

Impact of job autonomy on work engagement: the mediating role of job crafting in universities of Pakistan

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Abstract

The objective of this study was to investigate the extent to which relationship exists between job autonomy and work engagement in private universities of Pakistan. Moreover we also tested the mediating effect of job crafting between job autonomy and work engagement. Data was collected from 250 faculty members from different public and private universities (Riphah International University ,Islamic International University ,Allama Iqbal Open University , Bahria University ,National university of modern languages).The results of the study showed that job autonomy has significant and positive relationship with work engagement. The results also disclosed that job crafting plays a mediating role between job autonomy and work engagement. The study has both theoretical and practical implications. This study is an attempt to explore the mediating effect of job crafting in Pakistan for the first time, it gives empirically validation.

Keyword: job autonomy, job crafting, work engagement , university professors

1. Introduction

Complexity of tasks in modern jobs compels organizations to expect their employees to be dedicated, energetic and innovative: to be engaged in their work. In a rapidly changing technological environment, the internal environment of organizations is constantly in flux due to downsizing and off shoring, hence the importance of employee engagement with their work takes on even greater dimensions. Quitting the job is not the only solution when dissatisfaction occurs, as job searching and changing job is not a trivial matter, so it is paramount for employees to turn the job one has into the job one wants. (Wrzesniewski , 2011). Work engagement is a well established construct and predicts many beneficial outcomes for employees and organizations. Several studies reveal work engagement to be positively related to in-role performance (Bakker et al., 2012), proactive behaviors (Salanova & Schaufeli, 2008), life satisfaction (Hakanen & Schaufeli, 2012), mental health (Schaufeli et al., 2008) and negatively related to cynicism and burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Furthermore, work engagement is a positive result derived from employee job crafting, as demonstrated by job redesign studies (Tims & Bakker, 2010). However, work engagement is inextricably linked to the type of work employees are engaged in, which in turn leads to job design theories.

Research suggests that job autonomy decreases turnover which leads to an increase in job satisfaction (Price, 2000) and organizational commitment, (Chudoba, Kacmar, McKnight and George 2007). When employees perceive a high degree of autonomy in their jobs they consider it as an organizational support. (Eisenberger,

Rhoades, and Cameron, 1999), which in turn reduces turnover intention and increases the job satisfaction (Spector, 1986). Employees will be more committed and satisfied to the organization when they are provided with job autonomy as compared to employees with no freedom. Earlier studies found that job autonomy is directly related to job performance (Morgeson et al., 2006). For employees whose job has no meaning or purpose to them, and which provides them with little opportunity to learn, they experience burnout and exhaustion (Spreitzer 2010).

Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) argued that in the dynamic environment of today, job crafting can contribute to enable and promote agility in organizations; it can also contribute to create strategic advantage for the organization. For employees to align their motives, strengths and passion with their work Spreitzer and Wrzesniewski (2011) propose the use of job crafting as a remedy. Job crafting is a powerful tool for companies to retain their best employees. It is also beneficial for organizations that serve the customers as it helps the organization to react to fast changes in the market.

While Job autonomy is intuitively linked to self-initiated changes made by employees, initial empirical results have been partly contradictory (Berg et al., 2010). Results indicate that crafting of jobs in order to reduce person- job misfit is higher at lower occupational levels of employment. Sheldon & Elliot's (1999) self concordance theory states that in the need of fulfilling autonomy, competence and relatedness, personal goals are selected and strived for that lead to the achievement of these objectives. But the extent and direction of work

characteristics effects on job crafting has not received scholarly attention and it motivates us to investigate the empirical links between work characteristics and work engagement with the mediating role of job crafting.

Bandura's (1997) theory of self-efficacy has important implications with regard to motivation. The theory predicts that people participate voluntarily in activities to the degree they consider themselves competent. With regard to employees this means that they will be more likely to attempt, to persevere, and to be successful at tasks in which they have a sense of efficacy. Occasionally employees have the required skill to perform the task, but they fail because they lack a sense of self efficacy to use these skills well. Almost everyone can identify the things they would like to change, goals they want to achieve, and things they wanted to attain. Nonetheless, many of the people also understand that putting these plans into action is not an easy and simple thing. The efficiency of an individual plays a main role in how task, challenges, and goals are approached regardless of the occupation.

1.2 Significance of the study

This study will provide an overview on the impact of relationship between work engagement and job autonomy with the mediating role of job crafting in public and private universities of Pakistan. Past research in the education sector in Pakistan revealed issues like Motivational Issues for Teachers in Higher Education (Rasheed 2010), Job satisfaction (Malik, Tirmizi, & Chaudhary, 2013) but the construct of job autonomy has been neglected. This is the first scholarly attempt at understanding the relation of job autonomy and work engagement. Indeed, it is rare known instance of employing job crafting in the Pakistani organizational context. This study selects the academia for purposes of examining job autonomy, as it is well known that university faculties are by and large autonomous, by their very nature and design (Felicia 1998).

The study will provide an insight for policy makers to make teachers autonomous so that they will be able to design their job according to their circumstances. Through job redesigning they will be able to achieve organizational goals. It can bring about numerous positive outcomes, including engagement, and job satisfaction.

Faculty members are important human resources and they can play critical role in enhancing output in different social establishment including educational systems and universities, if they are satisfied with their job condition. Past research revealed that autonomy and teacher motivation both are related to job stress and job

satisfaction (Davis & Wilson; 2000; Pearson & Hall, 1993).

Recent global changes have resulted in creation of new challenges in shape of standardization and cost minimization, quality assurance, technological advancement, global competition, which have hit every sector throughout the world including the educational sector. Past research shows that job autonomy for teachers has a common link with empowerment, stress, and job satisfaction (Brunetti, 2001; Kim & Loadman, 1994; Klecker & Loadman, 1996; Ulriksen, 1996). One of the major factors that can cause job satisfaction or dissatisfaction is job autonomy (Aydin and Ceylan, 2009). One of the facets to motivate teacher is job autonomy (Khmelkov, 2000; Losos, 2000; White, 1992). Teachers are considered to be the most valuable asset of any country. They impart skills and knowledge to the students who after the completion of their studies join different sectors of country and start contributing towards the development of the country's economy. It is hence very important that teachers should be given autonomy as it allows them to be innovative and promote them to take the positive initiatives. Teachers should grant autonomy and they should be empowered (Melenyzer, 1990; Short, 1994). However the study of job autonomy and job crafting has been surprisingly neglected in Pakistan, this would be the first study to address the issue. After having identified the problem, the next section presents the research questions.

The research objectives of the study are:

To investigate the relationship between job autonomy and work engagement in the universities of Pakistan.

To explain the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and work engagement in the universities of Pakistan.

2. Literature review

2.1 Job autonomy

An important work characteristic is autonomy at work and it is defined as the extent to which ones job gives freedom to plan work ,select different methods to perform task and also to make decisions (Hackman & Oldham, 1976). When autonomy is enhanced, employees are more involve in attaining new skills and are more responsible for problems at work. (Parker, 1998). Autonomy has been consistently linked to employee satisfaction as a positive factor (Parker & Wall, 1998). Many other research results also pointed out that autonomy is an essential component for

professional development (Hart & Rotem, 1995) and is a positive factor for job satisfaction (Finn, 2001).

Bakker (2004) conducted a research among 605 students and 178 music teachers from 16 different music schools. The results of the study revealed that job resources which includes autonomy ,supervisory coaching ,social support and performance feedback have positively influenced the balance between teachers skills and challenges ,which in turn contributes to their work enjoyment and intrinsic work motivation

Another study done by (Hakanen, Bakker & Schaufeli,2006) in which questionnaire was delivered to all teachers of the Education Department of Helsinki, Finland. The sample size was 2038. The results indicated that both the process exists, though the prominent process was energetical. Furthermore it, was seen that burnout had mediating effects on high job demands on ill health ,it also mediated the effects of lacking resources on poor engagement ,where as work engagement also mediated the effect of job resources on organizational commitment

Hall et al (1997) in his research examined that the most imperative factor of teacher's motivation is autonomy . They added that teachers are more confident and self initiators when they have autonomy to manage class ,design their course ,plan how to evaluate in comparison to those teacher who are given instructions for every task to be done. The findings of this study is also the same as by Parver et al (2008) they have found that teacher's empowerment means they have academic freedom i. e they have freedom to plan the lesson , make syllabus ,select text books to recommend their students by their own and not by the department ort .Moreover ,Short et al (1994) findings are similar to the previous studies ,he elaborated that teacher's empowerment is a process in which teachers extend their capabilities to grow and to solve their problems. Furthermore he explained the six dimensions of teacher empowerment which are decision making, status ,professional growth ,autonomy and self efficacy.

Rasheed, Aslam & Sarwar (2010) conducted a research to identify the issues of motivation for teachers in higher education of Pakistan.. The Islamia University of Bahawalpur, Pakistan was taken as case, the source to collect the primary data was in depth interviews and questionnaires. The findings of the study have shown that along with compensation and benefits there are some other motivating factors like job design ,feedback, empowerment ,work environment ,decision making ,recognition and participation motivates teachers in higher education.

Chase (1981) argued that the was the first step in a chain of events that led to employee turnover is loss of perceived autonomy According to (Chung-Yan, 2010) the unstructured nature of complex jobs, which require workers to exercise judgment, decision-making, creativity, and other discretionary behaviors,Frrese and Zapf (1994) argued that those with discretion and control can more effectively resolve problems because they have the freedom to choose strategies to deal with the situation. for job crafting, the opportunity of an individual for himself how and job what to do may therefore be preconditioned (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Employees who perceive higher levels of autonomy within their practice are more satisfied within their jobs. (Taylor& Morgan 2008). The employees rarely attempt to change some of the characteristics of their jobs if they feel that they have no opportunity/freedom to craft their jobs. Therefore, the necessary condition will be that employees have enough control over their work to perceive that they have the opportunity to enact their ideas or wishes. Based on above literature and further conceptualization the first hypothesis is stated as

H₁: There will be a positive relationship between work engagement and job autonomy in the universities of Pakistan.

2.2 Job Crafting as a Mediator

Employees may redesign (i.e. craft) their work without management's oversight was first observed by Kulik, Oldham and Hackman (1987). But the term Job Crafting was coined by Wrzesniewski and Dutton in 2001. According to them, Job crafting is a mean by which employees utilize opportunities to "customize their jobs" (Berg et al., 2007). In a similar vein, Tims & Bakker (2010) refer to the construct as "proactive changes in job design that are not specific arrangements that are negotiated with the organization".employees craft their jobs so they can balance job demands with resources they have according to their needs and capabilities .(Tims et al., 2010). This definition roots Job Crafting in the Job Demand Resource Model (Schaufeli et al., 2001) and is more appropriate for empirical investigation. Framing it in this resource based stream of work yields more measurable content to the construct.

Job crafting is an action process that unfolds over a time span in a worker's career. Moreover, for the act of job crafting to occur, job autonomy must be a pre-condition, for it would be hard to imagine a "crafter" engaged in redesigning his/her job without having the freedom from external restraints to do so (Bakker, 2010). Additionally, Ghitulescu (2006) found job crafting to

have a stronger positive relation for individuals with higher skills. The breadth of skills is likely to be correlated with job autonomy as organizations lend more liberty to those who have higher task complexity. Under a vastly different setting, Bakker (2010) detected engaged employees to be more likely to be active job crafters of their work. Lyons (2008) noticed that organizational benefits accrue for all those workers who engaged in job crafting.

Nonetheless, job crafting is not necessarily a predictor of solely positive outcomes. By being excessively consumed in their work through job crafting, employees may create undesirable outcomes for themselves and the organization. In a descriptive study of how job crafting can enhance meaning in scholarly life for organizational researchers, Wellman & Spreitzer (2010) observe that while scholars may enhance occupational worth for themselves, it occasionally can be at the expense of their relations with others. Similarly, if an employee is engaged in tailoring his/her work which runs against organizational goals and objectives, this activity will be detrimental to the organization (Berg et al., 2007). Thus negative implications of Job Crafting persist for both employees and organizations.

Being a recent concept introduced in the job design, job crafting has relatively scarce empirical studies using it as a primary determinant of organizational phenomenon. However, there is a growing body of literature which deploys it as a mediating influence in empirical models. Job crafting has been found to partially intervene between in-role performance and proactive personality (Bakker et al. 2012). Intuitively speaking, proactive personality fosters and manifests its positive work benefits under an autonomous work environment. Tims & Bakker (2010) specify job crafting as a mediator in their proposed model. Thus, our prediction is that job crafting by employees in organizations will play an intervening role in the connection between the level of work engagement and job autonomy such that compared to restricted workers, autonomous employees will employ more job crafting resulting in higher engagement with their work. Based on above literature the second hypothesis is being formulated as

H₂: There will be a positive relationship between job autonomy and job crafting in universities of Pakistan.

H₃: Job autonomy will have a positive relationship with job crafting which will lead to work engagement in universities of Pakistan.

Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) refers to engagement as fulfilling, positive, work-related state of mind that is characterized by absorption, dedication, and vigor. However, Maslach & Leiter (1997) conceptualize engagement as the total opposite of burnout positioned on a single continuum. But it can be argued that both engagement and burnout are two independent states, such that the increase in one is not exactly proportional to the decrease in the other. Work engagement can be distinguished from employee involvement on two bases. Engagement is an antecedent of involvement and involvement is not merely a cognition like engagement but also an attitude and behavior at work (May et al., 2004). Thus, work engagement is a unique concept having discriminate validity.

The work engagement construct has been tested in vastly different settings proving its generalisability. For instance, Schaufeli et al. (2009) found that initial work engagement is positively related to job resources and negatively to absenteeism. Prins et al. (2010) found male medical residents to be more engaged in work and had particularly higher levels of vigor. Siu et al. (2010) found work engagement to fully mediate between family-work enrichment and job autonomy and partially mediate the relation of job autonomy and work-family enrichment. Xanthopoulou et al. (2008) studied the effects of colleague support among flight attendants and found a positive relationship with work engagement. Gorgievski et al., (2010) discovered that employee engagement was predictive of higher task performance and innovativeness among self-employed and salaried employees. Thus, work engagement is a substantially well validated measure of employees' cognitions in and about the work.

Bakker & Bal (2010) conducted a study among 54 Dutch teachers. The main focus of the study was to find out intra-individual relationship between job performance, work engagement, and job resources. The results indicate that if the teachers are provided with resourceful work environment then it fosters weekly work engagement of the teachers and can have a sportive effect on job performance indirectly. On a different trajectory, Organizational performance is excessively used as a dependent variable in organizational studies and is seeping into the few but growing empirical studies of work engagement as well. However, the employment of organizational performance as an outcome variable is problematic. There is no clear consensus on its measurements and stringent criticisms exist on studies that use it as a dependent variable (March & Sutton, 1997). Secondly, organizational performance should not be the only criteria on which to judge employee

2.3 Work Engagement

behaviors. Bakker (2010) cautions against evaluating work engagement solely on the basis of organizational performance but to predict it on the well-being and happiness of the employees themselves. Moreover, Bakker & Demerouti (2007) found work engagement was positively related to performance. Additionally, using self concordance theory (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999) as a theoretical base which states that in the need of

2.5 Theoretical Framework

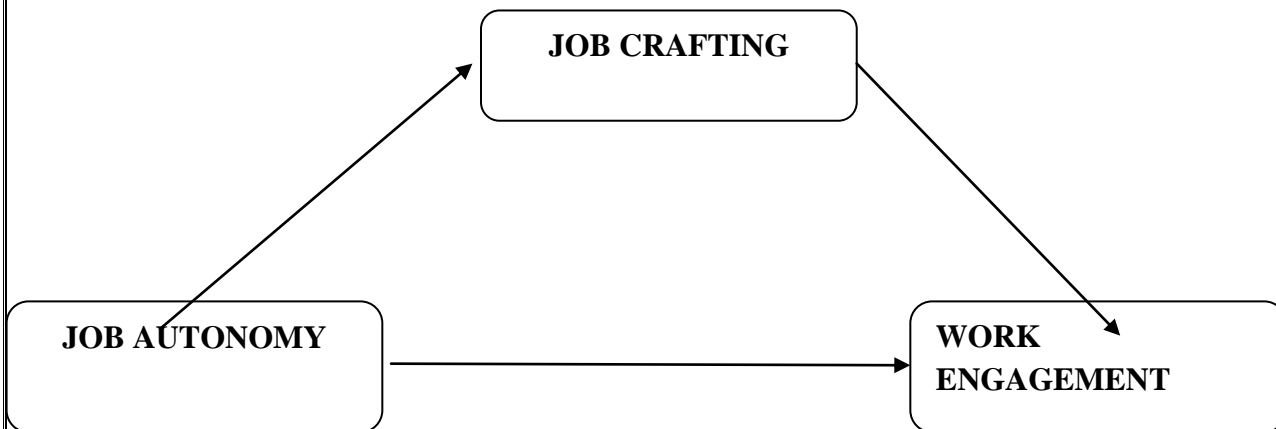
. The theoretical framework of this study posits three classes of variables, independent variable job autonomy,

fulfilling autonomy, competence and relatedness, personal goals are selected and strived for that lead to the achievement of these objectives. Therefore from the literature it is hypothesized that

H₄: There will be a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement in universities of Pakistan.

the dependent variable work engagement and the mediating variable job crafting..

Fig 2.5 A theoretical framework of Impact of Job Autonomy on Work Engagement with the Mediating Role of Job Crafting in Universities of Pakistan



Methodology

3.1. Data Collection

data is to be collected through questionnaire which is primary data.

3.2. Unit of Analysis:

. The main focus of present study is to address the issue of work engagement among faculty members, the unit of analysis for present study is an individual.

3.3 Population and Sample

Population of the study comprised of all faculty members in both public and public and private universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Universities in which questionnaires were distributed are National University of Modern Languages, Allama Iqbal Open University Bahria University, Riphah International University and International Islamic University. 300 questionnaires were distributed among faculty members of different universities. 250 questionnaires were received. The response rate was 83%.

3.4. Sampling Technique

In this research convenient sampling technique is used.. The reason for using convenient sampling is due to the fact that there are large number of universities in Islamabad and Rawalpindi. It was not possible to reach all the universities in a limited time period, hence convenient sampling appeared to be the most appropriate form of sampling technique. To obtain the data questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members of universities in Rawalpindi and Islamabad. The reason for choosing this sector is mainly because due to highly competitive environment universities management are working very hard to retain highly qualified and skilled professors, for this purpose they have allowed their professors to adopt new methods for teaching and every possible mean to gain attention of students and to get better results. In universities professors are given job autonomy, they do enjoy some flexibility in their jobs.

3.5. Instrumentation

Questionnaire was designed on five point Lickert scale, which also includes four items with demographics variables including age, gender, status, experience and their rank in the university
To gather the data, questionnaire survey is used as a main tool. The first portion of the questionnaire consists of the questions that are related to the demographics

attributes of the employees. The second portion of the questionnaire contains the questions related to the Job autonomy, job crafting and work engagement. Data is to be collected through personally administered questionnaires. All responses would to be taken on Likert’s five-point scale, scale of 5 starting from strongly disagree to the strongly agree.

Job Autonomy: Job Autonomy was measured by the scale developed by Hackman and Oldham(1975) .Job Autonomy has been used as an independent variable in the study. A three item scale for measuring job autonomy was used. The sample item included “ I have the freedom to decide how to organize my work” .The reliability score for this variable was found as 0.746.

Work engagement: Work engagement would be measured by Utrecht work engagement scale by Schaufeli & Bakker (2002). It has 17 items .The sample item included “At my work, I feel bursting with energy”. The chronbach alpha is 0.89.

Job crafting: Job crafting is to measured by the scale developed by Tims ,Bakker, & Derks (2011) . The scale consists of 21 items and has cronbach alpha of 0.80 .Example of the items included are I try to develop my capabilities, I try to develop myself professionally.

Results4.1Sample Characteristics

Description	Range	Frequency	Valid percentage
Gender	Male	189	75.9
	Female	61	24.4
Age	21-30	71	28.4
	31-40	112	44.8
	41-50	41	16.4
	51-60	24	9.6
	Above 60	2	0.8
Rank	Lecturer	167	66.8
	Assistant Professor	71	28.4
	Associate Professor	12	4.8
Experience	1-2 years	64	25.6
	3-4	59	23.6
	5-6	46	18.4
	7-8	41	16.4
	9-10	20	8
	Above 10 years	20	8

Data showed that majority of employees are male. From the sample size of 250, there were 189 male respondents, which is 75% of the sample. Whereas there were 61 female respondents that is 24% of the sample. . A lower percentage of the working women explain the major difference in the gender wise frequencies. On the broader level in the country, the percentage of working women is quite low as compared to the overall percentage of males. Most of the faculty members have experience of 1-2 years i.e 25 % , whereas 26% faculty members have experience of 3-4 years , 8% faculty members have experience for above 10 years

4.2. Reliability Analysis

The most common measure of internal consistency ("reliability") is Cronbach’s alpha.

Table 4.2: Reliability of Scales

Variables	Cronbach’s Alpha	No of Items
Job Autonomy	0.865	3
Job Crafting	0.846	21
Work Engagement	0.869	17

4.3 Descriptive Statistics

The Descriptive procedure displays univariate summary statistics for several variables in a single table and calculates standardized values.

Table 4.3: Minimum, Maximum, and Mean& Standard deviations

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
JA	250	2.00	5.00	3.2880	.90153
JC	250	2.76	4.81	3.8884	.38590
WE	250	2.41	4.94	3.9800	.44035

For gender the maximum is 2 because the questionnaire produced responses in two categories where 1 represents male and 2 represents female. Job Autonomy has mean value of 3.2880 with a standard deviation of 0.90153. Job crafting show the mean value of 3.8884 and standard deviation of 0.38590 .Work Engagement show the mean of 3.9800 with the standard deviation of 0.44035.

4.4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis examines the degree of the association between two variables .The values of the correlation analysis generally lie between -1 to +1, while the positive or negative sign indicates the direction of the relationship.

Table: 4.4: Correlation Analysis

Variables	JA	WE	JC
.JA	1		
WE	.179**	1	
JC	.181	.674**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed)

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed)

.Job autonomy was significantly positively correlated with work engagement (r=.179, p<0.05).

Work engagement is significantly positively correlated with job crafting (r=.674, p<0.05)

4.5 Regression Analysis

Table 4.5: Results of Regression Analyses for Outcomes

Predictors	Work Engagement		
	β	R ²	ΔR^2
Step 1			
Control Variable		0.05	
Step 2			
Job Autonomy	0.085**	0.08	0.03**

N=250, Control variables are gender, age, status, experience and position

p<.05*, p<.01**, p<.001***

Regression analysis was used to check the outcomes of tested hypothesis. The regression analysis showed that job autonomy were significant contributor for work engagement.

In the first step, regression analysis for outcomes showed that the R² value for control variable (gender, age. status, experience and position) was 0.05.

In step 2, results of regression analysis for outcomes showed that job autonomy is significantly contributor of work engagement. B value (β) is 0.085 which shows that dependent variable (work engagement) will be increased by 8% by increasing one unit of independent variable (job autonomy). R square (R²) is 0.08 which means that 8 % of the change in dependent variable can be explained by the variation in the independent variable. Moreover p<0.01 indicates significant relationship between these two variables. Therefore H₁ was accepted.

4.6. Mediation Regression Analysis:

Table 4.6: Results of Mediation Regression Analyses for Work Engagement

Predictor	Job Crafting			Work Engagement		
	β	R^2	ΔR^2	β	R^2	ΔR^2
Step 1						
Control Variables		.08				
Step 2						
Job Autonomy	.082**	.124	.036**			
Step 1						
Control Variables					.05	
Step 2						
Job Crafting				.799***	.49	.44***
Mediation: Job Crafting						
Step 1						
Control Variables					.05	
Step 2						
Job Crafting				.799***	.49	.448***
Step 3						
Job autonomy				.02	.49	.002

p<.05*, p<.01**, p<.001***

The above table 4.5 shows the results of mediation regression analysis. Initially, the impact of independent variable that is job autonomy has seen on mediator i.e job crafting. In first step, all the control variables were entered which shows that R^2 0.08. In the second step, job autonomy was also entered. Job autonomy showed a significant positive relationship with job crafting. B value (β) is 0.082 which shows that job crafting will be increased by 8% by increasing one unit of job autonomy. R square (R^2) is 0.08 which means that 8 % of the change in job crafting variable can be explained by the variation in job autonomy. Moreover $p<0.01$ indicates significant relationship between these two variables. Therefore H_2 is accepted which states that there will be a positive relationship between job autonomy and job crafting in public and private universities of Pakistan

Next, the impact of mediator i.e job crafting has seen on work engagement. In step 1, control variables has $R^2= 0.05$, where job crafting ($\beta=0.79***$, $p<0.001$ and $\Delta R^2=0.44***$, $p<0.001$) show significant association with work engagement. It has found that R square (R^2) is 0.44 which means that 44 percent of change in work engagement can be explained by variation in job crafting. Beta value (β) is 0.79 which shows that work engagement will be increased by 79% by increasing one unit of job crafting. Moreover $p<0.001$ indicates highly significant relationship between these two variables. Hence H_3 is accepted i.e. there will be a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement in public and private universities of Pakistan.

In last mediation step, first control variables were entered which show ($R^2= 0.05$). In step 2, job crafting has ($\beta= 0.79***$, $\Delta R^2=0.44***$, $p<0.001$), hence showing significant relation with work engagement. However in last step, job autonomy show insignificant relation with work engagement ($\beta= 0.02$, $R^2=0.49$ and $\Delta R^2=0.002$) hence this shows that job crafting mediates between job autonomy and work engagement as beta value (β) is 0.02 and $p >0.05$ which is insignificant hence it showed that there is full mediation.

On the basis of above results, H_3 is accepted

5. Discussion and Conclusion

5.1 Discussion

The objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between job autonomy and work

engagement in universities of Pakistan and also to explain the mediating effects of job crafting on job autonomy and work engagement. All hypotheses were accepted.

The first hypothesis proposed that there will be a positive relationship between job autonomy and work engagement among faculty members. The results showed that it was indeed the case, as job autonomy had a positive and significant relationship with the work engagement. these results are in- line with both theory and empirical results of previous research (Bakker & Demerouti 2008, Schaufeli & Salanova ,2007). Furthermore the extensive literature on job demand model conclusively shows job autonomy to be predictor of work engagement (Demerouti et al.,2001).The job demand resource model predicts that with the increase of job resources and lessening of job demands corresponding increase will be observed in work engagement. As the physical ,psychological and social resources grow the antecedents of more autonomous work activities are laid .this fosters psychological climate for the employee which propels him to take initiative ,proactive and positive tasks on his own account .

The Self-concordance theory further provides a useful lens to understand our formulated hypothesis. The genuine personal interest and goals reflect the level of work engagement an employee will have ,given that job autonomy is guaranteed Our results showed the extent to which an employee is engaged with his/her work is dependent upon the freedom of activities such as job-related tasks or individual goals and personal values (Sheldon & Elliot, 1999). Our results are in harmony with the stated theory.

The second formulated hypothesis stated that there will be a positive relationship between job autonomy and job crafting. the results of regression showed that job autonomy is positively and highly significant to job crafting .Similar results have been recorded in the literature (Bakker, 2010 , Ghitulescu, 2006).the result is not surprising as job crafting is a behavior that is associated with autonomous jobs constituting of more complex tasks . As shown by previous literature higher degree of autonomy and discretion lead to greater opportunity to craft (Berg 2007)

The third hypothesis proposed that job autonomy will have a positive relationship with job crafting which will lead to work engagement. The results of the study showed that job crafting fully mediates job autonomy and work engagement. Tims & Bakker (2010) employed job crafting as a mediator in their proposed model, and further empirically validated by (Bakker et al 2012).

The result is significant based on following reasons. Firstly this empirically validates research association of job crafting with job autonomy and work engagement

Secondly it shows that job crafting is essential in understanding the process involved in the relationship between job autonomy and work engagement. Faculty members, who, comparatively score higher on job autonomy scale (i.e. they have high job autonomy), are encouraged to engage in proactive changes to their work, which in turn, engrosses them in their work.

Thirdly the conservation of resource theory (Hobfoll, 1981) illuminates this relation by proposing that the primary objective of employees is to conserve the psychological resources in order to successfully carry out the job demands. Job autonomy, as an integral part of job resources, facilitates the job crafting behaviors which result in preservation of their psychological resources as work becomes increasingly aligned with their personal interest and values .This has the predicted effect of more absorption in work for employees.

The last hypothesis of the study proposed that there will be a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement. The hypothesis was accepted as the results showed that there is a positive and highly significant relationship between job crafting and work engagement. The results accord with previous studies on the topic (Bakker 2011, Bakker, Tims & Derks 2012) Engaged employees conserve their own engagement through a process of job crafting (Bakker & Leiter 2010)

To conclude, job autonomy and job crafting plays an important role in engaging employees to their work .Employees, when provided with job autonomy, are more likely to engage in their work and work gets done more quickly and with better results. Employees must perceive that the environment in which they are working is autonomous; this imparts a sense of ownership in their work.

The job crafting construct have not been explored in Pakistan yet, the current study is the first attempt in this regard . The most valuable findings of our research is that job crafting mediates the relationship between job autonomy and work engagement .Employees with job autonomy have more opportunity to craft their jobs and this enables them to be more engage in creating more challenging work environment. Definitely, more research is needed in this area with different organizational settings of the job crafting construct in order to increase the generalizability of its findings. Additionally, different attitudinal and behavioral

variables can be studied by employing job crafting as a mediator.

5.3 Implications

This study has both particle and theoretical implications.

- This study gives empirical validation of the model in Pakistan as this is the first study to shed light on job crafting.
- Second implication, directed at the organizational level, may be to create an organizational climate that fosters work engagement (Bakker et al., 2011). Organizations that provide supportive environment for their employees are more eager to devote their energy and time at work and show more involvement when they are provided with a supportive environment and an environment where their needs are responded .
- Employees are more likely to increase their work engagement when they are provided with an opportunity where they can grow ,develop their abilities and skills .
- One implication is that employee job crafting construct should receive more attention at work because of its positive effect on employee well-being. Because job crafting occurs within organizations, managers should be aware of the effect that employees can have on their own work environment. Managers could provide employees with opportunities to craft their jobs (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

5.4 Limitations

Following are the limitation of the study that needs to be addressed:

- Due to time constraint the data was collected from the faculty members working in universities located in Rawalpindi and Islamabad only.
- Another limitation of the present study is that cross-sectional data was used and collected through convenience sampling. This technique is useful when researcher has limited resources whereas when using probability sampling the results are more authentic. The sample size was not large and bigger sample size would give more appropriate understanding of casual relationships.

5.5 Direction for future Research

There are several issues that are needed to be addressed in future.

- This study employed Job autonomy which is only one dimension of Job characteristic model. The Job characteristic model should be studied holistically with its impact on work engagement through the mediating role of job crafting. The results would most likely generate more insightful conclusions to the job crafting construct.
- The Job crafting variable is unexamined in Pakistani setting , therefore it may prove to be fruitful endeavor to future researcher .
- It is not necessary that job crafting always has positive effects, hence it is suggested to test empirically that under what conditions job crafting produces positive outcomes or has negative results .

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