

The Role of Work Engagement in Mediating the Effect of Job Crafting on Employee Job Satisfaction at PT ABC Sidoarjo

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Abstract: *This study aims to examine the effect of job crafting on job satisfaction, with work engagement as a mediating variable among employees of PT ABC in Sidoarjo. This research employs a quantitative approach using primary data collected through questionnaires distributed to 65 employees using a total sampling technique. Data were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling–Partial Least Squares (SEM-PLS) with WarpPLS 7.0 software. The results indicate that job crafting, work engagement, and job satisfaction are at good to high levels descriptively. The measurement model meets the criteria for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability, with Composite Reliability values above 0.70 and satisfactory AVE values. Hypothesis testing reveals that job crafting has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction and work engagement. Furthermore, work engagement significantly influences job satisfaction. Mediation analysis shows that work engagement partially mediates the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. These findings suggest that proactive employee behavior in modifying and shaping their work not only directly enhances job satisfaction but also indirectly increases it through stronger work engagement. Therefore, organizations are encouraged to promote job crafting practices and strengthen employee engagement to improve job satisfaction and achieve sustainable organizational performance.*

Keywords: *Job Crafting, Work Engagement, Job Satisfaction, SEM-PLS*

1. Introduction

Employee loyalty reflects employees' satisfaction with their jobs. Employees who are satisfied are more likely to demonstrate stronger commitment, perform effectively, and contribute to organizational success (Hardeba, 2017). However, maintaining employee job satisfaction has become increasingly challenging in today's dynamic work environment, where rapid technological advances, changing work arrangements, and rising job demands continuously reshape employees' work experiences.

Recent evidence highlights this challenge. According to the SEEK Workplace Happiness Index (2025), Indonesia ranks first among Asia-Pacific countries in workplace happiness, with 82% of employees reporting that they are happy at work. Nevertheless, the survey also revealed that 44% of employees experience work-related stress and 43% suffer from burnout. Excessive workloads, insufficient organizational support, role ambiguity, limited career opportunities, and rapid technological changes were identified as major contributors to these conditions. Furthermore, workers with higher income levels tend to report greater workplace happiness than those with lower earnings. These findings suggest that high workplace happiness does not necessarily eliminate psychological strain, raising concerns about employees' long-term job satisfaction.

This phenomenon is also evident at the organizational level. Based on interviews conducted with the Human Resources Department (HRD) of PT ABC, the company has experienced relatively high employee absenteeism and frequent cases of employees leaving work before the end of their scheduled working hours. These behavioral indicators suggest that some employees

may be experiencing low levels of job satisfaction. This organizational evidence reinforces the national findings and highlights the practical importance of identifying factors that enhance employees' job satisfaction.

One factor that has received considerable attention is job crafting, which refers to employees' proactive efforts to redesign aspects of their jobs to better align with their skills, interests, and personal preferences (Jutengren et al., 2020). Through job crafting, employees actively shape their work to create more meaningful and satisfying job experiences. Previous studies have consistently shown that job crafting improves various employee outcomes, including work engagement and job satisfaction.

However, the theoretical foundation of job crafting is rooted in Western cultural values that emphasize individualism, autonomy, and proactive agency (Lin and Meng 2024). Consequently, its applicability across different cultural contexts remains uncertain. In collectivistic societies such as Indonesia, where interpersonal relationships, hierarchical norms, and collective values are more strongly emphasized, employees may engage in job crafting differently. Supporting this argument, recent cross-cultural research found that the positive relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction was significant in Lebanon and the United States but not in India, indicating that cultural context may influence how job crafting contributes to employee satisfaction. These inconsistent findings suggest that the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction may not always be direct and highlight an important research gap regarding the generalizability of job crafting theory in collectivistic cultures.

One possible explanation for these inconsistent findings is the presence of underlying psychological mechanisms. Work engagement, characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption, represents a positive motivational state that enables employees to experience greater fulfillment in their work (Zhang and Li 2020). Previous studies have demonstrated that job crafting positively enhances work engagement (Cheng and Yi 2018), (Zahoor 2021), (Borst 2018). Employees who proactively shape their work are more likely to become psychologically engaged, which subsequently enhances their job satisfaction. Despite this theoretical rationale, empirical evidence examining work engagement as a mediating mechanism between job crafting and job satisfaction remains limited, particularly in the Indonesian context.

Therefore, this study aims to address this research gap by examining the effect of job crafting on job satisfaction through the mediating role of work engagement among employees in Indonesia. By extending job crafting theory to a collectivistic cultural context, this study contributes to the growing cross-cultural literature while providing practical implications for organizations seeking to enhance employee satisfaction and engagement.

2. Literature Reviews

2.1 Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction is an individual matter, as the level of satisfaction differs from one person to another, depending on personal values and work outcomes. According to (Van den Heuvel, Demerouti, and Peeters 2015) as cited in (Zhang and Li 2020), job satisfaction is an affective reaction shown by an individual toward their job, leading employees to develop a positive attitude in the workplace. (Rahardini 2020), (Cheng and Yi 2018), and (Monita and Mahdani 2020) state that job satisfaction refers to the positive and negative feelings experienced by employees in carrying out their work. An employee can be considered satisfied when they feel happy with their job and the tasks assigned to them.

Indicators of job satisfaction include feelings of satisfaction with work activities and the results achieved, both from completed and ongoing tasks. Another important indicator is organizational support, which refers to the support provided by the company to employees so that they feel valued in the workplace (Cheng and Yi 2018), (Fu, He, and Zhang 2020).

2.2 Job Crafting

Job crafting refers to changes initiated by employees in carrying out their work or tasks (Cheng and Yi 2018). It is an effort made by employees to alter or create physical and cognitive changes in their tasks and in the constraints they face at work. This involves creatively adjusting job demands, personal preferences, and performance targets, as well as modifying and shaping

their personal or professional identity.(Miraglia et al. 2017),(Zahoor 2021),(Lee, Shin, and Baek 2017).

Job crafting consists of two types: individual and collaborative crafting. Individual crafting occurs when employees take an active role in modifying their job boundaries while creating work methods that suit them. Collaborative crafting refers to employees working together to determine ways to modify their job boundaries in order to achieve shared work goals (Cheng and Yi 2018)

The indicators of job crafting developed (Kim, Baek, and Shin 2020), include: task crafting, which is the employee's ability to modify tasks according to their needs; cognitive crafting, which is the ability to change or create perceptions about their work; and relational crafting, which is the ability to manage and shape interactions with others in the workplace.

2.3 Work Engagement

According to (Zahoor 2021) work engagement is an affective motivational construct characterized by positive work-related feelings reflected in vigor, dedication, and absorption. When employees are able to work in accordance with their needs and preferences and feel connected to their jobs, they tend to experience satisfaction with what they do and become increasingly motivated to carry out their responsibilities. Furthermore, when employees are able to adjust to tasks that may not fully align with their abilities or passions, they may develop stronger attachment and engagement toward other aspects of their work (Cahyati and Qomariyah 2019)

The indicators of work engagement, according to (Shen and Ma 2022) and (Kuok and Taormina 2017), include:

- a. Cognitive Work Engagement (CWE), which refers to employees' perceptions and thoughts about their work.
- b. Emotional Work Engagement (EWE), which refers to the emotional feelings employees experience toward their jobs.
- c. Physical Work Engagement (PWE), which refers to employees' physical condition or level of energy when performing their work tasks.

2.4 Hypotheses Development

Job crafting enables employees to proactively modify their job tasks, relationships, and work environment to better align with their abilities and needs. Such proactive behavior increases employees' sense of meaning, autonomy, and motivation, which in turn enhances their work engagement. Previous studies have consistently reported that job crafting positively influences work engagement by fostering greater enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption in work (Bakker and Demerouti 2024), (Zahoor 2021), (Zhang and Li 2020),(Stephani and Kurniawan 2019). Therefore, employees who actively engage in job crafting are expected to exhibit higher levels of work engagement.

H1: Job crafting has a positive and significant effect on work engagement

Job crafting enables employees to proactively redesign their tasks and work environment to better match their skills, interests, and job demands. By increasing autonomy and creating a more meaningful work experience, job crafting enhances employees' job satisfaction. Previous studies have consistently found that job crafting has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction (Zhang and Li 2020), (Ingusci et al. 2016), (Polatci and Sobaci 2018), (Fernández-Macias and de Bustillo Llorente 2024). Employees who actively shape their jobs are more likely to experience greater satisfaction because they can align their work roles with their personal needs and capabilities.

H2: Job crafting has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

Work engagement reflects employees' enthusiasm, dedication, and absorption in their work, which are essential for fostering positive work experiences and job satisfaction. Engaged employees are more likely to perceive their jobs as meaningful and rewarding, leading to higher levels of satisfaction. Previous studies consistently report that work engagement has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction (Garg, Dar, and Mishra 2018), (Çankır and Arıkan 2019)

(Merissa 2018)(Cahyati and Qomariyah 2019). These findings suggest that employees with higher work engagement tend to experience greater job satisfaction.

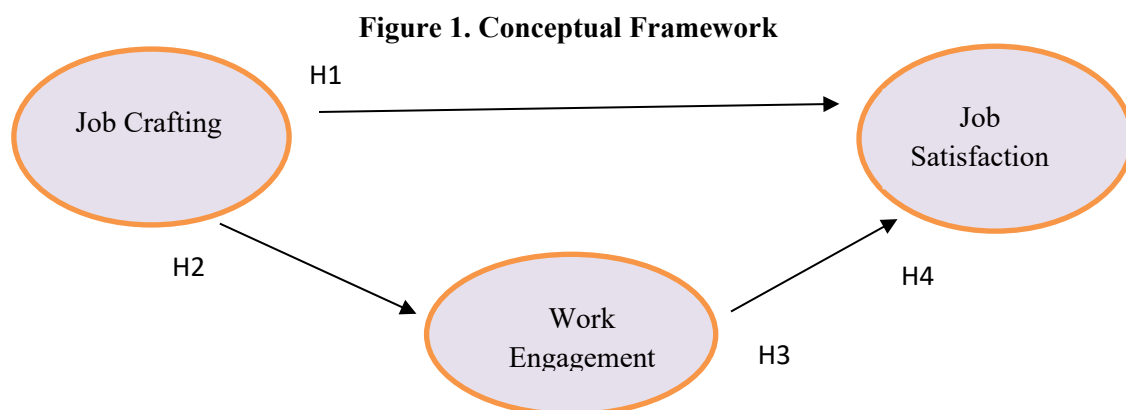
H3: Work engagement has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction.

Work engagement is considered an important psychological mechanism that explains how job resources and proactive work behaviors influence employee outcomes. Previous studies have demonstrated that work engagement serves as a significant mediator in various organizational relationships, including the effects of job crafting on turnover intention and job performance, as well as the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behavior (Borst 2018)(Zhang and Li 2020)(Lee, Shin, and Baek 2017)(Phuong and Le Ha 2022). Given that job crafting enhances work engagement and engaged employees are more likely to experience higher job satisfaction, work engagement is expected to mediate the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction.

H4: Work engagement mediates the positive effect of job crafting on job satisfaction.

2.5 Conceptual Framework

This study examines the relationship between job crafting, work engagement, and job satisfaction. Job crafting is proposed to directly influence both work engagement and job satisfaction. Employees who proactively modify their tasks, relationships, and work environment are expected to become more engaged in their work while simultaneously experiencing greater job satisfaction. Furthermore, work engagement is expected to positively influence job satisfaction. Employees who are enthusiastic, dedicated, and fully absorbed in their work are more likely to perceive their jobs positively and experience higher levels of satisfaction. In addition to its direct effects, work engagement is proposed to mediate the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. Through proactive job redesign, employees can enhance their level of engagement, which subsequently increases their job satisfaction. Based on these relationships, the conceptual framework of this study is presented in Figure 1



3. Research Methods

Employee loyalty to a company reflects a form of job satisfaction. Employees who feel satisfied with their jobs tend to deliver their best performance and are able to complete tasks as effectively as possible (Hardeba 2017). One of the factors influencing job satisfaction is job crafting and work engagement. Job crafting refers to employees' proactive efforts to redesign their jobs through a bottom-up process, in which employees modify job boundaries according to their skills and passions (Jutengren et al. 2020). The implementation of job crafting can influence an employee's level of work engagement. Work engagement is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption. It fosters positive thinking and satisfying work outcomes (Zhang and Li 2020). According to research by (Cheng and Yi 2018), as cited in (Zahoor 2021), and (Borst 2018), job crafting has a positive and significant effect on employee work engagement, meaning that higher levels of job crafting are associated with higher levels of work engagement.

Based on survey results, Indonesia ranks first as the country with the happiest workers in the Asia-Pacific region, with 82% of employees reporting happiness at work. However, the survey also revealed that 44% of workers experience stress and 43% feel burned out. High levels of stress

(44%) and burnout (43%) are mainly triggered by excessive workloads and high demands, lack of social and organizational support, role ambiguity and conflict, technology and work environment changes (WFH/WFO), lack of recognition and development opportunities, as well as individual factors such as age, education level, and tenure, which also affect resilience to workplace stress. Workers earning Rp8 million or more per month tend to report higher happiness compared to those earning below Rp2.4 million. According to data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) as of November 2025, the average monthly wage of workers/employees in Indonesia is Rp3.33 million. In today's technological era, both directly and indirectly, technological developments influence changes in work situations, quality of life, work happiness, and income levels, all of which can ultimately affect employees' job satisfaction.

Low levels of work happiness may indicate low job satisfaction. According (Anggraini 2018), an individual's level of happiness is related to several aspects of satisfaction, including job satisfaction. Based on interviews with a company's HRD representative, employee dissatisfaction can be identified through high absenteeism rates and employees leaving work earlier than scheduled. Against this background, the researcher reexamines the level of employee job satisfaction in Sidoarjo, focusing on job crafting and work engagement as a mediating variable.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1 Respondent Characteristics

This study involved 71 respondents from PT ABC with diverse characteristics in terms of position, age, gender, education level, and length of service. Based on job position, respondents were predominantly in the helper position (15.5%), followed by drivers (12.7%) and inventory staff (11.3%), while other positions were distributed in smaller percentages. This indicates that the majority of respondents come from the company's operational division. In terms of age, most respondents were within the productive age range, particularly 22–27 years (25.4%) and 32–37 years (23.9%). The smallest percentage was in the 18–22 years age group (7%).

Based on gender, respondents were predominantly male (88.7%), while female respondents accounted for only 11.3%. This reflects the nature of the work, which is largely operational and requires physical effort. Regarding education level, the majority of respondents had a senior high school (SLTA) education (83.1%), followed by bachelor's degree holders (14.1%) and diploma graduates (2.8%). In terms of tenure, most respondents had worked for 5–7 years (26.8%) and 1–3 years (25.4%). Overall, the respondent profile represents an operational workforce dominated by males, within productive age groups, with a secondary education background, and relatively stable work experience within the company.

4.2 Descriptive Statistical Analysis

Based on the results of the descriptive statistical analysis, the job satisfaction shows a mean score of 4.05 on a five-point Likert scale (5 = strongly agree to 1 = strongly disagree), indicating a high level of job satisfaction among respondents. The indicator with the highest mean value is satisfaction with daily work activities (4.08), suggesting that employees enjoy and feel comfortable with the tasks they perform. Meanwhile, the lowest mean score is found for overall job satisfaction (3.99), although it still falls within the high category. Overall, these findings demonstrate that employees have a positive perception of their working conditions and overall work experience.

Respondents reported a mean score of 3.74 for job crafting on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), indicating a high level of job crafting. According to the predetermined classification criteria, this score indicates a high level of job crafting among respondents. The highest-rated indicator was making an effort to get to know team members ($M = 3.97$), reflecting employees' strong initiative to build interpersonal relationships at work. In contrast, willingness to take on additional responsibilities received the lowest mean score ($M = 3.61$), although it remained within the high job crafting category. Overall, these findings suggest that employees actively engage in proactive behaviors to shape and improve their jobs in ways that better align with their abilities and the needs of their teams..

The descriptive statistical analysis revealed that the work engagement variable had a mean score of 3.84, measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5

(strongly agree). According to the predetermined classification criteria, this score indicates a high level of work engagement among respondents. The highest-rated indicator was feeling enthusiastic when starting the workday ($M = 3.93$), whereas feeling absorbed in work received the lowest mean score ($M = 3.73$), although it remained within the high work engagement category. Overall, these findings suggest that employees exhibit high levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption, reflecting a strong psychological attachment to their work.

Table 1. Composite Reliability and AVE

Variabel	Composite Reliability	Square Root of AVE	Description
Job Satisfaction (JS)	0,954	0,935	Reliabel & Valid
Job Crafting (JC)	0,920	0,769	Reliabel & Valid
Work Engagement (WE)	0,933	0,817	Reliabel & Valid

Source: Data source, 2025

Based on the test results, all variables have Composite Reliability values above the minimum threshold of 0.70, indicating that they are reliable. The Job Satisfaction variable has a Composite Reliability value of 0.954, Job Crafting has 0.920, and Work Engagement has 0.933. These values demonstrate that all constructs exhibit very good internal consistency.

Meanwhile, based on the square root of AVE values, each variable shows a value higher than its correlations with other constructs. The square root of AVE for Job Satisfaction is 0.935, Job Crafting is 0.769, and Work Engagement is 0.817. This indicates that each construct has good discriminant validity, as it explains more variance in its indicators than it shares with other constructs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the measurement model has met the criteria for convergent validity, discriminant validity, and reliability.

Table 2. Path Coefficient

Direct Effect			
Influence Between Variables	Path Coefficient	P-Value	Conclusion
JC → JS	0,668	0,001	Significant
JC → WE	0,826	0,001	Significant
WE → JS	0,190	0,047	Significant
Indirect Effect			
Influence Between Variables	Path Coefficient	P-Value	Conclusion
JC → WE → JS	0,157	0,027	Significant

Source: Data source, 2025

Table 2 shows the results of the hypothesis testing. The first hypothesis states that job crafting has an effect on job satisfaction. The results indicate a path coefficient (β) of 0.668 with a p-value = 0.001, which is smaller than 0.05. This means that job crafting has a significant positive effect on job satisfaction. In other words, the higher the level of job crafting, the higher the level of job satisfaction among employees.

The second hypothesis examines the effect of job crafting on work engagement. The results show a path coefficient (β) of 0.826 with a p-value = 0.001, which is also below 0.05. This indicates that job crafting has a significant positive effect on work engagement. Employees who proactively modify and shape their work tend to demonstrate stronger engagement.

The third hypothesis tests the effect of work engagement on job satisfaction. The findings reveal a path coefficient (β) of 0.190 with a p-value = 0.047, which is less than 0.05. This means that work engagement significantly influences job satisfaction.

The fourth hypothesis examined the mediating role of work engagement in the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. As shown in Table 2, both the direct effect ($\beta = 0.668$, $p = 0.001$) and the indirect effect ($\beta = 0.157$, $p = 0.027$) were significant. However, the Variance Accounted For (VAF) value of 19.03% indicates that work engagement accounts for only a small proportion of the total effect. According to Hair et al. (2022), a VAF below 20% indicates no substantive mediation. Thus, although the indirect effect was significant, work engagement

contributed only a limited mediating role, with job crafting influencing job satisfaction primarily through its direct effect.

4.3 Effect of Job Crafting on Job Satisfaction

The results indicate that job crafting positively and significantly influences job satisfaction, suggesting that employees who proactively shape their work experience report higher levels of job satisfaction. This finding is particularly relevant given that the respondents were predominantly operational employees, including helpers and drivers, most of whom were male and had completed senior high school education. These jobs are generally characterized by standardized procedures, physically demanding tasks, and limited job autonomy, leaving relatively little opportunity to redesign task content or work processes. Under such conditions, job crafting is more likely to be expressed through relational crafting than task crafting.

This interpretation is supported by the descriptive findings, which show that the highest-rated job crafting indicator was employees' efforts to build relationships with team members ($M = 3.97$), followed by recognizing the importance of their role in organizational success ($M = 3.87$). These findings suggest that operational employees primarily enhance their work experience by strengthening interpersonal relationships and developing a greater sense of meaning in their work, rather than by changing formal job tasks. In operational settings, where work is highly interdependent, effective task completion depends on close coordination, communication, and mutual support among coworkers. Building strong relationships facilitates information sharing, cooperation, and trust, enabling employees to cope more effectively with physically demanding tasks while creating a more supportive work environment. At the same time, employees who perceive their contributions as important to organizational success are more likely to experience a sense of purpose and accomplishment, which further enhances their job satisfaction.

These findings suggest that the effectiveness of job crafting depends on the characteristics of the job itself. For operational workers with limited autonomy, relational crafting, supported by cognitive crafting through a stronger sense of work meaning, represents a more feasible strategy than modifying formal job tasks. Consequently, organizations should foster collaborative work environments and encourage positive interpersonal interactions, as these conditions enable employees to optimize available social resources and improve their job satisfaction. This finding supports previous studies reporting a positive relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction (Ingusci et al., 2016; Polatci & Sobaci, 2018; Zhang & Li, 2020), while extending the literature by demonstrating that relational crafting, complemented by cognitive crafting, constitutes the predominant form of job crafting among operational employees in the Indonesian context.

4.4 Effect of Job Crafting on Work Engagement

The results indicate that job crafting has a positive and significant effect on work engagement, suggesting that employees who proactively shape their work experience are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption. This finding is particularly relevant because the respondents were predominantly operational employees, including helpers and drivers, whose jobs are characterized by standardized procedures, physically demanding tasks, and limited job autonomy. Under these conditions, employees have relatively few opportunities to modify formal job tasks, making relational and cognitive crafting more feasible than task crafting.

The descriptive findings support this interpretation. The highest-rated job crafting indicators were making an effort to get to know team members ($M = 3.97$) and recognizing the importance of one's role in organizational success ($M = 3.87$). These results suggest that employees primarily enhance their work experience by strengthening workplace relationships and assigning greater meaning to their work. In operational environments, where task completion depends heavily on teamwork and coordination, supportive interpersonal relationships facilitate communication, knowledge sharing, and mutual assistance, enabling employees to manage demanding work more effectively.

The work engagement results further reinforce this explanation. Employees reported the highest scores for feeling proud of their job ($M = 3.89$), feeling enthusiastic while performing their work ($M = 3.87$), and perceiving their work as inspiring ($M = 3.86$), whereas feeling fully

absorbed in work received the lowest score ($M = 3.73$), although it remained in the high category. This pattern indicates that job crafting contributes more strongly to the dedication dimension of work engagement than to absorption. Operational employees may not always become fully immersed in their work because their tasks are routine and physically demanding; however, supportive coworker relationships and a strong sense of work meaning foster greater enthusiasm, pride, and commitment to their jobs.

These findings suggest that, among operational employees with limited job autonomy, relational crafting, reinforced by cognitive crafting, is the primary mechanism through which job crafting enhances work engagement. Rather than changing formal job tasks, employees become more engaged by strengthening social relationships and recognizing the value of their contributions to organizational success. This finding supports previous studies demonstrating a positive relationship between job crafting and work engagement (Zahoor, 2021; Monita & Mahdani, 2020; Stephani & Kurniawan, 2019), while extending the literature by showing that, in the Indonesian operational work context, job crafting enhances work engagement primarily by fostering dedication through social connectedness and meaningful work.

4.5 Effect of Work Engagement on Job Satisfaction

The results indicate that work engagement has a positive and significant effect on job satisfaction, suggesting that employees with higher levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption are more likely to experience greater job satisfaction. This finding is particularly relevant because the respondents were predominantly operational employees, including helpers and drivers, whose work involves routine, physically demanding tasks and limited job autonomy. In such work settings, psychological engagement becomes an important internal resource that helps employees maintain positive attitudes toward their jobs despite demanding working conditions.

The descriptive findings support this relationship. The highest-rated work engagement indicators were feeling proud of one's job ($M = 3.89$), feeling enthusiastic while performing work ($M = 3.87$), and perceiving work as inspiring ($M = 3.86$). Similarly, the highest-rated job satisfaction indicator was satisfaction with daily work activities ($M = 4.08$). These findings suggest that employees who feel proud of and enthusiastic about their work are more likely to enjoy their daily tasks and evaluate their work experiences positively. For operational employees, who often perform repetitive activities, enthusiasm and pride in their work help transform routine tasks into meaningful experiences, thereby increasing satisfaction with their jobs.

Although being fully absorbed in work received the lowest work engagement score ($M = 3.73$), it remained within the high category, as did overall job satisfaction ($M = 3.99$). This pattern is understandable given the nature of operational work, which requires continuous physical activity, adherence to standard operating procedures, and frequent coordination with coworkers, making it more difficult for employees to become completely immersed in their tasks. Nevertheless, strong dedication and enthusiasm appear sufficient to sustain high levels of job satisfaction.

These findings suggest that, among operational employees, dedication plays a more prominent role than absorption in enhancing job satisfaction. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful, take pride in their contributions, and remain enthusiastic are more likely to evaluate their jobs positively, even when their work is physically demanding and relatively routine. This finding supports previous studies demonstrating a positive relationship between work engagement and job satisfaction (Çankır & Arıkan, 2019; Garg et al., 2018; Merissa, 2018),

4.6 The Mediating Role of Work Engagement in the Relationship Between Job Crafting and Job Satisfaction

The fourth hypothesis proposed that work engagement mediates the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction. Although the indirect effect was significant ($\beta = 0.157$, $p = 0.027$), the Variance Accounted For (VAF) was only 19.03%, which is below the 20% threshold recommended by Hair et al. (2022). Therefore, the mediating role of work engagement was not substantively supported, indicating that job crafting influences job satisfaction primarily through its direct effect.

This finding contrasts with previous studies by Zhang and Li (2020), Loi et al. (2020), Mälikangas et al. (2023), and Teng and Cheng (2025), which reported that work engagement

significantly mediates the relationship between job crafting and positive work outcomes. Similarly, an Indonesian study by Kibbianingsih and Hadi (2025) found that work engagement significantly mediated the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction.

A possible explanation for this discrepancy lies in the characteristics of the respondents. The present study involved predominantly operational employees, including helpers and drivers, whose jobs are highly standardized, physically demanding, and characterized by limited job autonomy. In this context, employees have relatively few opportunities to redesign formal job tasks and instead rely more on relational crafting, by strengthening relationships with coworkers, and cognitive crafting, by recognizing the importance of their work. These proactive behaviors appear to improve employees' daily work experiences and job satisfaction directly, rather than indirectly through higher work engagement.

The relatively low VAF further indicates that work engagement explains only a small proportion of the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction, suggesting that other psychological mechanisms may be more influential. This interpretation is consistent with Letona-Ibañez et al. (2021), who demonstrated that work meaningfulness is a key mechanism linking job crafting to positive work outcomes, indicating that employees may first derive meaning from their work before developing stronger engagement. Accordingly, the present study extends the literature by suggesting that the mediating role of work engagement is context-dependent and may be less prominent among operational employees with limited job autonomy, where workplace relationships and work meaningfulness exert a more immediate influence on job satisfaction.

5. Conclusions

This study demonstrates that job crafting is an important antecedent of both work engagement and job satisfaction among operational employees. Employees who proactively strengthen workplace relationships and assign greater meaning to their work tend to report higher levels of engagement and job satisfaction. Although work engagement positively influences job satisfaction, its role in explaining the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction was not substantively supported. This finding indicates that job crafting contributes to job satisfaction primarily through its direct effect rather than through work engagement.

The findings provide important theoretical implications by showing that the mediating role of work engagement is context-dependent. Unlike previous studies that identified work engagement as a significant mediating mechanism, this study suggests that, among operational employees with limited job autonomy, relational crafting and cognitive crafting play a more prominent role in enhancing job satisfaction. These findings extend the job crafting literature by demonstrating that the psychological mechanisms linking job crafting to work outcomes may differ according to occupational characteristics and work context.

From a managerial perspective, the findings suggest that PT ABC should encourage employees to engage in job crafting by fostering collaboration, strengthening communication among coworkers, and reinforcing the significance of employees' contributions to organizational success. Managers and supervisors should create a supportive work environment that enables employees to develop positive workplace relationships, exchange knowledge, and recognize the value of their work. Such initiatives are expected to improve job satisfaction directly while simultaneously maintaining employees' work engagement.

This study has several limitations. The findings were obtained from operational employees within a single organization, which may limit their generalizability to other industries and occupational groups. In addition, the cross-sectional design does not permit causal inferences. Since work engagement did not emerge as a substantial mediating mechanism, future studies should explore other psychological mechanisms that may better explain how job crafting enhances job satisfaction, such as work meaningfulness, psychological empowerment, perceived organizational support, person–job fit, or organizational commitment. Future research is also encouraged to examine different occupational groups and organizational contexts to obtain a more comprehensive understanding of the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction.

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