

Job Crafting : A Systematic Review and Meta - Analytical Relationships with Precursors and Work Outcomes (2001 – 2021)

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Abstract

Meta-analysis and SEM (structural equation modeling) were used to investigate the relationship between job crafting, job characteristics, work engagement, and job performance. We used random effects of meta-analysis to statistically integrate 199 primary studies and structural equation modeling to examine the assumed moderation through gender and educational levels using Stata: Version 16.0 software. We also ran an exploratory moderator analysis to see any systematic differences in the relationships. The findings revealed that job performance and job characteristics were positively and significantly related at the 1% level, as were job performance, job crafting, and work engagement. All were positively and significantly related at the 1% level. Work engagement and job crafting, too, were positively correlated and statistically significant at the 1% level. Furthermore, $p < 0.05$ for gender and $p < 0.10$ for educational level indicated that educational level and gender moderated the relationship between job performance, work engagement, job characteristics, and job crafting significantly. Cronbach's alpha was used to conduct the reliability test, which indicated a good ($0.8 \leq \alpha < 0.9$) and excellent ($0.9 \leq \alpha$) internal consistency because Cronbach's alpha was more significant than the 0.6 thresholds, and the validity indicated that the model was adequate.

Keywords : job crafting, job redesign, work engagement, job performance, job characteristics, meta-analysis, systematic review, PRISMA, structural equation modeling

JEL Classification Codes : J28, I31, M10, M12, M54

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The process of designing a job and then selecting appropriate human resources to work on it is not easy because well-designed jobs tend to produce better results. Job description elements, such as knowledge and skills, are defined and measured, and job characteristics look into job-related traits that can be used as motivators (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). Job crafting is a bottom-up process as opposed to the traditional top-down approach of job characteristics. It is a proactive behavior in which employees themselves try to alter their job to achieve meaningfulness in their work. It is an alternative perspective of job design. Job crafting was first introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), who defined job crafting as the physical and cognitive

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changes individuals make in the tasks or relational boundaries of their work. With job crafting, employees have the scope to change the tasks and social components of their job by way of altering their tasks and relational boundaries. Such alterations lead to a different experience of work meaningfulness, responsibility, and knowledge of results, which are the three critical psychological states governed by the five core dimensions: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, and feedback. Even though a job description is defined during job design, employees rarely accomplish the job according to its formal definition (Bacha, 2014). Workers adjust their pre-determined work schedules and tasks to meet their unique requirements. The positive outcomes include psychological well-being (Berg et al., 2010), work meaningfulness (Tims et al., 2012), work engagement (achieving flourishing and high-quality goals), better performance (Mishra et al., 2016), reduced turnover intention (Jnaneswar, 2019; Ramaprasad et al., 2020), enhanced work engagement, improved work-life quality (Agrawal, 2019), and organizational commitment (Girdharwal, 2019). By redesigning the job, proactive employees become more engaged. Schaufeli and Salanova (2011) defined work engagement as the engagement of physical, cognitive, and emotional energy at work. Enthusiasm, tenacity, and an overwhelming sense of involvement with a task characterize dedication (Campbell, 1990).

Employees who are highly and proudly motivated are inspired and feel important. A person's overall skill level of competence is referred to as "performance." The goal of three dimensions (informality, dynamism, and performance) of individual work performance is to focus on the actions or deeds that employees have control over. It considers the job's fundamentals, as outlined in the job description (Ng & Feldman, 2009). Going above and beyond established job requirements can include going the extra mile, training newcomers, and demonstrating initiative. An organization's behavior is encouraged and informed but not required by its corporate structure (Sidhu et al., 2020). Using contextual activities to better understand organizational, social, and psychological factors improves the organization's effectiveness.

Previously, researchers have drawn the attention that in today's virtual environment, job design, i.e., the top-down approach, has become a matter of concern among the knowledge workers (working class) and also among organizations and the community as a whole as there are serious negative consequences of the top-down approach, that is, job design. The job design impacts psychological health, satisfaction, life meaningfulness, and overall health and wealth at the individual level. In contrast, at the structural level of a firm, the job design of employees results in increased absenteeism, turnover intentions, weak productivity, job dissatisfaction, employee burnouts, and lower organizational commitment. Henceforth, job crafting/redesign compels the individuals to accomplish stability between work and non-work activities. Therefore, the primary purpose of this systematic review and meta-analysis in the area of job crafting is to provide a holistic understanding of the antecedents, as well as the consequent of the key constructs, their conceptualizations, predictors, as well as outcomes of job crafting, which has not been previously addressed in this field of study.

Conceptualization of "The Theory of Job Crafting"

This concept of job crafting was first put forth by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). The authors described job crafting as both employee self-initiated and employer facilitated. The self-determination theory of job crafting behavior postulates that work motivations are deep-rooted in people's interests, positive self-image, and work-relatedness (Tims et al., 2012). It can meet basic needs and contribute to more excellent work outcomes and meaningful employee work. The job crafting concept and job demands and resources model are interrelated (Koopmans et al., 2014). Resource-based job crafting motives stem from people wanting to bring their job resources in sync with their job demands (Shusha, 2014). Self-empowerment promotes a person-job fit and employee engagement, reducing job stress and exhaustion. Due to the high interest in the job demands-resources model (JD-R), research studies were limited to two types of studies: formal and informal. Studies such as

Tims et al. (2015) and Berg et al. (2010) partially undermined cognitive crafting. One possible pitfall of the “JD-R model” is that it might overlook proactive person reasons for crafting job. It hypothesizes that individual processes fall into two categories: promotion and prevention. The promotion-oriented redesign is made to enhance resources and explore new opportunities; the prevention job design focuses on various motivational processes and enables us to accurately evaluate the positive and negative impact of job design (Naude, 2010). It also integrates the principle of role drafting with policymaking, which gives us a more holistic view of policymaking (Shantz et al., 2013). Since most of the literature deals with the JD-R model and the theory of job crafting, which is similar to that found in Rudolph et al. (2017), we also conducted a meta-analysis using the results of this study of specific job crafting methods (i.e., identifying social resources, increasing social resources, reducing hindrance, and preparing for changes). Composing a job follows one of three factors: individual differences, big-five traits, and job characteristics (Berg et al., 2010). While gender (Thriveni Kumari, 2020), age, and age-related characteristics such as personality, self-efficacy, self-competence, and demographics may affect one's working style (Afroz & Haque, 2021), all three job characteristics, job autonomy, job enrichment, and task significance were found to have a positive correlation with job crafting (Kim & Lee, 2016). Though social factors and individual characteristics have long been studied, numerous studies have begun to look at the connection between the social factors and the various job specifications (for example, academics start to appreciate the vital role of leadership and co-workers in job crafting). They provide others with opportunities for mutual growth and development and contribute to its resources, inspiring employees better to serve customers. Based on socialization (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013), we believe that two distinct variables impact crafting jobs: those already part of the organization, including the top brass, and colleagues who interact with one another frequently.

Most importantly, we emphasize the inherent “interpersonal” nature of the organization's members, who may be customers and clients or family members, as a source of social resources that indirectly affect employees. We use this structure because it better fits our employee job crafting framework. When people expect interpersonal relationships such as team leaders, supervisors, clients, peers, or families to be part of their job activities, we describe how social interactions affect job crafting behaviors (Patwardhan et al., 2018).

In most empirical studies, the relationship between job characteristics and overall work performance appears to be negligible (Hernaus & Mikulic, 2014). It is unusual to come across research on job performance that is contextualized. According to previous research, individual performance is linked to job demands. The contextual performance had a more significant impact on job performance than task-related characteristics on managers' work performance in a study of 154 metal-company employees (Humphrey et al., 2007). According to formal research published in 2007, employees with proactive solid personalities were more likely to create practical in-role performance jobs. Researchers discovered a link between career advancement and contextual performance in a study of customer service representatives conducted in 2012. Both in-role and extra-role performance have been linked to work engagement. In a study conducted on 54 Dutch teachers, there was a link between job engagement and productivity. Another study showed a strong correlation/effect between work engagement and job performance when participants' educational level was used as a moderator in a survey (Bakker et al., 2016).

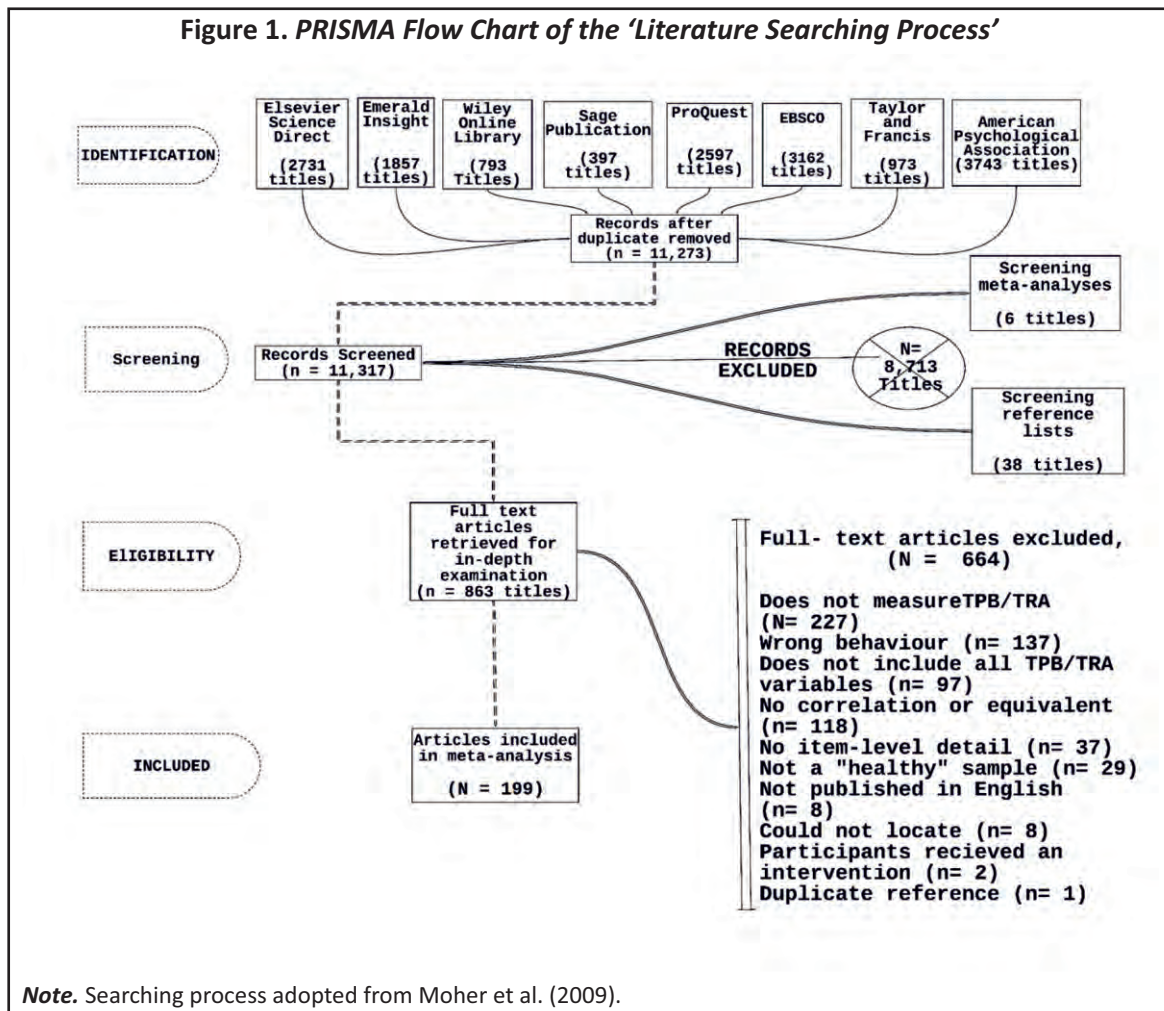
Previously, numerous quantitative and qualitative investigations have been conducted to understand antecedents and consequences of job crafting and investigated the relationships between work engagement, job crafting, and job performance. Researchers did not investigate whether work engagement mediated the relationships between the job elements, as proposed by the meta-analysis regression. Therefore, the primary purpose of the systematic review and meta-analysis in the area of job crafting is to provide a holistic understanding of the antecedents, as well as a consequent of the key constructs, their conceptualizations, predictors, as well as outcomes of job crafting, which have not been previously addressed in this field of study. The scrutiny of research also identifies significant gaps and suggests the directions for future research.

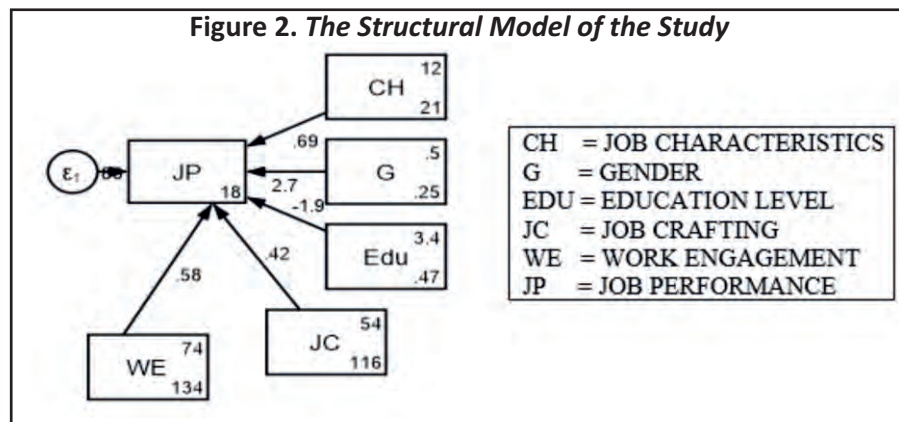
Research Objectives

The meta-analysis has these goals. Firstly, to conduct a meta-analysis on the relationship between job crafting, job characteristics, work engagement, and demographic variables such as gender and educational level as correlates of job performance. Secondly, to test the model's assertion that job crafting dimensions mediate the relationship between work engagement and job performance by running a meta-analysis on those specific proposed paths. Thirdly, to examine the moderating effect of gender and educational level. Finally, to conduct exploratory analysis on this relationship and extend reference on the job crafting theory.

Search Methodology - Literature Search Strategy and Search String

We scoured as many published peer-reviewed studies as possible (as shown in Figure 1). The key objective of online databases is to find information. Studies were discovered by searching the following eight databases: Elsevier Science Direct, Emerald Insight, Sage Publication, Wiley Online Library, EBSCO, ProQuest, American Psychological Association, and Taylor and Francis. We formulated our search conditions as an “AND” search phrase using a search string operator. The main factors of our keyword strategy are job redesign and job crafting,





and we used the terms “performance,” “engagement,” “job characteristics,” “job features,” and “with regards to demographic variables,” and “work outcomes,” for job crafting. We considered literature from April 2001 – January 2021. A meta-analysis search has been conducted on all works cited in the study. We carried out three additional literature reviews for our investigation.

Study Selection Criteria (Inclusion/Exclusion)

The inclusion criteria considered (Figure 1):

- ✎ Full-text peer-reviewed journals published in English only.
- ✎ Articles focusing on reviewing and conceptualizing job crafting, job characteristics, work engagement, work performance, and demographics were considered. Empirical studies that examined antecedents and consequences of job crafting in the international and national (Indian) contexts, which researchers have not previously emphasized.

The exclusion criteria included (Figure 1): non-peer-reviewed research articles, case studies, periodicals, master's papers, conference proceedings, doctoral thesis, newspaper articles, reports, and unpublished research articles.

Research Hypothesis

- ✎ **H1** : There is a positive relationship between job crafting and job performance.
- ✎ **H2** : Job characteristics have an impact on job performance.
- ✎ **H3** : Gender moderates the relationship between job crafting and job performance.
- ✎ **H4** : Educational levels moderate the relationship between work engagement and job performance.
- ✎ **H5** : Work engagement has an impact on job performance.
- ✎ **H6** : There is a positive relationship between job performance and work engagement.
- ✎ **H7** : There is a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement.

Meta-Analysis of Job Crafting

Stata version 16.0 software was used to extract the demographic data such as gender, educational level, etc. We used random effects of meta-analysis to statistically integrate demographic data from 199 primary studies, which were researched previously by researchers and academicians from 2001–2021 in the field of management, and structural equation modeling was used to examine the assumed moderation through gender and educational levels. Before performing the calculations, we transformed the extracted correlations into *z*-values. This transformation improves the skewed correlation estimates (Boudrias et al., 2009). Though the *z*-values are consistently positive, they are less biased than the average correlation results (Silver & Dunlap, 1987).

Moreover, Fisher's *z*-values yield a better estimation of the actual moderate correlation. Many studies included in the present meta-analysis differ in their job characteristics, so we decided on a random-effects model (Veroniki et al., 2016). We calculated Fisher's *z*-values using the sum of within-study variance and the total variance. Conducting a review for exploratory analysis, leading to important discoveries and research hypotheses, we conducted an experimental investigation and improved our ability to infer with that form of study (Song et al., 2001). As a result, we generated a model for each possible moderator. Subsequently, we conducted a moderator analysis using the structural equation model (SEM) for each relationship, accounting for all previously significant moderators.

Data Analysis and Results

As shown in Table 1, correlation = *R*, sample size and data on participant characteristics including both genders, that is, male and female and educational level were extracted (as shown in Table 1). The data from the studies revealed that 100 respondents were males, which accounted for 50.3% of the total, while 99 were females, who accounted for 49.7%. The mean of gender is 0.5, which means that gender represents 0.5 on an average, and the standard deviation is 0.501, which indicates that gender has a variability of 0.501 from the mean. The educational

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	Frequency	Percentage	Mean	Standard Deviation
Gender			0.50	0.501
Male	100	50.3		
Female	99	49.7		
Total	199	100		
Educational Level			3.35	0.687
B. SC	12	6.0		
M. SC	116	58.3		
M. Phil	61	30.7		
PhD	9	4.5		
College	1	0.5		
Total	199	100		
Job Characteristics			12.12	4.559
Job Crafting			53.96	10.789
Work Engagement			73.63	11.589
Job Performance			86.54	14.813

level represents 3.35 on average and has a variability of 0.687 from the mean. Out of which, 12 were Bsc graduates, who accounted for 6%; 116 were MSc postgraduates, who accounted for 58.3%; 61 were MPhil holders, who accounted for 30.7%; 9 were PhD holders, accounting for 4.5%; and 1 was a college certificate holder, accounting for 0.5% of the total sample. The descriptive statistics show that job performance has the highest mean value of 86.54 and the highest standard deviation of 14.813, indicating the highest variability of job performance from the mean. Job characteristics has the lowest mean value of 12.12, and the lowest standard deviation of 4.559, which indicates that job characteristics has the least variability from the mean (Balakrishnan & Kumar, 2021).

Reliability and Validity

Instrument reliability and validity were examined through SPSS Version 26.0. After that, discriminant measures were examined to see if they provided different results. The reliability and validity have been examined through a mix of Cronbach's alpha, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE). The factor loading reflects the magnitude of the correlation between the measured variables. The latent variable: Cronbach's alpha was used to measure the internal consistency of the items used in the survey as variables in the study. The Cronbach's alpha results indicate that all measures have Cronbach's alpha above the threshold of 0.6. To validate the measurement model, composite reliability and (AVE) values were investigated (Sudhindra et al., 2020). Other studies have suggested this minimum estimate of (CR). (CR) values for all model measurements meet or exceed the recommended value of 0.70. It is also suggested that the (AVE) variance measures should be above the accepted cut-off value of 0.50, indicating that half the items in the sample should contribute to the variation (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). The results show that all current model variables have (AVE) values greater than or equal to the minimum recommended value of 0.50. All values reported in this study for composite reliability and AVE meet the recommended values. The statistical analysis shows that the model exhibits adequate convergent validity and reliability.

Meta-Analysis

The findings from Table 2 reveal that since $r = 0.414$, $p < 0.01$, job performance and job characteristics are positive and significantly related at a 1% significant level. The values of $r = 0.634$, $p < 0.01$ suggest that there is a

Table 2. Random-Effects Average Correlation and Heterogeneity Statistics by Gender of Participants

Association	Random Effects - Average Correlation	No. of Effect Size (k)	No of Participants (N)	Lower Limit of Confidence Interval (LL)	Upper Limit of 95% Confidence Interval (UL)	Estimated Amount of Heterogeneity (r^2)	Test of Heterogeneity Based on Fisher's Z-Value (I^2)
Job Characteristics	0.4142*	19	199	0.0760	0.3990	0.0114	86.22%
Job Performance – Job Crafting	0.6344*	15	199	0.4301	0.7199	0.0039	62.70%
Job Performance – Work Engagement	0.6933*	11	199	0.3840	0.9910	0.0218	90.31%
Work Engagement – Job Crafting	0.6087*	9	199	0.5754	0.6880	0.0240	82.64%

Table 3. Random-Effects Average Correlation and Heterogeneity Statistics by Educational Level of the Participants

Association	Random Effects - Average Correlation	No. of Effect Size (k)	No of Participants (N)	Lower Limit of Confidence Interval (LL)	Upper Limit of 95% Confidence Interval (UL)	Estimated Amount of Heterogeneity (r^2)	Test of Heterogeneity Based on Fisher's Z-Value (I^2)
Job Characteristics	0.4850*	7	199	0.0344	0.5420	0.0034	42.80%
Job Performance – Job Crafting	0.5260*	17	199	0.0261	0.6215	0.0052	54.78%
Job Performance – Work Engagement	0.6860*	12	199	0.3842	0.7640	0.0128	74.01%
Work Engagement – Job Crafting	0.5642*	15	199	0.5220	0.6150	0.0319	87.33%

significant positive relationship between job performance and job crafting. The values of $r = 0.693$, $p < 0.01$ indicate that job performance and work engagement are positive and significantly related at the 1% level; $r = 0.609$, $p < 0.01$ imply that work engagement and job crafting are positive and significantly correlated at the 1% significant level. Besides, $p < 0.05$ for gender indicates that gender significantly moderates the relationship between job performance and job characteristics, job performance and job crafting, and between job performance and work engagement at a 5% significant level.

The findings from Table 3 depict that $r = 0.485$, $p < 0.01$, which indicate that job performance and job characteristics are positive and significantly related at a 1% significant level; $r = 0.526$, $p < 0.01$ indicate that there is a significant positive relationship between job performance and job crafting; $r = 0.686$, $p < 0.01$ indicate that job performance and work engagement are positive and significantly related at the 1% level; $r = 0.564$, $p < 0.01$ imply that work engagement and job crafting are positive and significantly correlated at a 1% significant level. Besides, $p < 0.05$ for gender and $p < 0.10$ for educational levels means that both gender and educational level significantly moderate the relationship between job performance and job characteristics, job performance and job crafting, and between job performance and work engagement at 5% and 10% significant levels, respectively, as revealed by the structural equation model (Figure 2). These findings are in line with the results obtained by Bakker et al. (2016). This confirms a positive correlation between work engagement and job performance when participants' characteristics were used as a moderator in the study. We can also see that $B = 0.688$, $p < 0.01$ for job characteristics; $B = 0.416$, $p < 0.01$ for job crafting; and $B = 0.575$, $p < 0.01$ for work engagement. It indicates that job characteristics, job crafting, and work engagement significantly positively impact job performance.

The study's main objectives are to conduct a meta-analysis on the relationship between job crafting, job characteristics, work engagement, and demographic variables such as gender and educational level as correlates of job performance. Secondly, the study attempts to test the model's assertion that job crafting dimensions mediate the relationship between work engagement and job performance by running a meta-analysis on those specific proposed paths. Thirdly, the study examines the moderating effect of gender and educational level. Finally, it attempts to conduct an exploratory analysis on this relationship and extend reference to the job crafting theory.

The findings reveal that job performance, job crafting, and work engagement are positively and significantly related at the 1% level. Therefore, H1 and H6 are supported. As job performance and job characteristics are positively and significantly related at the 1% level, therefore, H2 is supported. Work engagement and job crafting, too, are positively correlated and statistically significant at the 1% level, therefore, H5 and H7 are supported.

Furthermore, $p < 0.05$ for gender and $p < 0.10$ for the educational level indicates that educational level and

gender significantly moderate the relationship between job performance, work engagement, job characteristics, and job crafting. Hence, H3 and H4 are supported (see Table 2 and Table 3).

Theoretical and Managerial Implications

Our findings on job characteristics, job performance, job crafting, and work engagement have multiple practical implications. Our results suggest that employees should take an active role in their work development as a positive correlation is found between the degree of job crafting and employee involvement. In light of this study, employees should increase their structural and social resources to enhance engagement. If employees want to craft their jobs, they should perform the tasks measured by Tims et al. (2013) and Petrou et al. (2012). The job crafting instruments allow for it. For instance, employees may take additional courses to improve their skill levels, choose tasks that will enhance their ability to complete the tasks on their own based on their ability and knowledge, or seek advice from their supervisors. It is vital to point out that it is not just the individual who benefits from their job, but also the organization. However, job crafting seems to be detrimental to engagement and productivity. Workers should avoid frustrating challenges or seek out demanding situations that exhaust them, or another example is that they may look for social support or participate in conversations. Whenever possible, managers should encourage employees to put in efforts to achieve their goals. Our moderator analysis suggests that employees and managers interested in job crafting should consider their own culture's importance. In collectivistic cultures, working environments and social resources rather than individual ones significantly impact productivity.

Similarly, managers should calibrate their measures based on their employees' cultural preferences. The workforces from collectivistic countries should value job crafting even more since it increases social resources. In multidisciplinary teams, using a different cultural background may be significant. Even small increases in employee engagement may significantly impact a company's performance.

Conclusion

Although the results of this meta-analysis are still open to interpretation, these findings provide valuable information about the connection between job crafting, work engagement, and job performance. The results of this meta-analysis find a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement. Future research should also investigate this relationship. Furthermore, our exploratory moderator analysis indicates that gender and educational levels moderate the relationship between job performance, job characteristics, job crafting, and work engagement. Meanwhile, the structural equations model also reveals that job characteristics, job crafting, and work engagement significantly positively impact job performance. Despite the results, further research on these interrelated variables is required.

Limitations of the Study and Scope for Further Research

Although structural equation modeling and meta-analysis are complete in terms of the variables they addressed, the meta-analytic model did not include all relationships between the studied variables. As a result, all the meta-analytic correlations are not included in the overall correlation matrix. It is difficult to say whether this had a significant impact on our results or not. Furthermore, a caveat of the current meta-analysis is that many correlations included common-method variance, which overestimates the relationship between two constructs whenever correlations are obtained using the same or similar methodologies (Pigott & Polanin, 2019). It is a common problem in many studies, and as a result, meta-analysis is used in this study. In the future, researchers can

investigate how potential moderators impact the indirect relationships between precursors and work outcomes through job crafting. By doing so, the literature can capture a more comprehensive understanding of the different roles and mechanisms of job crafting.

Authors' Contribution

Dr. Valarmathi B. conceived the idea and supervised G. Vasanth Kumar to write an initial draft of the systematic review study in “job crafting.” Dr. Valarmathi B. and G. Vasanth Kumar performed the meta-analytical calculations and performed the numerical simulations using the software STATA VERSION 16.0. Dr. Valarmathi B. checked the final draft, developed the PRISMA model, and suggested revising the paper by incorporating some changes in the discussion section. Both the authors discussed the results and contributed to the final manuscript.

Conflict of Interest

The authors certify that they have no affiliations with or involvement in any organization or entity with any financial interest or non-financial interest in the subject matter or materials discussed in this manuscript.

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