

The Role of Job Crafting in Increasing Job Satisfaction through Employee Engagement: Conceptual Framework

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Abstract: Covid 19 decreased the level of employee wellbeing, including job satisfaction, caused by changes in duties and responsibilities, increased workload, and changing work environment. Employee job satisfaction is very important factor because it has a positive impact on the company success. Employees who are satisfied with their work tend to feel happy and have high motivation to perform their tasks well. This study aims to develop conceptual framework of the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction through employee engagement in Indonesia. Research on job crafting is still limited in Indonesia so that this research can close such research gap. It is believed that job crafting behavior is able to affect employee job satisfaction and employee engagement. Furthermore, this paper emphasizes the important role of employee engagement as mediator in the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. This study is useful for further researchers and human resource management practitioners in order to develop strategies in improving employee job satisfaction.

Keywords: Job crafting, employee engagement, job satisfaction, Covid 19.

INTRODUCTION

The Covid-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on employee wellbeing, including employee job satisfaction in various sectors and countries. After the COVID-19 pandemic, many changes have occurred in the world of work, including more frequent job transitions. Many employees lose their jobs or are forced to switch to a new job. The Covid 19 pandemic has also increased job dissatisfaction among employees caused by changes in duties and responsibilities, increased workload, and a changing work environment. Survey conducted by the World Economic Forum-Ipsos (2020) COVID-19 caused 30% of adult employees to take leave, 56% experienced increased anxiety due to job security, 55% experienced changes in work patterns and work stress, work from home caused 50% of employees to feel isolated and lonely and 40% said that their productivity dropped.

Symptoms of declining employee wellbeing also occur in Indonesia. Based on a survey conducted by Jobstreet Indonesia in 2020, from five thousand employees, many employees feel unhappy with their jobs (Jobstreet, 2020). The facts show that 89% of employees were happy with their jobs before COVID-19, while only 49% of employees were happy after the COVID 19 pandemic (Jobstreet, 2020)

Employee job satisfaction is very important factor. Employees who are satisfied with their work tend to feel happy and have high motivation to perform their tasks well. This will have a positive impact on employee productivity and performance, and increase company profits. In addition, happy

employees will also tend to stay in the company longer (Biason, 2020). Previous research found that job satisfaction is related to employee performance (Inayat & Jahanzeb Khan, 2021); turnover intention (Bello, *et al.*, 2021); organizational commitment (Sriram, 2020). Therefore, companies need to establish the right strategy to improve employee job satisfaction.

One of the factors that affect job satisfaction is job characteristics (Raihan, 2020). Theory of job characteristics can explain why some workers feel more satisfied with their jobs than others. This theory identifies five main characteristics that work must have in order to increase job satisfaction, namely: variety, identity, significance, autonomy, and feedback. Therefore, the work needs to be designed in such a way that employees feel the meaningfulness of the work and finally feel satisfied.

To respond to this condition, the organization needs to respond quickly and appropriately. Organizations should develop programs to redesign the tasks, responsibilities and personal relationships of employees, but according to Wang, *et al.*, (2017) the initiative arising from the organization is not enough. The practice of redesigning jobs top-down does not work in a continuously evolving business environment (Demereouti, 2014). Job descriptions are not agile enough to anticipate changing work conditions. Top-down job design strategies are not able to motivate employees to adjust work behavior to the increasing demands of work. Therefore, it requires initiative and innovation from employees to

redesign their work (Lee & Lee, 2018). This condition indicates that there has been a transformation in the process of designing work, which originally started from the organization (top-down) now becomes the initiative of employees (bottom up).

The behavior of employees in redesigning their work proactively, spontaneously and on their own initiative is known as Job Crafting. According to de Gennaro (2019 : xvii), job crafting is also known as an activity to adapt work to the needs, strengths and interests of employees (personalization of work). Through job crafting, employees have a sense of confidence, satisfaction, happiness and a sense of meaningfulness on the job. Research conducted by Cheng and O-Yang (2018) found job crafting has an influence on job satisfaction. This means that the higher the job crafting, the higher the level of employee job satisfaction.

In addition to job crafting, employee engagement also affects job satisfaction (Nguyen, *et al.*, 2018; De Simone, S., Plant, A. & Cicotto, G., 2018). Employee engagement is a positive state of mind, and a satisfactory result of work. Employee engagement can be characterized by Vigor, dedication, and absorption (Schaufeli, *et al.*, 2006). Employees who feel attached to their jobs tend to be more satisfied with their jobs, because they feel they have meaning in their work. Employees who feel engage to their jobs also tend to be more motivated and dedicated in their work, making them more likely to achieve their job goals and feel satisfied with their achievements.

Employee engagement has a role as a variable that mediates the influence of job crafting on job satisfaction. The higher the job crafting, the higher the employee's engage to work. Beer, Tims and Bakker (2016), Zahoor (2021), Ahuja and Chaturvedi (2017), Roskova and Faragova (2020) in their research found that job crafting has a positive and significant influence on employee engagement. Job crafting can increase employee engagement by increasing self-confidence, building more positive relationships, and providing a sense of autonomy and control over work. Therefore, organizations can consider providing greater space for employees to do job crafting in order to increase employee engagement and motivate employees to keep working positively in the organization. When employees feel engage to their work, employees will be more passionate and dedicated to their work so that the goals of the

work are achieved and employees feel satisfied. Research conducted by Beer, Tims and Bakker (2016) found that employee engagement is able to mediate the influence of job crafting on job satisfaction.

Based on the phenomena, facts, previous research and logic of thinking described above, researchers are interested to examine more deeply the relationship between job crafting, employee engagement and employee job satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to develop a conceptual framework of the relationship between job crafting, employee engagement and job satisfaction that emphasizes the role of employee engagement as a mediator in the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. This study will be useful for empirical studies that will be conducted in the future.

LITERATUR REVIEW AND HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is a positive or pleasant emotional statement as a result of an individual's evaluation or assessment process Locke's (1975) in Pang and Shan-Lu (2018). According to Heuvel, *et al.*, (2015) in Zhang and Li (2020) suggested that job satisfaction is an affective reaction that a person shows to his work, so the employee has a positive attitude at work. Based on the various notions of job satisfaction above, it is concluded that job satisfaction is a psychological phenomenon that explains the feelings and thoughts of employees towards their work. It can be said that job satisfaction is employee satisfaction with the characteristics of his work. Hackman and Oldham (1976) identified 5 job features that can affect employee job satisfaction: Skill variety, Task identity, Task significance, Autonomy and Feedback.

Job Crafting

Job crafting is an active behavior in which employees make changes in physical and / or cognitive tasks or personal relationships in the work environment (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). According to Bruning & Campion, (2018), job crafting is an activity carried out by employees to change jobs in order to improve themselves, both procedural, social and cognitive. According to Petrou, *et al.*, (2018), job crafting is a proactive behavior in which employees align the demands of the job with her/his capabilities and preferences. Demerouti, (2014) defines job crafting as an employee's initiative to change jobs by adjusting

between job demands and resources in order to make work more meaningful, satisfying and binding. Based on the definitions above, it can be concluded that job crafting is a bottom-up job design approach where the initiative to design tasks, cognition and relational relationships comes from the employees themselves.

The job identity model proposed by Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001) is the first job crafting model developed. According to this model, employees apply job crafting behavior by: 1) changing job boundaries by increasing or decreasing tasks, 2) modifying social aspects by improving relationships with other employees, superiors and customers, 3) modifying cognitive aspects of work so that employees have a positive perception of their work. Based on the job identity model, job crafting implementation practices in the workplace include 3 aspects of change as follows: (1) Task Crafting is an effort by employees to modify task boundaries by changing the shape, scope and or changing the number of activities undertaken by employees, 2) Relational crafting is an effort by employees to change relationship boundaries by improving the quality and number, superiors and customers and 3) cognitive crafting is an employee's effort to change cognitive boundaries which means that employees change their perception of the work done.

Meanwhile, other researchers developed the Job Demands-Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) as the basis of the conceptualization of job crafting (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Referring to this concept of thinking, employees will carry out job crafting with the aim of balancing between the demands and resources owned (Wang, Demerouti, & Bakker, 2017). Based on this logic, Tims, Bakker, and Derks (2013) developed job crafting measurement dimensions that include: increasing structural job resources, increasing social job resources, increasing challenging job demands, and decreasing hindering job demands.

Job Crafting and Job Satisfaction

The relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction is based on the theory of self-determination proposed by Ryan & Deci (2000). Referring to the theory of self-determination, individuals need autonomy and a sense of connection with others in a social environment. Job crafting task and relational crafting make employees have autonomy and feel more connected to their colleagues, which will ultimately increase job satisfaction. Through the

implementation of job crafting employees feel meaningfulness and satisfaction in their work. Another Alternative, referring to the Job Demands-Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), employees feel the need to balance work demands and resources in order to match their preferences and skills. The match between the skills possessed and the demands of the task will lead to a feeling of satisfaction when working. Research conducted by Cheng and O-Yang (2018) found job crafting variables have a positive influence on job satisfaction. Oerlemans and Bakker (2018) found that daily job crafting has a positive effect on job satisfaction, because employees who do job crafting can meet certain basic psychological needs. Based on these thoughts, the research hypothesis developed is:

H1: Job crafting positively affects job satisfaction.

Employee Engagement

The concept of employee engagement was proposed by William Kahn in 1990. employee engagement is a psychological condition that arises when an individual feels emotionally and cognitively connected to their job. According to Kahn, (1990), there are three dimensions of employee engagement, namely: 1) affective attachment: the individual feels satisfaction and happiness in doing his job, and feels that his work is important to him, 2) Cognitive attachment: the individual understands the goals and values of the organization, and feels that his work is consistent with these goals and values, 3) behavioral attachment: the individual is actively involved in his work and feels that he has control over his work.

Meanwhile, Schaufeli, *et al.*, 2006 defines employee engagement as an individual's positive behaviour at work that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. The dimension of work engagement refers to the UWES instrument developed by Schaufeli, *et al.*, 2006 which includes: 1) vigor/enthusiasm: the willingness of employees to invest effort in the work and persevere in the face of job difficulties, 2) dedication : the employee's full involvement in the work and the feeling that the work done is important and the sense of enthusiasm, inspired, proud, 3) absorption : a characteristic of employees who have full concentration and feel cool while working so that time passes quickly when working, and find it difficult to break away from work. Based on the thinking of Schaufeli, *et*

al., (2006), Zahoor, (2021) states that work attachment is a form of Affective motivation that can be described by positive work behavior shown through vigor, dedication, and absorption.

Job Crafting and Employee Engagement

Job crafting refers to the process by which employees actively change their tasks, relationships, and perceptions of their work to create greater meaning and purpose in their work. The concept was introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton, (2001) and has emerged as a popular research topic in Organizational Psychology. Kahn, (1990) developed The Theory of employee engagement, which refers to the emotional relationship between employees and their work. According to this theory, when employees feel engaged to their jobs, they tend to feel a clear sense of purpose and meaning in their work, and they will be more motivated, high-performing, and feel satisfied with their work. There are several studies that have shown a link between job crafting and employee engagement. Ahuja and Chaturvedi, (2017) found that employees involved in job crafting tend to have higher levels of employee engagement. In addition, Wrzesniewski, *et al.*, (2013) found that job crafting increase employee engagement by allowing employees feel more connected to their work and perceive their work as more meaningful. Research conducted by Zahoor, (2021) shows results that job crafting can significantly and positively affect employee engagement. In line with research conducted by Zhang and Li, (2020), job crafting is positively related to employee engagement, if employees are able to redesign their jobs, employees can create a pleasant work environment so that employees will be more enthusiastic, dedicated and soluble in completing their tasks. Research conducted by Nissinen, *et al.*, (2022) also showed results that job crafting has an influence on job attachment to one company. The presentation directs the development of hypotheses as follows:

H2: Job crafting positively influences job attachment

Employee Engagement and Job Satisfaction

The relationship between employee engagement and job satisfaction is based on the theory of social exchange proposed by Blau, (1986). When employees are tied to their work they work wholeheartedly so that the expected performance can be achieved and even exceeded. This causes employees to receive high appreciation through the social exchange of rewards from the company so

that employees feel satisfied. Job satisfaction is a situation where employees have a positive feeling for their work experience and life (Demerouti and Cropanzono, 2010). Meanwhile, the employee's engage to his job explains the ability and willingness to carry out the work (Demerouti and Cropanzono, 2010). A person who has a high level of employee engagement tends to have higher job satisfaction because the employee is willing and has a high ability to carry out his work (Cankir and Arikan, 2019). Employees who are engaged and who believe in the values of the organization will in most cases be satisfied with their work (Thangaraj, 2020). Vorina, Simonic and Vlasova, (2017), Jaiswhal, Pathak and Kumari, (2017) found that employee engagement had a positive effect on job satisfaction. This is because they feel that their work has a clear meaning and purpose. In addition, employees who are tied to work tend to have high enthusiasm and dedication in carrying out their duties and focus on their work. All of these things cause employees to be able to complete tasks well, resulting in increased job satisfaction (Noercahyo, Maarif, and Sumertajaya, 2021). Therefore, the hypothesis developed is:

H3: job attachment positively affects job satisfaction.

The Role of Employee Engagement as Mediator in the Relationship between Job Crafting and Job Satisfaction

Job crafting has a direct influence on job satisfaction. The relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction is based on the self-determination theory proposed by Ryan & Deci, (2000) and the Job Demands-Resources Model (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). Employees who do job crafting have autonomy and a sense of connection with others in a social environment. Employees also need to balance work demands and resources in order to match their preferences and skills. Having autonomy, connecting with others while working and feeling a good fit between the skills and the demands of the task will lead to a feeling of satisfaction when working. Research conducted by Cheng and O-Yang, (2018) and Oerlemans and Bakker, (2018) found job crafting variables have a positive influence on job satisfaction.

Based on the demands and resources model perspective, job crafting has been associated with various employee outcomes through employee engagement (Tims, *et al.*, 2013). It can be said that Job crafting has an indirect influence on job

satisfaction through employee engagement. Ogbuanya and Chukwuedo, (2017) found employee engagement mediates the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. This study therefore coincides with this author in stating the importance of employee engagement as a strategy to ensure that craft work generates adequate levels of job satisfaction. Furthermore employee engagement was found to fully mediate the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction (Liorente and Topa, 2019). Villajos, García-Ael, and Topa, (2019) explain the role of

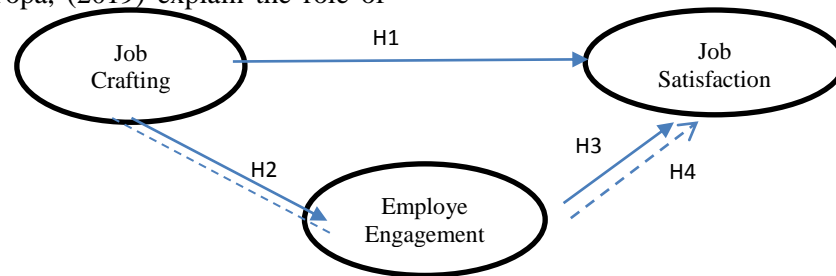


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

CONCLUSION

After the COVID-19 pandemic, many changes have occurred in the world of work, including more frequent job transitions. The facts show that the Covid 19 pandemic has increase the level of job dissatisfaction among Indonesian workers caused by changes in duties and responsibilities, increased workload, and a changing work environment. Meanwhile, it has been believed that job satisfaction is an important variable for the organization. Job satisfaction affects the effectiveness of the organization through its ability to influence employee outcomes such as performance, commitment and intention to leave. Therefore, the right strategy is needed as an effort to increase job satisfaction. In accordance with the problems that have recently been faced by many organizations, this paper proposes a conceptual model to improve job satisfaction by involving variable job crafting and employee engagement. This study aims to analyze the conceptual model of the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction through employee engagement in Indonesia. Research on job crafting is still limited in Indonesia so that this research can close the gap. It has been explained in the theoretical basis that job crafting behavior can affect employee job satisfaction and employee attachment. Furthermore, this paper emphasizes the important role of employee engagement as a variable that mediates the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. This study is useful for subsequent researchers and human resource management

employee engagement as mediator in the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. These findings show the importance of employee engagement. When employees do job crafting, employees feel satisfied. Referring to the above explanation of the hypothesis developed is:

H4: employee engagement mediates the effect of job crafting on job satisfaction

Based on the above explanation, the research framework was developed as follows:

practitioners in order to develop strategies in improving employee job satisfaction.

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