

Impact of Job Crafting on Faculty Affective Job Satisfaction: An Empirical Study

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Abstract

In today's dynamic academic landscape, faculty members face multifaceted roles that demand adaptability and resilience. This study investigates the impact of job crafting on faculty affective job satisfaction within the context of state and central universities in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. Affective job satisfaction, reflecting the emotional attachment and fulfillment faculty derive from their roles, is critical for fostering motivation, productivity, and retention. Drawing on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and self-determination theory, this research explores how task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting influence faculty members' emotional connection to their work. The findings reveal that all three dimensions of job crafting significantly enhance affective job satisfaction, with task crafting emerging as the strongest predictor. This highlights the importance of empowering faculty to redesign their tasks to align with their strengths and preferences. Relational crafting and cognitive crafting also positively impact satisfaction by emphasizing the value of workplace relationships and reframing perceptions of work, respectively. The study underscores the relevance of job crafting as a proactive strategy for addressing the challenges of the academic profession. It provides actionable insights for academic institutions to create supportive environments that empower faculty to shape their roles meaningfully. These findings have broader implications for improving faculty well-being, enhancing institutional performance, and promoting the overall quality of education.

Keywords: Job crafting, Task crafting, Relational crafting, Cognitive crafting, Affective job satisfaction.

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I. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving academic landscape, the role of faculty members has become increasingly multifaceted, demanding not only subject-matter expertise but also adaptability to institutional and societal changes (Bhutta et al., 2018). Faculty members often face challenges such as heavy workloads, evolving pedagogical demands, and the need to maintain work-life balance (Oubibi et al., 2022). These challenges, coupled with the dynamic nature of higher education institutions, have underscored the importance of understanding factors that contribute to faculty well-being and job satisfaction (McNaughtan et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2024). Job satisfaction, particularly affective job satisfaction, which reflects an individual's emotional attachment and positive feelings toward their work, plays a crucial role in fostering motivation, productivity, and retention among faculty (Locke, 1976). Affective job satisfaction extends beyond mere contentment with extrinsic job attributes, delving into the intrinsic emotional fulfillment derived from one's role (Spector, 1997). Understanding the antecedents of affective job satisfaction, therefore, becomes pivotal for academic institutions aiming to nurture a supportive and fulfilling work environment for their faculty (Jennings & Greenberg, 2014; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003). One such antecedent that has gained attention in organizational behavior research is job crafting. Job crafting refers to the proactive adjustments individuals make in their work roles to align tasks, relationships, and perceptions with their preferences, skills, and values (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Rooted in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and self-determination theory, job crafting emphasizes the agency of employees in shaping their work experiences to enhance engagement and satisfaction (Tims et al., 2013; Ryan & Deci, 2000). While the concept has been explored extensively in corporate settings, its application in academic institutions remains relatively under-researched, particularly in relation to affective job satisfaction (Leana et al., 2009; Cheng et al., 2016; McNaughtan et al., 2021; Khan et al., 2024). This study seeks to bridge this gap by examining the impact of job crafting on the affective job satisfaction of faculty members working in various state and central universities of Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir. By exploring dimensions such as task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting, the research aims to unravel how these proactive strategies influence faculty members' emotional connection to their roles. Furthermore, the study considers the unique dynamics of academic institutions, including autonomy, collaborative opportunities, and institutional culture, to provide a nuanced understanding of job crafting's relevance in this context. The findings of this

research are expected to offer valuable insights for academic administrators and policymakers, enabling them to design interventions that empower faculty to take ownership of their roles and enhance their affective job satisfaction. Such interventions not only contribute to the professional growth and well-being of faculty members but also have broader implications for the quality of education and institutional success. Keeping all this in view, the study objectives are delineated as below:

- 1) To examine the impact of task crafting on faculty affective job satisfaction,
- 2) To investigate the impact of relational crafting on faculty affective job satisfaction, and
- 3) To examine the impact of cognitive crafting on faculty affective job satisfaction.

II. Literature Review

Job crafting, introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), refers to the self-initiated modifications employees make to their job tasks, relationships, and cognitive perceptions (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). This proactive approach to job design empowers individuals to align their roles with personal skills, interests, and values, fostering a sense of ownership and engagement (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). The concept is rooted in the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007) and self-determination theory (Ryan & Deci, 2000), emphasizing the role of agency in improving workplace experiences. Job crafting is categorized into three dimensions: task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Task crafting involves altering the nature or structure of job responsibilities to make them more meaningful. Relational crafting focuses on reshaping interpersonal interactions to enhance workplace relationships. Cognitive crafting pertains to reframing perceptions of work to derive greater purpose and satisfaction (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Tims et al., 2013). These dimensions have been found to contribute significantly to job satisfaction, engagement, and overall well-being (Petrou et al., 2012; Berg et al., 2013; Kim et al., 2018; Noesgaard & Jorgensen, 2022; Khan et al., 2024). However, research examining job crafting's specific impact on affective job satisfaction, an emotional connection and positive feelings toward one's job is limited, especially in academic contexts.

Faculty members in higher education face unique challenges, such as balancing teaching, research, and administrative duties, which often lead to stress and dissatisfaction (Oubibi et al., 2022). Job crafting has been recognized as a potential strategy to address these challenges and enhance faculty well-being. For instance, task crafting allows faculty to adapt course designs or research agendas to align with their expertise and interests, leading to greater professional fulfillment (Gordon et al., 2018). Further, the act of crafting task boundaries, whether individually or collaboratively was found to have a significant role in enhancing the affective satisfaction of teachers working in various schools across Spain, ultimately contributing to their overall well-being (Llorente-Alonso & Topa, 2019). Empirical evidence underlines the significant positive impact of relational crafting on affective job satisfaction. Bhutta et al., (2018) found that when faculty members in various universities in China engaged in crafting their social and relational boundaries, it significantly enhanced their affective job satisfaction. Çınar & Basım, (2022) further emphasized the importance of relational crafting in enhancing employee satisfaction by developing a greater desire to remain with their organization. Cognitive crafting, where faculty reframe their roles to focus on the broader societal impact of their work, has also been associated with heightened affective job satisfaction (Niessen et al., 2016). Further, the study by Yepes-Baldó et al., (2018) also confirmed a strong positive association between cognitive crafting and the psychological well-being of nurses working in various hospitals across Spain. This accentuates the importance of cognitive crafting in developing psychological resilience and well-being among employees, further contributing to a more satisfying and fulfilling work experience. Despite these promising findings, the literature highlights a significant gap in understanding how job crafting directly influences affective job satisfaction among faculty members. Addressing this gap is crucial for academic institutions seeking to create supportive environments that enable faculty to thrive emotionally and professionally. The interplay of job crafting dimensions within the academic profession further underscores its importance. Studies have suggested that faculty autonomy and academic freedom provide fertile ground for job crafting (Berg et al., 2013). On the basis of the above cited literature, the present study posits that:

H1: *Task crafting has a significant positive impact on affective job satisfaction of faculty members.*

H2: *Relational crafting has a significant positive impact on affective job satisfaction of faculty members.*

H3: *Cognitive crafting has a significant positive impact on affective job satisfaction of faculty members.*

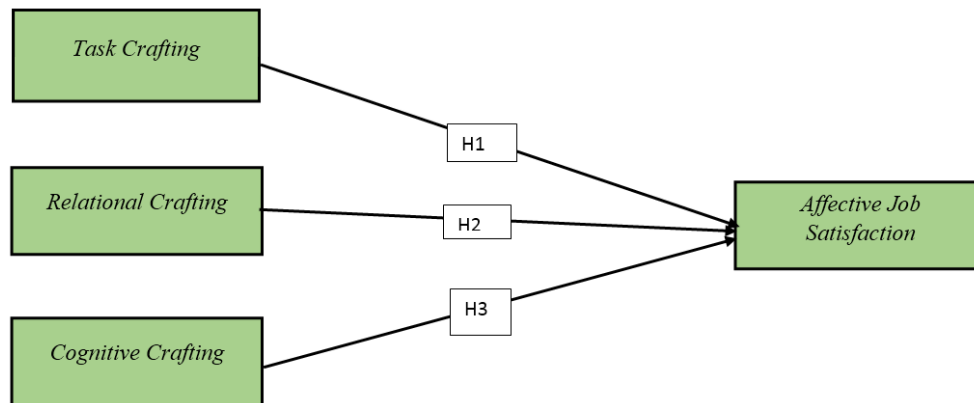


Figure 1: Conceptual Model of the Study

III. Research Design

3.1. Respondents and Sampling Design

The respondents of the study comprised of 300 faculty members (Professors, Associate Professors, Assistant professors, and Lecturers) working in various state and central universities across the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir. A total of 325 faculty members were contacted for the present study by mailing the questionnaires to their respective mail ids. Out of 325 faculty members, only 300 responded, thereby representing a response rate of 92.3 %. Non-sampling technique that is convenience sampling was employed to collect data from the respondents.

3.2. Measures

The five point likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was used to measure the respective constructs of the study. The facets of job crafting were measured using the scale developed by Slemp and Vella brodrick, (2013). The construct of task crafting was measured using 4 items, relational crafting was also measured using 4 items and cognitive crafting were measured using 5 items. The construct of affective job satisfaction was measured using 5 item scale developed by Thompson & Phua, (2012). In addition to these 18 items, demographic information of the respondents with respect to their gender, age, work experience, and designation was also obtained. Thus, the final questionnaire comprised of total 22 items.

3.3. Respondent’s profile

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Variable	N	%	Cumulative %
Gender			
Male	217	72	72
Female	83	28	100
Age			
30-35 Years	124	41	41
36-40 Years	59	20	61
41-45 Years	52	17	78
Above 45 Years	65	22	100
Work Experience			
0-10 Years	171	57	57
11-20 Years	82	27	84
Above 20 years	47	16	100
Designation			
Professors	40	13	13
Associate Professors	45	15	28
Assistant Professors	182	61	89
Lecturers	33	11	100

The demographic profile of the respondents indicates a predominance of males (72%) compared to females (28%). In terms of age distribution, the majority of respondents (41%) fall within the 30-35 years age group, followed by those aged above 45 years (22%), 36-40 years (20%), and 41-45 years (17%). Regarding work experience, a significant portion (57%) have 0-10 years of experience, while 27% have 11-20 years, and

16% have over 20 years of experience. The sample is also heavily represented by Assistant Professors (61%), with lower proportions of Associate Professors (15%), Professors (13%), and Lecturers (11%). This distribution reflects a diverse yet younger and less experienced academic workforce, with a focus on junior and mid-level designations.

IV. Data Analysis

The data was analyzed with the help of SPSS software package version 23. The analysis of data was done in two stages. Descriptive statistics and correlation of respective constructs were assessed at the first stage. The second stage involved assessment of the structural model to substantiate the proposed hypotheses.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix

Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4
<i>Task Crafting</i>	3.468	.685	1			
<i>Relational Crafting</i>	3.397	.651	.452**	1		
<i>Cognitive Crafting</i>	3.396	.632	.642**	.433**	1	
<i>Affective Job Satisfaction</i>	3.393	.736	.521**	.412**	.485**	1

Note: P<.01**

The mean scores displayed in table 2 above indicate moderate levels across all constructs, with Task Crafting having the highest average (3.468) and variability (SD = 0.685), followed closely by Relational Crafting (mean = 3.397, SD = 0.651), Cognitive Crafting (mean = 3.396, SD = 0.632), and Affective Job Satisfaction (mean = 3.393, SD = 0.736). The results displayed in table 2 further indicate that the dimensions of job crafting (Task, Relational, and Cognitive) are positively related to Affective Job Satisfaction, with Task Crafting showing the strongest relationship. This suggests that engaging in crafting behaviors, particularly task-related adjustments, is associated with higher levels of job satisfaction (Leana et al., 2009; Cheng et al., 2016; Kim et al., 2018; Khan et al., 2024).

4.1. Multicollinearity

To access the issue of multicollinearity in the data, the present study utilized VIF and Tolerance values (Kutner et al., 2004). The table 3 presents the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values for the paths from Task Crafting (TC), Relational Crafting (RC), and Cognitive Crafting (CC) to Affective Job Satisfaction (AJS), which help assess multicollinearity in the model. The VIF values for all paths are well below the commonly accepted threshold of 5, with TC → AJS having a VIF of 1.816, RC → AJS at 1.314, and CC → AJS at 1.779 (Hair et al., 2006). These low VIF values indicate that there is no severe multicollinearity among the predictors, meaning that each construct (TC, RC, and CC) contributes distinct and independent variance to the prediction of AJS (Hair et al., 2006). Additionally, the Tolerance values, which are the reciprocals of the VIFs, are all well above the 0.2 threshold, with values of 0.551 for TC → AJS, 0.761 for RC → AJS, and 0.562 for CC → AJS (Fornell & Bookstein, 1982). These tolerance values suggest that a large proportion of the variance in each predictor is not explained by the other predictors, further confirming the absence of problematic multicollinearity. Overall, the VIF and tolerance results demonstrate that the model is free from significant multicollinearity, ensuring the reliability of the regression analysis and the validity of the relationships between job crafting behaviors and affective job satisfaction.

Table 3: Multicollinearity Diagnostics (VIF)

Paths	VIF	Tolerance
<i>TC → AJS</i>	1.816	.551
<i>RC → AJS</i>	1.314	.761
<i>CC → AJS</i>	1.779	.562

Note: TC = Task crafting, RC = Relational crafting, CC = Cognitive crafting, AJS= Affective Job Satisfaction.

4.2. Structural Model Assessment

After the assessment of descriptive statistics, structural paths were determined to evaluate the study hypotheses. The results depicted in table 4 clearly exhibit that all the three dimensions of job crafting (task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting) had a significant positive impact on faculty affective job satisfaction, thereby confirming H1-H3. The regression analysis results highlight the significant positive relationships between Task Crafting (TC), Relational Crafting (RC), and Cognitive Crafting (CC) as predictors of Affective Job Satisfaction (AJS). Among the predictors, Task Crafting was found to have the strongest impact on AJS ($\beta = .303$, $t = 4.751$, $p \text{ value} = .000$), indicating that proactive modifications to tasks play a crucial

role in enhancing employees' emotional satisfaction with their jobs. Relational Crafting also contributes positively ($\beta=.184$, $t =3.383$, $p = .001$), suggesting that building and improving workplace relationships moderately enhance job satisfaction. Similarly, Cognitive Crafting ($\beta=.210$, $t= 3.329$, $p =.001$) shows a significant positive relationship with AJS, emphasizing the importance of reframing thoughts about work to boost satisfaction. Further, the model's R^2 value of 0.336 indicates that 33.6% of the variance in AJS is explained by these three dimensions of job crafting, highlighting their substantial collective influence on job satisfaction while acknowledging that other factors may also contribute. Overall, the findings underscore the importance of fostering job crafting behaviors, particularly task crafting as a strategy to enhance employees' affective connection and satisfaction with their roles.

Table 4: Structural Path Results

Paths	Beta Coefficients	Standard Deviation	T values	P values
<i>TC</i> → <i>AJS</i>	.303	.069	4.751	.000**
<i>RC</i> → <i>AJS</i>	.184	.061	3.383	.001**
<i>CC</i> → <i>AJS</i>	.210	.074	3.329	.001**
R square	.336			

Note: **= $p < .001$

V. Discussion

The present study investigated the impact of the three dimensions of job crafting (Task Crafting (TC), Relational Crafting (RC), and Cognitive Crafting (CC)) on faculty affective job satisfaction (AJS). The findings provide empirical support for the hypothesized relationships (H1-H3) and offer meaningful insights into how faculty members' proactive role modifications contribute to their emotional connection and satisfaction with their jobs. Task Crafting emerged as the strongest predictor of AJS, with a β value of 0.303. This finding underscores the critical role of faculty members' proactive engagement in reshaping their tasks to align with personal preferences and capabilities. The high β and significant t-value ($t = 4.751$, $p < 0.001$) highlight that when faculty members take initiative in redesigning their work processes, they derive greater emotional satisfaction. This result corroborates with earlier studies of (leana et al., 2009, Cheng et al., 2016, Kim et al., 2018, Khan et al., 2024) who suggest task autonomy and control over work processes enhance job satisfaction by fostering a sense of ownership and accomplishment. From a practical standpoint, institutions can benefit from encouraging faculty to identify and pursue tasks that resonate with their strengths and interests, thereby creating a more engaged and satisfied workforce. Thus, hypothesis 1 was supported. The findings further revealed that relational ($\beta = .184$, $t= 3.383$, $p=.001$) and cognitive ($\beta=.210$, $t= 3.329$, $p=.001$) crafting both significantly predicted faculty affective job satisfaction. The results corroborate with the findings of Mcnaughtan et al., 2021, Noesgaard & Jergenson, 2022, who confirmed that engaging in crafting the social and cognitive boundaries of jobs positively impacts employee job satisfaction and work commitment. This suggests that through nurturing a culture of collaboration and mutual respect, academic institutions can leverage relational crafting to improve faculty satisfaction and create supportive environments. The results further suggest that when faculty engage in cognitive crafting, such as perceiving their teaching as a way to shape future leaders or viewing research as contributing to societal development they experience greater emotional satisfaction. The study's R^2 value of 0.336 indicates that the three dimensions of job crafting collectively explain 33.6% of the variance in AJS. This substantial contribution underscores the importance of fostering job crafting behaviors in academic settings. While the results provide valuable insights, the study's cross-sectional design and reliance on self-reported data suggest the need for longitudinal and qualitative research to deepen understanding. Overall, the findings affirm the importance of job crafting as a strategy to enhance emotional satisfaction and organizational outcomes in academic settings.

VI. Limitations and Future Research Directions

While the study highlights the significant role of job crafting in enhancing faculty affective job satisfaction (AJS), several limitations warrant consideration. The cross-sectional design limits causal inference, and the reliance on self-reported data may introduce bias. Future studies could adopt longitudinal designs to explore the temporal effects of job crafting and include qualitative methods to capture deeper insights into faculty experiences. Second, the study was limited to faculty members from universities in the Union Territory of Jammu & Kashmir, which restricts the generalizability of the findings to broader populations. Future research should explore these variables across diverse contexts and settings to provide a more comprehensive understanding and enhance the applicability of the results.

VII. Conclusion

The findings reinforce the importance of task, relational, and cognitive crafting in enhancing faculty affective job satisfaction. Among the dimensions of job crafting, task crafting emerged as the strongest predictor of affective job satisfaction, highlighting the critical importance of enabling faculty to redesign their tasks in alignment with personal strengths and preferences. Relational crafting and cognitive crafting also demonstrated significant positive impacts, reflecting the importance of workplace relationships and reframing work perceptions in fostering emotional well-being. The study's focus on faculty members in the Union Territory of Jammu and Kashmir provides a unique context for understanding these dynamics within the evolving academic landscape. However, it also emphasizes the need for further research across diverse institutional and cultural settings to enhance the generalizability of these findings. In conclusion, this study bridges the gap in understanding the interplay between job crafting and affective job satisfaction in academic settings, offering actionable insights for fostering a supportive and fulfilling work environment for faculty.

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