

The Relationship Between Job Crafting and Intention to Leave: A Literature Review Study

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Abstract

This paper integrates data from various databases via a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) to thoroughly examine the relationship between job crafting and employees' intentions to leave. The research highlights that employees are an essential competitive asset for organizations, significantly contributing to their development and success. Given the intense competition in today's market, talent retention is a major challenge for many global enterprises. Thus, understanding and managing employee intentions to leave is of paramount importance. Job crafting, characterized as an employee-led method for redesigning work, has attracted substantial attention in Human Resource Management and Organizational Behavior studies. Studies show that, unlike traditional static job designs, job crafting empowers employees to shift from being passive recipients to becoming proactive participants. By engaging in self-directed and value-driven career management, employees are encouraged to tailor their job content to meet personal needs, which enhances job satisfaction, well-being, and engagement. This leads to improved individual and organizational performance, resulting in mutual benefits. Moreover, the findings suggest that job crafting serves as a key indicator of employee turnover intentions. Hence, encouraging employee involvement in job crafting can effectively lower turnover rates and significantly impact management practices. It offers a strategic approach to fostering employees' commitment to staying within the organization.

Keywords: Intention to Leave, Employee Turnover, Job Crafting, Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction.

Research Background

Employees play a vital role in the development and sustainability of an organization (Kumar, 2021). With social progress and increased competition, employee turnover rates have significantly risen in recent years, becoming one of the main challenges faced by human resources departments (M. Ikhwan Maulana Haeruddin et al., 2023). Indeed, studying employees' intentions to leave has been at the heart of organizational management research (Climek et al., 2022). According to Lazzari et al. (2022), intention to leave is defined as an employee's expressed willingness to leave the organization and seek new employment within a certain period; it is a significant indicator for predicting actual turnover behavior.

Many researchers have pointed out that intentions to leave or employee turnover constitute major issues for organizations (Aburumman et al., 2020), because intentions to leave are the best predictors of actual turnover behavior, reflecting individual attitudes towards the organization and serving as the focal point in studies on turnover problems (Huang & Zang, 2023). Therefore, addressing employee turnover from the perspective of understanding turnover intentions has become an urgent challenge for policymakers and management to tackle.

Job crafting primarily refers to the proactive behavior of employees in positively reshaping three aspects of their work: job tasks, relationships with organizational members, and overall perceptions of their job. Specifically, task crafting involves employees voluntarily altering the quantity, specifics, timing, and allocation of effort for their tasks; relational crafting pertains to changing the frequency or intensity of interactions with others; and cognitive crafting means adjusting one's own perspectives and feelings towards various aspects of the job (Sun & Du, 2023). Such self-initiated behaviors enable employees to gain higher senses of job meaning, engagement, and satisfaction (Qin et al., 2020). Research has shown that job crafting plays a crucial role in predicting employees' intentions to leave. Therefore, encouraging employee participation in job crafting activities can serve as an effective measure for organizations to reduce intentions to leave (Zhang & Li, 2020). Moreover, numerous studies both domestically and internationally consider job crafting as a bottom-up approach to job design, which exerts positive effects on employees and the organization (Xiao & Ke Junqun, 2020; Wang, 2022). Thus, when examining the relationship between variables influencing employees' intentions to leave, it is critical to focus on job crafting.

This study focuses on exploring the impact of job crafting on employees' intentions to leave. We systematically collect, analyze, and summarize existing research from the perspective of job crafting to investigate its effects on employees' intentions to leave. Our aim is to fill gaps in current research and provide targeted directions for future studies, delving into this new perspective to understand how job crafting influences employees' intentions to leave. Through this research, we aspire to offer more specific and practical management recommendations to organizations while enhancing the academic understanding of the relationship between job crafting and intentions to leave. Such efforts will contribute to the development of more effective employee management strategies, boosting employee satisfaction, and ultimately promoting the long-term stability and sustainable development of organizations. We employ a systematic literature review method to identify research gaps

and potential mechanisms and propose an agenda for future research. Adhering to these fundamental principles, this study endeavors to explore the following research questions:

Main Research Question

Does job crafting have a significant relationship with employees' intentions to leave?

Research Significance

Theoretical Significance: Through a systematic analysis and synthesis of existing literature, this study delves into the mechanisms through which job crafting affects employee turnover intentions. It constructs a theoretical framework suggesting that job crafting can diminish turnover intentions by enhancing employees' sense of work meaning, elevating job satisfaction, increasing job engagement, and improving performance. This framework provides a fresh perspective on the theoretical advancements in organizational behavior and human resource management, promoting a deeper understanding of the subject matter.

Practical Significance: This study highlights the positive impact of job crafting on reducing employee turnover intentions and offers practical guidance for organizations to promote proactive employee participation in this process. Research findings show that actively engaging in job crafting can enhance employees' sense of belonging and job satisfaction while effectively lowering their intention to leave. This dual benefit aids in talent retention and boosts organizational performance, ultimately leading to a win-win outcome for both the organization and its employees.

Research Methodology

To address the specific research questions, this study adopted a Systematic Literature Review (SLR) method. SLR emphasizes rigorous scientific procedures and transparency to ensure that other researchers can replicate the study's findings. In recent years, this approach has gained significant attention and recognition in the field of business and management (Paul et al., 2021; Dangelico & Vocalelli, 2017). Following the SLR guidelines proposed by Tranfield et al. (2003), we searched and collected relevant secondary data from databases such as Scopus, Web of Science, and Google Scholar, adhering to established research methodologies.

The results of the literature review pertinent to our research topic are summarized in the grid chart presented below. This chart aims to comprehensively present the key findings of previous studies, providing readers with a clear overview of the research landscape and facilitating an understanding of the existing knowledge framework.

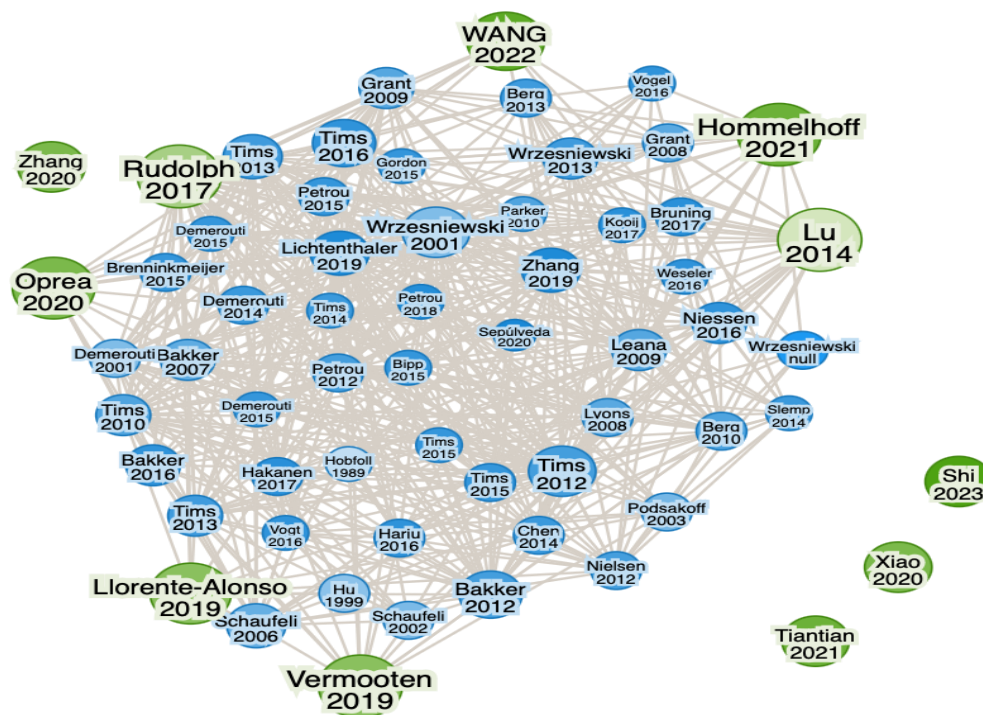


Figure 1.1: Academic Network Diagram of Job Crafting and Intention to Leave research.
Source: Research Rabbit (2024)

To investigate the relationship between job crafting and employees' intentions to leave, this study reviewed relevant literature from the past 20 years. During the initial screening process, materials that did not align with the research topic were excluded. Ultimately, 11 papers that met the inclusion criteria were selected for in-depth analysis.

These selected papers cover studies on related variables published in business journals over the past two decades. During the literature search process, this study did not impose any restrictions based on geographical regions.

Table 1.1

Overview of Job Crafting and Intention to Leave

Item	Publication Year	Author	Title
1	2014	Lu et al.	Does work engagement increase person–job fit? The role of job crafting and job insecurity.
2	2017	Rudolph et al.	Job crafting: A meta-analysis of relationships with individual differences, job characteristics, and work outcomes.
3	2019	Vermooten et al.	Job crafting, proactive personality and meaningful work: Implications for employee engagement and turnover intention.
4	2019	Llorente-Alonso & Topa	Individual Crafting, Collaborative Crafting, and Job Satisfaction: The Mediator Role of Engagement.
5	2020	Xiao & Ke Junqun	New progress in job design theory: Literature review of job crafting.
6	2020	Zhang & Li	Job crafting and turnover intention: The mediating role of work engagement and job satisfaction.
7	2020	Oprea et al.	Career Competencies, Job Crafting and Innovation behavior: insights from yin-yang harmony cognition.
8	2021	Dong et al.	An Empirical Study on the Effects of Job Crafting on Job Involvement and Turnover Intention.
9	2021	Hommelhoff et al.	The Role of Cognitive Job Crafting in the Relationship Between Turnover Intentions, Negative Affect, and Task Mastery.
10	2022	Wang	Research on job crafting from the perspective of sustainable career: Motivation, paths and intervention mechanisms.
11	2023	Shi et al.	Digital Job Crafting and Its Positive Impact on Job Performance: The Perspective of Individual-Task-Technology Fit.

Research content*Research on Job Crafting*

The concept of job crafting can be traced back to the research by Kulik et al. (1987), who noted that "employees spontaneously redesign their jobs." Subsequently, Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) formally introduced the term "job crafting." They focused on adjustments in tasks, relationships, and cognitive boundaries, defining job crafting as a series of proactive behaviors taken by employees to align personal interests, motivations, and passions with their work, thereby altering the boundaries of job tasks and interpersonal relationships. Tims and Bakker (2010), based on the Job Demands-Resources model, defined job crafting as the behavior of employees actively adjusting job demands and resources according to their own abilities and preferences to achieve balance. This definition highlights the impact of job characteristics on employee motivation and well-being. Moreover, Bruning and Campion (2018) posited that job crafting involves changes made by employees to improve their work experience.

Strümpfer (2006) emphasized that good job design contributes to organizational prosperity. In contrast, job crafting examines how employees influence themselves and their work environment through proactive adjustments in job design from an individual perspective. Unlike traditionally passively accepting organizational arrangements, job crafting embodies the proactivity of employees in managing their careers through self-guidance and value-driven actions. As a form of employee-initiated behavior, it underscores the importance of employees participating in and modifying job design according to their needs, thereby enhancing the fit between employees and their work environment (Grant & Ashford, 2008).

Due to the complexity of the concept of job crafting, different scholars have proposed various definitions from their respective perspectives. Numerous studies both domestically and internationally view job crafting as a bottom-up approach to job design, recognizing its positive impact on both employees and organizations (Xiao & Ke Junqun, 2020; Wang, 2022). On one hand, job crafting helps employees discover meaning in their work (Wrzesniewski et al., 2013), achieve person-job fit (Lu et al., 2014), and enhance job engagement (Tims et al., 2012). It significantly boosts job involvement, occupational commitment, job satisfaction, and creative performance (Bindl et al., 2019), thereby stimulating positive emotions, improving psychological states such as burnout, and effectively reducing turnover intentions (Zhang & Wang, 2024). On the other hand, research by Xin and Miao (2018) indicates that job crafting can significantly enhance employees' creative performance. Tuan et al. (2019) further found that job crafting promotes behaviors such as co-creation of civic value, benefiting both employees and the organization. In summary, job crafting is an important factor in predicting employees' intentions to leave. Encouraging employee participation in job crafting not only increases employee enthusiasm but also serves as an effective strategy for organizations to reduce turnover rates.

Research on Intentions to Leave

Porter and Steers (1973) posited that intention to leave is a withdrawal attitude exhibited by employees due to dissatisfaction with their current organization or job. Mobley (1977) further developed this concept, pointing out that after experiencing dissatisfaction, employees may generate thoughts of leaving and subsequently engage in a series of behaviors such as searching for new job opportunities, evaluating, and comparing other positions, ultimately forming an intention to leave, which is the final stage before actual turnover behavior occurs. Building on this foundation, Miller et al. (1979) defined intention to leave as the overall manifestation or attitude of employees considering leaving their current organization and seeking other job opportunities. This is the process by which individuals evaluate and measure the issue of leaving prior to implementing actual turnover behavior. Additionally, Shore and Barksdale (1998) emphasized the close relationship between intention to leave and actual turnover behavior, suggesting that it can serve as a proxy indicator for turnover behavior.

Other scholars have also put forward similar views. For example, Lacity et al. (2008) argued that intention to leave refers to the thoughts or willingness of employees to leave the organization, and it is considered a reliable predictor of turnover behavior. Wu (2023) stressed that intention to leave is the psychological state of voluntarily stepping away from one's current job and position before ultimately leaving, which is the direct cause leading to employee turnover behavior. Although different researchers have varying definitions of this

phenomenon, the core reflects the employees' intention to terminate their relationship with their current employer and seek new career opportunities. Huang and Zang (2023), synthesizing previous research findings, pointed out that intention to leave is the best predictor of turnover behavior, representing individual attitudes towards the organization and serving as the central focus of turnover studies. Therefore, despite differing definitions, all these perspectives underscore the importance of intention to leave as a significant precursor to employee turnover behavior and its critical role in research.

Many researchers have focused on turnover issues, attempting to answer the critical question of "what factors determine employees' intentions to leave" (Romeo et al., 2020). Studies show that multiple factors can influence an employee's intention to leave, including personal, organizational, job-related, and environmental factors (Ling et al., 2005). In terms of demographic variables, factors such as age, gender, marital status, and tenure can explain unique variations in turnover intentions (Igbaria & Greenhaus, 1992; Somers, 1996). From an organizational perspective, organizational justice (Alkahtani, 2015), perceived organizational support (Gan & Xu, 2018), trust in supervisors, and organizational climate (Mulki et al., 2007) are all important predictors of employee turnover. Regarding individual factors, low job satisfaction and high emotional exhaustion are closely associated with higher turnover intentions (Lin et al., 2013). A substantial body of empirical research indicates that individuals with higher job satisfaction (Mulki et al., 2007) and positive emotional states (Lin & Zhao, 2014) typically exhibit lower turnover tendencies. Moreover, the impact of organizational commitment on turnover intentions is similar to that of job satisfaction: both exert direct and negative effects on intentions to leave (Ling et al., 2000). This means that higher levels of organizational commitment and job satisfaction can significantly reduce employees' intentions to leave.

In summary, the reasons for employees developing intentions to leave are varied and include factors such as work stress, job satisfaction, job security, work environment, incentive mechanisms, and career development. Existing literature highlights that high employee turnover rates have been a persistent challenge across various industries, significantly impacting industry development. Employee turnover not only incurs associated costs but also negatively affects organizational productivity, sustainability, competitiveness, and profitability (Suraihi et al., 2021). It increases the risk of talent loss (Mirzaei et al., 2021) and can lead to disruption, ultimately resulting in a decline in organizational performance. Through this literature review, it is evident that research on intentions to leave is relatively limited, especially concerning how employee-initiated job crafting behaviors influence their intentions to leave. Empirical studies specifically addressing this relationship are scarce. Therefore, it is necessary to validate these relationships to deepen our understanding of the link between job crafting and intentions to leave and provide a more comprehensive insight.

Research on the Relationship Between Job Crafting and Intentions to Leave

Dong et al. (2021) found that job crafting significantly reduces employees' intentions to leave. It is considered one of the important factors in predicting turnover intentions, making the encouragement of employee participation in job crafting a strategic approach for organizations to effectively reduce such intentions (Zhang & Li, 2020; Vermooten et al., 2019). Scholars define job crafting as the process by which employees proactively adjust task content and interactions with colleagues to customize their work, an autonomous behavior that

enhances employees' sense of meaning, engagement, and satisfaction at work (Rudolph et al., 2017; Oprea et al., 2020, Zhang, 2022).

As a bottom-up approach to job design, job crafting has positive impacts on both employees and organizations (Xiao & Ke Junqun, 2020; Wang, 2022). Specifically, it helps improve employees' job performance, stimulates innovative behaviors, promotes organizational citizenship behaviors, and reduces withdrawal behaviors (Hommelhoff et al., 2021; Shi et al., 2023). Moreover, research by Llorente-Alonso and Topa (2019) indicates that job crafting not only increases job satisfaction but also decreases intentions to leave and alleviates job burnout. Through job crafting, employees can enhance their sense of belonging, thereby reducing organizational talent loss, which positively affects the organization as a whole (Xiao & Ke Junqun, 2020; Zhang & Li, 2020). These positive changes not only boost individual employee performance but also strengthen the overall effectiveness of the organization.

Limitation

This review has several limitations. First, although we conducted rigorous screening of key databases and combined manual searches with citation tracking, it is not possible to guarantee the inclusion of all relevant studies. Future research could provide a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between job crafting and intentions to leave by exploring broader data sources, expanding the range of databases, and optimizing search algorithms.

Second, in consideration of the quality of the literature and the practicality of this review, our initial screening focused primarily on peer-reviewed journal articles. This choice may have led to the exclusion of other valuable resources such as conference papers, book chapters, and grey literature, thereby affecting the comprehensiveness of the research. The exclusion of these alternative sources, which might offer different perspectives and insights, could limit the breadth of the study.

Additionally, this study concentrated on the relationship between job crafting and intentions to leave, but this does not imply that all related materials were covered. Other pertinent literature on this topic may not have been included, constituting a potential limitation.

Despite these limitations, this literature review aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the relationship between job crafting and intentions to leave through existing research. From an employee's perspective, this study delves into the association between job crafting and intentions to leave, offering new insights into how employees proactively reshape their jobs, thus enriching the framework for studying intentions to leave. Moreover, this study assists management in understanding the impact of job crafting on employees' intentions to leave and provides deeper insights into how the extent of job crafting affects employee behavior and attitudes.

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