

Impact of Job Crafting on Employee Engagement in the Selected Commercial Banks in Sri Lanka

N.Thevanes¹ and T.Baskar²

¹Assistant Lecturer, Department of Business and Management Studies, Trincomalee Campus,
Eastern University, Nilaveli, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka

Email: nadesthev@gmail.com

²Senior Lecturer, Department of Business and Management Studies, Trincomalee Campus,
Eastern University, Nilaveli, Trincomalee, Sri Lanka

Email: stbaskar21@gmail.com

¹ **Corresponding Author**

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Abstract

An empirical knowledge gap has been observed regarding the relationship between job crafting and employee engagement in banking sector of Sri Lanka. Hence, in order to fill this empirical knowledge gap, this study was carried out with the objectives of find out the levels of job crafting and work engagement, explores the relationship between job crafting and employee engagement and explores the impact of job crafting on employee engagement in selected licensed commercial banks in Sri Lanka. The data of this study have been collected from 150 employees in selected licensed commercial banks in Sri Lanka through the structured questionnaire. The data were analyzed with univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses. The findings of the study revealed that job crafting and employee engagement are in high level in surveyed banks. And also, findings of the study stated that there is a strong positive relationship between job crafting and employee engagement. Further, findings of the study revealed that, increasing structural job resources and decreasing hindering job demands, are not significant to predict the employee engagement of selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa. However, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands has positive significant influence over the employee engagement. This study suggested that degree of job crafting of organization can improve employee engagement.

Keywords: employees, bank, job crafting, engagement.

1. Introduction

Employees are the life blood of any organization and there are no organizations which are with employee-less (Opatha, 2020). Organization is defined as the collection of people work together to achieve the common goals and objectives (Robbins and Judge, 2015). This definition clearly explains the importance of human resources in achieving the organizational goals and objectives. Employees are human resources which are unique and vibrant resource when compared them with all other resources such as financial, physical, and other intangible resources. All other resources make things possible but only human resources make things happen (Opatha, 2009). Thus, without employees' active participation and engagement, achieving the organizational goals and objectives become unrealistic.

Nowadays, employee engagement considered as one of the operational key performance indicators (KPIs) of organization which used to measure the productivity of human resources. An engaged employee is more productive, delivers better customer outcomes and experiences, contributes to maximize the organizational profits and can be considered as the source of competitive advantage (Saks, 2011; Hill and Birkinshaw, 2012; Kular et al., 2008). Creating a team of engaged, energized employees who embody the values of organization is an essential step in gaining the sustainable competitive advantage. Hence, contemporary organizations are committed to create a team of engaged employees who drive the organization towards success.

Further, organizations implement several strategies and practices in order enhance the employee engagement to reach the superior organizational performance. In this context, job crafting considered as the one of the crucial and effective practices to improve the employee engagement. Job crafting defined as self-initiated change behaviors that employees engage in with the aim to align their jobs with their own preferences, motives, and passions (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Thus, job crafting contributes to enhance the employee empowerment which turns leads to unleash the employee engagement. In this context, previous studies revealed that, there is a positive relationship exist

between job crafting and employee engagement (eg., Tims, Bakker, and Derks, 2012, 2013; Demerouti, Bakker, and Gevers, 2015; Demerouti, Bakker, and Halbesleben, 2015; McClelland et al., 2014; Shin, Hur and Choi, 2018; Dubbelt, Demerouti and Rispens, 2019; Meijerink, Bos-Nehles and Leede, 2019). Organization can improve the employee engagement through allow them to craft their jobs. However, the research in this area is less or in an infancy level. Little research has been done with regard to the relationship between job crafting and employee engagement in the world and no research has been done so far to test the relationship between job crafting and employee engagement in Sri Lankan context. In considering above reasons, the researchers would like to conduct this research study in order to fill the empirical knowledge and contextual gaps with regards to the relationship between job crafting and employee engagement.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Job Crafting

Job crafting is considered as the new approach of job design which allows the employees to redefine and reimagine their job designs. Hence, job crafting represents employee-initiated job design. The concept of job crafting was first introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) as a thought of the concept of job style that is considered as a top-down operate of managers to formally style jobs of their subordinates. Traditionally, job design treated as the top-down approach where top management decides the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the job which need to be performed by the job holder. Job crafting is considered as the bottom-up approach by putting employees “in the driver’s seat” in cultivating meaningfulness in their work (Berg, Dutton, and Wrzesniewski, 2013). Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), suggested the three types of job crafting techniques such as task, relational, and cognitive crafting. Task crafting involves employees altering the set of responsibilities prescribed by a formal job description, by adding or dropping tasks, altering the nature of tasks, or changing how much time, energy, and attention are allocated to various tasks. Moreover, they may change with whom and how often they interact in the workplace, which was conceptualized as relational crafting. A senior employee, for example, can create mentoring relationships with new and young employees as a way to teach and connect with them (Wrzesniewski, Berg, and Dutton., 2010). And finally, cognitive crafting involves employees changing the way they perceive the tasks and relationships that make up their jobs (e.g., a ticket salesperson seeing the job as an essential part of providing people with entertainment, not just processing orders). According to Leana, Appelbaum and Shevchuk (2009), job crafting takes two forms: individual crafting and collaborative crafting. Individual crafting occurs when an employee plays an active role in altering the boundaries of his/her task while shaping the actual way of working. Collaborative crafting refers to employees who work together to determine how to change the task boundaries in order to fulfill shared work goals. According to Tims, et al (2012), job crafting can take four forms, namely (1) increasing structural job resources, such as autonomy, variety, and learning opportunities; (2) increasing social job resources, like social support, supervisory coaching, and feedback; (3) increasing challenging job demands, such as proactive involvement in new projects; and (4) decreasing hindering job demands, for example by decreasing the number of emotional interactions or cognitive tasks. In this context, job crafting can be treated as the one of the high-performance human resource management practices and pro-active work behavior which has ability to contribute to enhance the employee-well-being, motivation, job satisfaction and employee engagement as well as mitigate the bored behavior, burnout and turnover intentions (Lu et al., 2014; Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012; Bruning & Campion, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017; Bakker and Costa, 2014; Bakker et al., 2016). In considering the advantages of job crafting,

contemporary organizations strive to adapt the job crafting in order to enhance individual and organizational performance.

2.2 Successive Definitions of Job Crafting

Table 1 shows the successive definitions of Job Crafting.

Table 1. Successive Definitions of Job Crafting

Author	Year	Definition
Wrzesniewski and Dutton,	2001	Job crafting is the process of employees redefining and reimagining their job designs in personally meaningful ways.
Berg, Dutton, and Wrzesniewski,	2008	Job crafting defined as the employees independently modify aspects of their jobs to improve the fit between the characteristics of the job and their own needs, abilities, and preferences.
Tims and Bakker	2010	Job crafting defined as the changes which employees make in their job demands and job resources.
Bruning and Campion	2018	Job crafting is defined as the changes to a job that workers make with the intention of improving the job for themselves. These changes can take structural (i.e., physical and procedural), social, and cognitive forms.
Kima, Im and Qu	2018	Job crafting refers to the ways in which employees play active roles in initiating changes in their jobs.

2.3 Employee Engagement

Iddagoda and Opatha (2020, p. 01) argued that engaged employees are drivers of the business activities of any organization to reach its desired destination. Thus, researchers and practitioners widely agree that sustaining high employee engagement should be a top priority for organizations. Kahn, well known as the first researcher who produced an academic paper on employee engagement in the year 1990 and defined employee engagement as involving one's "preferred self" and as "the harnessing of organization members' selves to their work roles; in engagement, people employ and express themselves physically, cognitively, and emotionally during role performances" (p. 694). Further, employee engagement plays a vital role in determining the employer brand of organizations (Mayuran and Kailasapathy, 2020) which its immense important to attract and retain the talented employees within the organization. Engaged employees are considered as the strong organizational assets for sustained competitive advantage and organizational success (Rich, LePine, and Crawford, 2010; Joo and Mclean, 2006). Dharmasiri (2010) revealed that employee engagement captures the essence of employees' head, hands and heart involvement in work. Researchers suggested that, engaged employees with adequate competencies and positive attitudes should be pave the way towards excellent organizational performance.

2.4 Successive Definitions of Job Crafting

Table 2. Successive Definitions of Employee Engagement

Author	Year	Definition
Schaufeli Salanova, González-Romá, and Bakker	2002	Employee engagement defined as the positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption.
Schaufeli and Bakker	2004	Employee engagement defined as the state of mind that is full of vigor, dedication, and absorption.
Maslach and Leiter	2008	Employee engagement defined as an energetic state of involvement with personally fulfilling activities that enhance one's sense of professional efficacy.
Dhamasiri	2010	Employee engagement refers to the psychological state of the employee (e.g., employee's identification with the organization), disposition of the employee (e.g., employee's positive feeling towards the organization) and performance (e.g., employee's level of discretionary effort).
Shuck and Wollard	2010	Employee engagement defined as an individual employee's cognitive, emotional and behavioral state directed toward desired organizational outcomes.
Christian, Garza, and Slaughter	2011	Employee engagement defined as a relatively enduring state of mind referring to the simultaneous investment of personal energies in the experience of work.
Iddagoda, Opatha, and Gunawardena	2016	Employee engagement defined as the extent to which an employee gets involved in the job and the organization cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally.
Buil, Martínez, and Matute	2019	Employee engagement defined as the positive feeling of an employee which is the resultant of passion toward the job.

2.5 Relationship between Job Crafting and Employee Engagement

Contemporary organizations are paying more attention on employee engagement due to the recently reported positive relationship between engagement and positive employee outcomes such as job performance, quality performance, employee productivity, customer satisfaction financial performance (Joo and McLean, 2006; Saks, 2011; Wickramasinghe and Perera; 2014; Iddagoda and Opatha, 2020). Further, enhancing employee engagement contributes mitigate the negative employee outcomes such as burnout, turnover intension (Maslach and Leiter 2008; Shankar and Bhatnagar 2010; Bruning and Campion, 2018; Rudolph et al., 2017). Therefore, engaged employees are considered as the drivers of organizational success. In this sense, organizations turn their spot light on implementation of job crafting techniques in order to create and retain the engaged employees.

Job crafting highly contributes to ensure person-job fit by enabling the employees to choose the duties and responsibilities based on their competencies, preferences and their own needs (Lu, et al., 2014; Petrou et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2012) ultimately this trend contributes to enhance the employee

engagement. Schaufeli et al. (2002, p. 74) suggested that employees may redesign their jobs using job demands and resources and display work engagement. Further, organization can ensure the employee engagement through applying the three types of job crafting such as 1) task crafting (employees taking on additional tasks, changing ways in which tasks are performed, and reducing the scope of their tasks.) (2) relational crafting (change the relational boundaries of their work by altering the number and quality of interactions with other people while working) (3) cognitive crafting (alter their view of work). These, job crafting techniques have ability to enhance the job satisfaction and employee engagement through the ensuring the employee empowerment, freedom as well as satisfying the social needs of employees.

As proposed in Job demand resources (JD-R) theory, crafting job resources and challenging job demands lead to employee engagement that in turn engenders desirable outcomes (Bakker et al., 2012; Bakker and Demerouti, 2016). In Van Wingerden's et al. (2017) study, employee engagement mediates the relationship between job crafting and employee performance. The study of Karatepe and Eslamlou (2017) confirmed that, job crafting fosters flight attendants' employee engagement and service recovery performance. According to the above literature and empirical evidence, this review establishes that job crafting has a positive relationship with employee engagement Therefore, this review proposes the hypothesis as:

Hypothesis: There is a positive relationship between job crafting and employee engagement.

3. Method

3.1 Study Design

Purpose of the study was analytical and predictive as it tested hypotheses. Extent of researcher interference was minimal because studying the three variables was done when they normally occurred without manipulating or controlling any variable. Study setting was non-contrived as the study was carried out in the natural environment without creating an artificial environment. Research strategy was survey as it involved collecting primary data through the use of a questionnaire. Unit of analysis was individual: employees working for selected licensed private commercial banks. Time horizon was cross sectional as data collection was done at one point in time to answer the research questions.

3.2 Sampling and Data Collection

The empirical data for the current study were collected from selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka. The total population of this study was all employees in selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka. Out of these, 150 employees were selected as sample to conduct this research by using stratified random sampling method, because to assure representation of employees belonging to different groups in the selected banks.

This study depends on primary data. The data of this study were collected from the respondents through structured questionnaire. The questionnaire contained questions relating to job crafting and employee engagement.

3.3 Measures

All constructs were measured with multiple items developed and tested in previous studies. Each item was measured on a five-point Likert-type scale anchored by 'strongly disagree' and 'strongly agree' response options.

This study has used an instrument adapted from past research works of Tims, Bakker and Derks (2012). This instrument can be used to measure the job crafting that consists of 21 question items. This instrument had a Cronbach's alpha of 0.873 which is higher than 0.70. Hence, this instrument had a good reliability. To measure employee engagement, nine question items were used from past research works Schaufeli et al. (2002). The instrument had a good degree of reliability with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.862.

3.4 Data Analysis Techniques

Correlation analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between the variables (Jahangir and Begum 2008). According to Sekaran (2000), the correlation coefficient value (r) range from 0.10 to 0.29 is considered weak, from 0.30 to 0.49 is considered medium and from 0.50 to 1.0 is considered strong.

Simple linear regression was used to measure the impact of the independent variable on a dependent variable. The regression coefficient (represented by R^2) can take on any value between 0 and 1. It measures how much the dependent variable varies with an independent variable when all other independent variables are held constant. Therefore, simple linear regression was used to measure the impact of job crafting on employee engagement of selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka.

Further, multiple regression analysis is used to examine the effects of multiple independent variables on the assessment of dependent variable. It computes coefficient for each independent variable, as well as its statistical significance, to estimate the effect of each predictor on the dependent variable, with other predictors held constant. Therefore, multiple regression was used to measure the impact of each variables of job crafting such as increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources, and increasing challenging job demands on employee engagement of selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka.

3.5 Findings of the Study

Profile of the Respondents

The gender distribution of the respondents is 54.1 percent males and 45.9 percent females. The results revealed that the respondents are young, with 47.8 percent between 21 and 30 years. In terms of educational background of the respondents, 33.8% of them were A/L qualified, 21% of them were graduates and 7% of them were postgraduates. The results also revealed that 25.5 percent respondents have the work experience below 2 years, 29.3 percent of the respondents have work experience between 2 and 5 years and 45.2 percent of the respondents have the experience above 5 years. Among the respondents, 9.6% them were managers, 12.7 them were assistant manager, 8.9% were hold other positions (junior executive officers, junior executives and banking trainee).

Correlation Analysis

Table 3 displays the correlations and descriptive statistics for all variables tested in the study. The descriptive statistics of the study suggest that, there is a high level of job crafting techniques were implemented in the selected banks. The results also imply that, employee engagement of the banks is in high level with mean scores from 4.04 to 4.41 out of 5. Correlation analysis illustrates that job crafting has a strong positive correlation with work engagement.

Table 3: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Variables	Mean	1
1 Job crafting	4.04	
2 Employee Engagement	4.41	0.632**.

Notes: N=157, **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed),
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2 tailed)

(Source: Survey Data)

Regression Analysis

Table 5 shows the results of simple linear regression analysis. The model summary of simple linear regression shows, R (0.632) is correlation coefficient between the independent variable and dependent variable. It says that there is a strong positive correlation between job crafting and work engagement. Adjusted R square is 0.399. Therefore, researchers can conclude that 40% of the variability in employee engagement of employees is accounted by the job crafting. In other words, 60% of variance of employee engagement of employees was affected by other variables except job crafting.

Table 4: Model summary of impact of job crafting on Employee engagement

Mode	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square
1	0.632 ^a	0.399	0.395

a. Predictors: (constant), job crafting; b. Dependent variable: employee engagement

(Source: Survey Data)

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5: Model Summary of Impact of Independent Variables on Employee engagement

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.822 ^a	.676	.667	.29117

a. Predictors: (Constant), increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands

Source: Survey data

The model summary of multiple linear regression shows, R (0.822) is correlation coefficient between increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands and dependent variable – employee engagement. It indicates that there is a strong positive correlation between each seven indicators of job crafting and work engagement. Adjusted R square is 0.667. Therefore, the researcher concludes that 66.7% of variability in employee engagement is accounted by combine of increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands. In other words, 33.7% of variance of employee engagement is affected by other variables.

Table 6: Coefficients of Independent Variables and Employee engagement

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.385	.282		1.367	.174
	Increasing structural job resources	.045	.056	-.042	-.811	.419
	Decreasing hindering job demands	.114	.066	-.119	-.1.746	.083
	Increasing social job resources	.278	.057	.322	4.856	.000
	Increasing challenging job demands	.823	.067	.695	12.228	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Employee engagement						

Source: Survey data

Coefficient result shows that increasing structural job resources and decreasing hindering job demands are not significant to predict the employee engagement of selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa. However, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands influence over the employee engagement. The high β -coefficient of Increasing challenging job demands ($t=12.228$, $p<.001$, $\beta=.823$) shows that it has a large predictive value for the dependent variable of employee engagement than the indicator increasing social job resources ($t=4.856$, $p<.001$, $\beta=.278$).

Therefore, the regression equation model is as follows:

Employee engagement = $0.385 + 0.278$ (Increasing social job resources) + 0.823 (Increasing challenging job demands)

4. Discussion

The results of the study have shown that, job crafting has significant impact on employee engagement. Organizations need the competent, vibrant, engaged employees to survive in the ultra-competitive business environment. However, managing the employees has become the huge obstruction to the contemporary organizations due to the diverse needs and expectations of the workforce. Thus, organizations are in necessity to implement the innovative HRM practices beyond the traditional HRM practices to satisfy the workforce in order to ensure the achievement of organizational goals. Traditionally, job design is considered as the top-down function of managers to formally design jobs of their subordinates. This type of job design is no longer a feasible option for organizations to ensure the effective and efficient utilization of human resources. In this context, recent days, organization focus more on implementing the job crafting as an innovative job re-design technique. The concept of job crafting which converts job design from top-down approach to bottom-top approach, whereby employees altered the boundaries of their jobs as per their interests, tastes, preferences and qualifications on their own initiative which highly supports to enhance the employee engagement. Further, job crafting contributes to ensure the person job-fit via allowing the employees to select the tasks, duties and responsibilities of the job based on their qualifications and personal interests. The better the fit, the more employees are engaged in the job with empowerment and freedom. Further, task, relational, and cognitive crafting techniques contribute to enhance the employee engagement via

mitigating the employees' burnout and exhaustion as well as increasing the employees' happiness. Thus, organizations need to consider more on implementing the job crafting techniques to enhance the employee engagement. This finding is consistent with previous researches (eg., Bakker et al., 2012, 2016; Demerouti, Bakker, and Gevers, 2015; Mäkikangas, 2018; Demerouti, Bakker, and Halbesleben, 2015; McClelland et al., 2014; Tims et al., 2012, 2013; Shin et al., 2018; Dubbelt et al., 2019; Meijerink et al., 2019) that indicated high level of job crafting can increase the employee engagement.

Based on the multiple regression analysis (coefficient result) shows that, increasing structural job resources and decreasing hindering job demands, are not significant to predict the employee engagement of selected licensed commercial banks in Batticaloa. However, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands has positive significant influence over the employees' work engagement. The high β -coefficient of increasing challenging job demands ($t=12.228$, $p<.001$, $\beta=.823$) shows that it has a large predictive value for the dependent variable of employee engagement. According to the results of the multiple regression analysis, only two dimensions namely increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands are seen significant to the employee engagement. The analysis yield results quite different what was hypothesized in this study. Hence, further empirical studies should be carried out to test and prove the theoretical arguments of this study.

5. Limitations of the Study

In addition to the strengths of this paper, we have to acknowledge some shortcomings of this research. This study focused only on selected licensed commercial banks in Badulla district of Sri Lanka with a limited sample size. Therefore, the same research can be extended to other banks as well as organizations in other sectors such as apparel sectors, hotel industry and project companies by collecting data from a larger sample size and deploying mixed research methods or approaches, because this study used only the quantitative approach. Therefore, future studies may consider collecting deeper data from the respondents. The use of both qualitative and quantitative methods would provide an opportunity for more depth and richer explanations regarding the impact of job crafting on work engagement. In addition to that, future studies have the further opportunities to consider the antecedent variables related to this study.

6. Theoretical and Practical Implications of the Study

This study should be both theoretical and empirical significance. From the theoretical perspective the results and findings are expected to contribute to HRM, organizational behavior literature. Further, this study is conducted in Sri Lanka. Findings of the study enrich the study of literature in Sri Lanka. From the practical perspective, the researcher believes the results of this study will help to enhance the employee engagement among practitioners. This study especially meant for the selected licensed commercial banks which is operating in Batticaloa district of Sri Lanka. In other words, the empirical findings should help the practitioners to understand how job crafting techniques may influence on Employee engagement of employees at the organizational level. Finally, overall findings of the study will be useful organizations which are practicing job crafting. It also provides useful reference for future research in these topics in Sri Lanka.

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