



## **JOB CRAFTING IN LOGISTICS EMPLOYEES: A MODEL PROPOSITION**

***Büşra MÜCELDİLİ***

Yıldız Technical University, Turkey

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### **Abstract:**

*This study investigates job crafting and makes contributions to management and logistics literature. The first contribution is theoretical. Job crafting is a crucial concept in organizations for today's employee. However, there is inconsistencies among job crafting conceptualizations. Secondly job crafting has been examined in aspect of logistics employees. In this conceptual study a model has been proposed. Accordingly, we propose a relationship between environmental turbulence and job crafting. Further, this study proposes the associations among job crafting and health and performance (i.e., task performance and contextual performance).*

### **Keywords:**

Job Crafting, Employee Health, Environmental Turbulence, Employee Performance, Logistics Employees

### **1. Introduction**

Logistics services plays an important role both interregional and international trade. Logistics is a comprehensive concept which includes transportation, customs clearance, storage, handing, insurance, packaging, stocks and inventory management, customer relations management and customer specific services (Sezer and Abasiz, 2017). Specifically, the effect of post pandemic era the roles of transportation and supply chain integration and the role of logistics becoming more challenging. Hence, organizations need to investigate the success factors of logistics and supply chain management. For example, Vallee and Dircksen (2017) emphasized that the success of distributing logistics provide competitive advantage by providing rights goods, and right time. As Wright et al (1994) emphasized human resources is a potential source of competitive advantage and organizational success. In the literature the studies about human side of logistics are nascent. The studies focus on market orientation, environmental challenges (Lee, 2010) and economic development (Lean et al, 2014). Hence, it is important to investigate the role of human side of logistics for gaining competitive advantage, superior performance, and organizational success.

Furthermore, another reason of the human side of the logistics is about the increasing impact of automation and digitization. The new era of business life with the increasing of technological developments requires new skills. Organizations should design flexible jobs which provides to employees proactively change their tasks and roles (Grant and Parker, 2009). In other words, it is crucial for the firms focus on job design and adjust various job characteristics for gaining success (Bakker et al., 2020). The changes in business work environment and logistics employees foster to redesign the jobs. Redesigning tasks and interactions enhance to improvement employee's needs, abilities and preferences (Niessen et al., 2016).

Additionally, new ecosystems in the logistics sectors of countries such as India and China constitute new business opportunities (McKinsey, 2019) and new job opportunities. For instance, Lean et al. (2014) demonstrated the increasing intensity number of employees who works in transportation, storage, postal, telecommunication. These new job opportunities require new talents and skills. Lin and Chang (2018) investigated the employee's skills in logistics, and they demonstrated that communication, customer and strategy management skill, global logistics and supply chain management skill and logistics information management skill is important. International market trend, supply chain management and information technology are changing the way of logistics is practiced and taught.

Also, logistics sector is very complex and volatile sector. Employees need a coping mechanism for completing their task. In this way, job crafting can be used a form of coping with stressful job demands and difficult situation (Masood, et al. 2021). Job crafting enhances to meaningfulness, engagement and satisfaction to logistics sector

employees (Demerouti, 2014). For example, Tims et al. (2015) emphasized that engaged employees' job performance and performance ratings from their supervisor and clients are in the highest level.

In the present study, we use job crafting theory for investigating the success factor of logistic employees. Our aim is to foster proactive behavior at logistic employees. The paper shows how, when, and why logistics employees craft their jobs and the role of crafting building new work identities and work meanings in logistics employees (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). For example, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) showed different examples from different sectors, including, health sector, beauty sector, IT sector and refreshment sector. However, there isn't evidence about logistic employees.

Additionally, the study underline the motivation of the logistics employees by finding meaningful jobs in their organizations. As Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) emphasized in the organizations the desire of controlling and meaning, having a positive self-image and connection with others foster job crafting activities.

The purpose of this conceptual paper is to underline the importance of job crafting and Fig.1 shows the conceptual framework on job crafting. In this paper as emphasized by Gilson and Goldberg (2015) logical arguments has been developed and proposed a new relationship between constructs. In this conceptual paper theoretical and empirical studies in the literature has been reviewed. The article has been organized around four sections. Firstly, literature review is enhanced by defining job crafting and explaining different theoretical perspectives. In the second section antecedent and consequences of job crafting has been discussed and offered relationships between variables. In this conceptual model environmental turbulence indicates as an antecedent of job crafting. Previous research on antecedents of job crafting has mainly on employee specific factors (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). In the last section discussion and future research take part.

## 2. Theoretical Framework

### 2.1. Job Crafting Conceptualization and Measurement

In the literature job crafting have been defined and operationalized by various ways. The most famous one has been defined by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001). Job crafting refers to physical and cognitive changes employees making for task or relational boundaries of their work (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). In the literature there are two main theoretical perspectives for explaining job crafting. The first one is composed of by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) which we showed above. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) indicated three types of job crafting namely, task, relational and cognitive crafting. Task crafting shows the changings in the scope and type of tasks by altering in the number or form of work (Masood, et al. 2021). Relational crafting indicates the changings in the interactions between employee and their networks (Masood, et al. 2021). Cognitive crafting demonstrates the changings employee's cognitive boundaries of the job (Masood, et al. 2021).

The second perspective belongs Tim et al. (2012) study (Makikangas and Schaufeli, 2021). The base of the Tim et al. (2012) is Job-Demands Resources (JDR) model. This model has two categories namely, job demands and job resources. Job resources shows growth opportunities in the job and job demands shows requirements of the jobs (Masood, et al. 2021). According to Tims et al. (2012) job crafting involves four dimensions, structural job resources, social job resources, challenging job demands, hindering job demands.

In her study Demerouti (2014) compare both theoretical perspectives and she underlined that Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) focused on meaningfulness in job on the other hand, JD-R perspective focused on employee motivation and health. The common point of perspective is changing work for handling problems and finding novel solutions.

Additionally, it is important to note that job crafting has been operationalized by various types. Although studies about job crafting were qualitative at the beginning, in the last decade various studies attempted to develop scales for measuring job crafting. There are various measures for operationalizing job crafting such as, Dutch Crafting Scale, Job Crafting Questionnaire, Job Crafting Measure and the Overarching Job Crafting Scale and Combined Job Crafting Scale (2020 Hu et al.). Dutch job crafting scale was developed by Tims et al. (2012) and measured with the 21 items that measures increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands. Job Crafting Questionnaire was developed by Slep and Vella-Brodrick (2013) and measured with 15 items that measures task crafting, cognitive crafting, relational crafting. Job crafting measure was developed by Weseler and Niessen (2016) and measured by 14 items that measures task crafting, relational crafting and cognitive crafting. Overarching job crafting scale was measured by Vanbelle (2017)

through four items. Lastly, combined job crafting scale was developed by Bizzi (2017). Bizzi (2017) revised and adapted Leana et al. (2009) scale. Bizzi (2017) measured job crafting by eight items.

Furthermore, Bruning and Campion (2019) underlined the types of job crafting, namely, work role expansion, (i.e., enlargement of work, expanding the task), social expansion (i.e., changing the relation aspect of the work, increasing social connection or improve communication), work role reduction (i.e. reducing the requirements of work, delegating), work organization (i.e. reconfiguration of resources), adoption (i.e. integrating new technology, new knowledge), metacognition (i.e. general cognitive self-management practices), withdrawal (i.e. disjoin task, relationship or aspect of the work context).

In this study we focus on two general categories when we studies outcome variable: performance and health. Performance is investigated via task performance and contextual performance. Task performance indicates that create/support product or service in organizations and these behaviors lead to firm’s success (Landay and Harms., 2019). Contextual performance indicates social and psychological support in the organization for enhancing success. Contextual performance is called as OCB- organizational citizenship behavior- and emphasizes interpersonal and motivational aspect of employee’s behavior (Landay and Harms., 2019). Also, health is investigated via psychological and physical health.

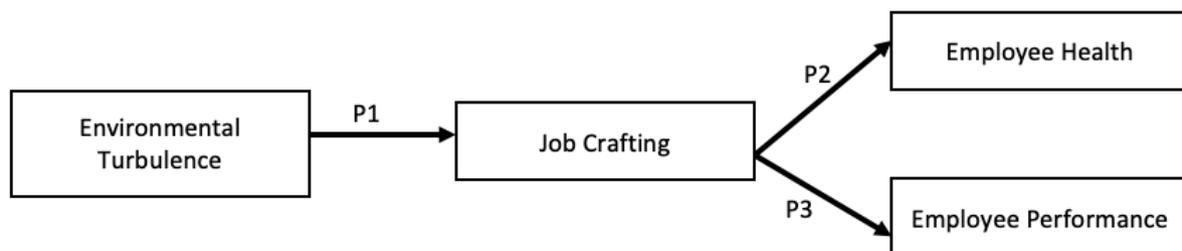


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

## 2.2. Antecedents of Job Crafting

### 2.2.1. The Relationship between Environmental Turbulence and Job Crafting

In the literature there is significant interest of market and technology turbulence due to unexpected and fast changings. Environmental turbulence refers to market turbulence, technological turbulence, and competitive industry (Turulja and Bajgoric, 2019). Accordingly, market turbulence indicates the rate of customer change in their product or service preferences, demands and fluctuations in market trend (Turulja and Bajgoric, 2019, Seбето and Hon, 2020). Technological turbulence indicates the rate of technological change in the industry (Jaworski and Kohli, 1993). Technologically turbulent environments require to develop new skills for challenging future demands. Logistics employees should improve and adapt their work changing customers’ demands and technological advancements such as frontline workers and knowledge workers (Folger et al., 2021). Also, in fast changing market and technological environment, logistics employees need to provide new solutions. Hence, we propose that:

P1: Environmental turbulence is positively related to job crafting.

## 2.3. Consequences of Job Crafting

### 2.3.1. The Relationship between Job Crafting and Health

In the literature there are evidences the relationship among work and health. For example, Parent-Thirion (2007) indicated that health problems such as pain, headache, cardiovascular problems are related with work environments and demands. Additionally, Duffy et al. (2021) emphasized that positive and negative workplace experiences are related with physical outcomes. For example, positive experiences such as working in regular hours, supportive climate or workplace safety leads to greater physical health, on the contrary high job demands, excessive work hours and deadlines cause poorer physical health. Similarly, the psychological health of employees is influenced by working conditions. For instance, hospitality employees who faces with demanding customers and pressures lead to stress and burnout. Tian et al (2022) underlined the importance of job crafting for employee’s psychological well-being. Job

crafting also helps employees work family enrichment (Loi et al., 2020) to associated with physical and mental health (McNall et al., 2010).

Hence, we propose that:

P2: Job crafting is positively related to employee physical and psychological health.

### **2.3.2. The Relationship between Job Crafting and Performance**

We suggest that job crafting influences both task and contextual performance. Job crafting provides engaged employees, and these behaviors are important for job-employee related outcomes (i.e. employee performance, job satisfaction, service recovery performance). (Cheng and O-Yang, 2018, Karatepe and Eslamlou). For example, Wang and Chen (2020) emphasized that employees optimize their work through their own knowledge, skills, abilities, and preferences which influences positively employee performance. They evaluated employee performance through task performance (objective measurement of performance).

Hence, we propose that:

P3: Job crafting is positively related to employee task performance and contextual performance.

## **3. Discussion**

Our conceptual model of job crafting provides new perspectives for management and logistics scholars. We propose that job crafting is self-initiated behaviors and provides employee's engagement for aligning their jobs. By highlighting the role of job crafting, this study enhances a framework for researchers and managers to understand the association among environmental turbulence and positive outcomes (i.e. employee health and employee performance).

### **3.1. Theoretical and Practical Implications**

It is important to note that there are different theoretical lenses for explaining job crafting. Additionally, we showed that there are different scales were developed for operationalized job crafting. There are inconsistencies and overlapping among these explanations. We follow Hu et al. (2020) and investigate and integrate different theoretical views on job crafting.

In this study we follow Duffy et al. (2021) and provide to answer the effect of workplace experiences and environment on the employee's health.

Beside theoretical contribution our research makes contributions for practitioners (i.e., logistics managers, supply chain managers and stakeholders). First, it can contribute to understand health issues in workplace. Recognition of the importance of self-initiated change behaviors fosters employees' physical health and psychological health (well-being). From this research logistics management can understand the role of job crafting to enhance positive employee outcomes in workplace.

Moreover, logistic management should be aware that job crafting is important for gaining superior performance and building energetic and vital organizations. In this respect, job crafting promotes objective and subjective performance through meaningfulness for work.

Lastly, supply chain management and logistics management should organize extra training programs for a better understanding of job crafting, cognitive and behavior crafting.

### **3.2. Limitations and Future Research**

This study proposed that job crafting is related to employee health and performance. It would be beneficial show the impact of job crafting on employee outcomes. Also, the mediating effect of job crafting can be investigated the relationship between environmental turbulence and employee outcomes.

Moreover, future research should investigate demographic differences in gender, work status and generations and educational background. Specifically, in the literature there are evidence about the differences among work values preferences between generations (Winter and Jackson, 2016).

In this study, we argued positive aspects of job crafting however job crafting can lead to negative consequences. In this sense, the negative consequences of job crafting such as turnover intention and burnout can be examined.

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