

# Job crafting

*by Meta Cindy*

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## Job Crafting: Work Engagement and Teacher Happiness

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### ABSTRACT

Happy teachers tend to perform better, be more capable of creating innovations, and produce new ideas in work so they help the organization reach its goals. This study aims to examine the role of job crafting towards happiness, mediated by work engagement in teachers as employees at their respective organizations. Participants of this study are 885 teachers who have worked in "X" Educational Foundation for at least one year. The instruments used are a job crafting scale that consists of 15 items, a calling scale with 12 items, a 9-item work engagement scale, and a happiness scale consisting of 8 items. All items in this instrument have been deemed valid and have reliability values of 0.763, 0.912, 0.934, and 0.758. The data obtained were analyzed using Model 4 of the SPSS Hayes Process. The findings of this study showed that there is a role of job crafting towards teachers' happiness that is mediated by calling and work engagement. It was also found that job crafting has a significant direct effect on teachers' happiness.

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### 1. INTRODUCTION

When someone is asked to mention the characteristics of a good life, they tend to include happiness, health, and longevity (Diener & Chan, 2011). Nowadays, work-life almost takes up all the time of one's whole life. Lyubomirsky et al. (2005) also stated work is an important thing since it helps people gain income, plays a role in affecting self-esteem, creates opportunities for meaningful activities, and produces goods and services needed by society. This phenomenon makes work one of the central parts of people's lives. According to Fisher (2010), when employees feel happier than before, their work productivity increases. They also mentioned that happiness is a source of many positive impacts such as having a successful career, living a longer life, gaining more money, and expanding social circle.

Happy employees usually have better performance, are more capable of creating, and producing new ideas at work so they help the organization reach its goals. Happy employees also tend to stick with their jobs, making the organization save plenty of its budget because they behave well, work punctually, seldomly get sick, show a willingness to help their colleagues, and in general, have a better relationship with their colleagues and superordinate (Fisher, 2011). This study is also supported by another study

which found that employees with positive emotions will display better work performance, whereas employees who experience high levels of negative emotions will be inhibited in performing at work (Diener, & Biswas-Diener, 2008). This is because happiness does not only bring positive impacts to the employees but also to the organization, it is important for both organization and employees as individuals to strive for it. Teachers with psychological well-being give a great impact on their students' well-being (Lester et al., 2022). Not everyone can choose their occupation and workplace, sometimes we are "ought to" accept a job or a workplace we do not favor. Therefore, happiness needs to be sought and created. Happiness itself has different definitions; the concept that is often linked with happiness in the workplace is job satisfaction, and one way to achieve job satisfaction is job crafting (Cheung et al., 2022).

Job crafting is the physical and cognitive changes employees proactively make in the task or relational boundaries of their work to suit their needs and interests more (Berg et al., 2010; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Job crafting is a highly influential process in creating a meaningful work experience, or regaining the meaning of one's work (Parker & Bindl, 2016; Riasnugrahani & Riantoputra, 2017; Wrzesniewski et al., 2013). Job crafting can alter the orientation of 'job' into 'calling' (Silber et al., 2010). Calling is a process of discovery; hence, when individuals receive an unfavorable job, meet obstacles in work, they can alter/modify their jobs so that they find new meanings or find calling in their jobs. In other words, job crafting contributes to the creation of calling (Duffy et al., 2012; Esteves & Lopez, 2017; Riasnugrahani et al., 2019).

Jobs and organizations can help employees feel happy, that is when they find the right job that aligns with their personality, gives meaning and challenges, and is appealing to them (Sakuraya et al., 2016). Calling has a close relationship with life satisfaction; individuals who savor calling find their life more meaningful, thus they will feel more satisfied with life (Lu et al., 2014). People who experience life satisfaction tend to feel happiness more often.

Job crafting is an effective way to manage job demands with job resources, to increase employee work engagement (Bakker et al., 2012). Job crafting enables person-job fit, so employees would feel more engaged with their jobs (Petrou et al., 2012). In short, job crafting has a positive correlation with work engagement (Burke & Cooper, 2009; Rodríguez-Muñoz, 2014). Work engagement impacts not only work-related outcomes but also emotional states (Bakker et al., 2016). Engaged employees also experience positive emotions more often, including happiness, joy, and enthusiasm (Tims et al., 2012). When employees feel engaged with their jobs, they will feel satisfied with the fulfillment of their emotional needs at work and will experience a higher level of happiness (Dik et al., 2012).

Happiness in the workplace is important to create because individuals who are happy with their work will also be happy at home, and even in other areas of life (Kristiana & Purwono, 2019). Employees who have already found their calling and are engaged with their jobs will result in individuals who found life satisfaction, and individuals who are satisfied in life tend to experience happiness (Hayes, 2017; Tims et al., 2013). Therefore, happiness does not only benefit one's role as an employee—in this study as a teacher—but also one's life overall. Happy employees will also bring positive impacts to the organization.

In conclusion, understanding the factors that contribute to teachers' happiness is crucial for creating supportive work environments and promoting overall well-being in the educational field. This study, titled "Job Crafting: Work Engagement and Teacher Happiness," aims to investigate the relationship between job crafting, work engagement, and teachers' happiness under the research question, "What is the relationship between job crafting and teachers' happiness in the educational context?" By exploring the direct effect of job crafting on teachers' happiness, this research seeks to contribute to the growing body of knowledge on the factors that influence teacher well-being. The findings of this study have the potential to inform educational policies and practices that foster job-crafting behaviors, enhance work engagement, and ultimately promote the happiness and satisfaction of teachers, leading to improved educational outcomes.

2. METHODS

Participants of this study are teachers who have worked for at least 1 year in the same educational foundation. The variables studied—job crafting, calling, work engagement, and happiness—are measured using instruments with good validity and reliability values. The instrument used to measure job crafting is based on the JCS (Job Crafting Scale) from Tims, Bakker, and Derks (2012), which consists of 15 items with 6 answer choices. The instrument used to measure call is based on Calling and Vocation Questionnaire, especially its Presence of Calling dimension (Dik, Eldridge, et al., 2012). This instrument comprises 12 items with 6 answer choices. Meanwhile, work engagement was measured using the Utrecht Work Engagement Scale (UWES-9) which is adapted to the Indonesian language by Kristiana, Fajrianti & Purwono (2018). This instrument consists of 9 items with 7 answer choices. Lastly, the instrument used to measure happiness is based on the Oxford Happiness Questionnaire Short Version by Hills and Argyle (2002) consisting of 8 items with 6 answer choices.

The data obtained are analyzed with regression analysis technique, especially model 4 from SPSS Process. The result of this analysis is meant to understand the relationship between job crafting and happiness through calling and work engagement as mediators.

3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

3.1. Findings

3.1.1. Descriptive Statistics

A total of 885 teachers with a minimum of 1 year of working experience participated in this study. 91% of them finished undergraduate studies and 9% have completed graduate studies. The range of participants' age is 21-61 years old (M=40.17, SD=10.17), and 72% are women. There are 72% of participants who are married, 25% of participants who are single, and 3% who are widowed. Of the participants, 27% who are married, 37% do not have children, 30,7% have two children, 23,1% have a child, 8,1% have 3 children, 1% have 4 children and 0,1% have 5 children. Participants' work experience ranges from 1 to 58 years (M=13.69, SD=9.57).

3.1.2. Result of Hypothesis Testing

The hypothesis testing result shows that job crafting affects happiness whether directly or indirectly through calling and work engagement as mediators (Figure 1).

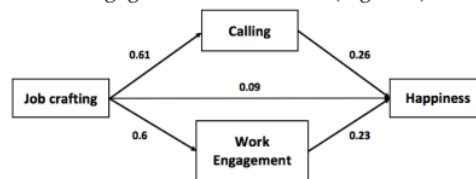


Figure 1. Mediation Model

From Table 1, it could be implied that there is a direct effect of job crafting towards happiness. However, its value is smaller if compared to the indirect effect of mediation by calling and work engagement. This result indicates that happiness can be increased by encouraging teachers to increase their work meaningfulness and their work engagement.

**Table 1.** Direct and Indirect Effect of Job Crafting towards Happiness with Calling and Work Engagement as Mediators.

| Variable | Effect | BootSE | BootLLCI | BootULCI |
|----------|--------|--------|----------|----------|
| JC → H   | .09    | .04    | .01      | .17      |
| JC→C→H   | .14    | .03    | .09      | .19      |
| JC→WE→H  | .12    | .02    | .09      | .16      |

Note: JC = Job Crafting, C = Calling, WE = Work Engagement, H = Happiness, N = 885

### 3.2. Discussion

There are a lot of positive impacts when employees feel happy doing their jobs. These positive impacts are not only felt by the employees themselves but also by the organization. Happy employees can generate fresh ideas and achieve their organization’s goals creatively. Other benefits of happy employees include employee retention, efficient work, lower absenteeism, willingness to help colleagues, and better relationships with colleagues and superordinates (Tims et al., 2016). When employees feel happy and satisfied with their jobs, it can have a multitude of positive impacts, not only for the employees themselves but also for the organization as a whole. Firstly, happy employees tend to be more productive and motivated, which can lead to increased creativity and the generation of fresh ideas. They are more likely to go above and beyond their responsibilities to contribute to the organization's goals and success. Another crucial advantage of having happy employees is improved employee retention. When employees are content with their work environment and feel valued, they are more likely to stay with the organization for the long term. This reduced turnover rate saves the organization both time and resources that would otherwise be spent on recruiting and training new employees.

Based on this study, job crafting is also found to have a significant role in the happiness of teachers in the “X” Educational Foundation. This finding shows that when teachers are proactive and organizations provide opportunities for the teachers to alter their opportunities, innovate, and improvise in doing their jobs. In addition, giving teachers the opportunity and proactively create or maintain various aspects of their jobs according to their interests and needs may lead to more happiness. When a teacher becomes a crafter in managing challenging job demands, he/she can become an “architect” who is able to build his/her own work environment. This can increase teachers’ happiness in doing their jobs (Bakker & Leiter, 2017). By engaging in job crafting, teachers are able to alter their job tasks, relationships, and perceptions to create a work environment that suits their preferences and strengths. This empowerment and autonomy to innovate and improvise in their teaching roles allow teachers to feel a sense of ownership and control over their work. They become architects of their own work environment, constructing it in a way that aligns with their professional goals and personal satisfaction.

A teacher who proactively does job crafting in their role, or acts as a crafter, will alter his/her job according to one’s needs and interests. Individuals will alter or modify their jobs to find meaning, self-identity, or calling in their jobs (Chen et al., 2014). Calling is a discovery process; hence, when individuals receive unfavorable jobs or meet obstacles in work, they can alter/modify their jobs to find new meanings or a calling in their jobs. In other words, job crafting contributes to the creation of a calling (Hu et al., 2020). Crafters can find positive experiences while working and produce positive meanings about themselves and their work. Employees who practice job crafting and get support from their organization will feel more compatible with their jobs (Pradana & Suhariadi, 2020). Therefore, job crafting can alter the orientation of ‘job’ into ‘calling’. The research conducted by Bakker and Leiter



(2017) supports these findings, shedding light on the positive relationship between job crafting and employee well-being. By recognizing and facilitating job crafting behaviors, educational organizations can foster a work environment that promotes teacher happiness, job satisfaction, and ultimately, improved educational outcomes.

In the long run, job crafting may also help individuals in finding meaning, their work identities, and person-job fit. Job crafting not only affects how teachers get their jobs done but also how they see their work, find meaning in their jobs, and feel the calling itself, which will then affect their happiness. Calling has a close relationship with life satisfaction; individuals who savour calling find their life more meaningful, thus they will feel more satisfied with life (Joo & Lee, 2017). People who experience life satisfaction tend to feel happiness more often.

This study also found that crafters can find happiness when they are fully involved with their work, also known as having work engagement. Job crafting is practised by employees to increase challenges in doing their jobs and increase job resources. Employees who are engaged with their work will be motivated to retain work engagement by doing job crafting (Hajru et al., 2016). Job crafting makes employees feel a person-job fit. Hence they become more engaged with their work (Sakuraya et al., 2016). According to Hu et al. (2020), the role of identity crafting and job characteristics crafting are strong predictors of work engagement. Both focus on task and social situation change in work and bring more enjoyable and meaningful work experience. Increasing and developing job crafting behaviors also display significant effects on work engagement.

Pradana & Suhariad (2020) also mentioned that job crafting plays an important role in encouraging employee involvement. When employees are already involved with their respective jobs, they can utilize their mental energy to exert optimal effort, not give up easily when facing troubles, and feel enthusiastic because they think their jobs give meaning to their lives so they feel happy in doing their tasks. Employees who feel engaged will also be more satisfied with their work in general and this can help them achieve a higher level of happiness.

With different types of job crafting behaviors, seeking challenges may be one of the methods to maintain the motivation and well-being of employees with higher levels of education [36]. Employees who are engaged with their jobs will feel satisfied with their emotional needs and fulfillment of work, and this will be the consequence of a higher level of happiness (Lester et al., 2022). Aside from impacting work-related outcomes, work engagement not only influences work-related outcomes but also has indirect effects on emotional states in other aspects of employees' lives. When individuals are fully engaged in their work, they experience positive emotions, a sense of purpose, and a higher level of overall well-being. This positive emotional state can spill over into other domains of their lives, such as their personal relationships and overall life satisfaction. By actively seeking challenges through job-crafting behaviors, employees with higher levels of education can sustain their motivation and maintain a sense of fulfillment in their work. This contributes to their happiness and well-being, not only within the workplace but also in their broader lives. Therefore, it is important for organizations to recognize the value of job crafting and provide opportunities for employees to explore and take on new challenges. By fostering an environment that supports job engagement and allows for individualized job crafting, organizations can promote the happiness and well-being of their employees, leading to increased job satisfaction and overall positive outcomes.

#### 4. CONCLUSION

Based on the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that job crafting can increase happiness in teachers; teachers who have found their calling can effectively increase their happiness at work if they practice job crafting proactively. Another conclusion is that teachers who practice job crafting accompanied by work engagement can increase their happiness at work. This study suggests that educational foundations and schools acknowledge that teachers need authority to do their jobs. Organizations need to provide autonomy for teachers to be creative in doing their jobs. The educational foundation and schools also need to inform the performance target which they need to fulfil and the

organization's goal itself so that their work behavior will align with the organization's target and goals. Another suggestion is to establish good communication with the teachers to discuss strategies and other things needed to get their work done according to the target and job demands. Future researchers are suggested to conduct a longitudinal study to examine the long-term effects of job crafting on work engagement and teacher happiness. This would involve tracking participants over an extended period of time to understand how job-crafting behaviours influence their engagement levels and happiness over time.

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