

Proactive Personality, Job Crafting and Work Engagement: Progenitors of Work Performance

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Abstract: *The sustainability of a whole business depends on the performance of its employees, and employers are constantly interested in improving employee job performance. Organizations are using cutting-edge innovations in this age of globalization, but there is an urgent need for competent personnel to ensure overall success. The importance of individual variables as a predictor to employee work performance is examined in this paper. Previous research has shown that proactive self-starting behaviour is becoming increasingly crucial for better performance, and that high levels of job crafting have a significant impact on worker's performance. Work engagement is a positive mental condition of advancement that can be a predictor of desired performance results. Studies already conducted should try to investigate those aspects that might improve work performance. The paper provides an integrative framework relating the three individual factors viz; proactive personality, job crafting and work engagement, to the dependent variable, which is work performance, by drawing on prior research. The study suggests work engagement and job crafting as a mediator to elucidate the link between work performance and proactive behaviour in order to get a deeper understanding of the concept.*

Keywords: Job Crafting, Proactive Personality, Work Engagement, Work Performance

Introduction

Due to the pressures of economic uncertainty and instability, the business environment is currently changing quickly. Organizations need to safeguard their resources in order to combat the dynamic influences in the outside environment. Employees are one of the most crucial resources since they are the center of a business and the foundation for its growth and success as a whole. Therefore, one of the most crucial things for a company to attain its competitive advantage and maximize its productivity is the performance of its people at work. According to Cropanzano and Mitchell (2005), productivity and performance are indicators of an employee's degree of satisfaction. Therefore, if employers don't meet their demands, motivation and satisfaction levels would suffer, which would certainly reduce worker's performance as well as organizational performance.

Today, organizations are dependent on workers who can perform in the changing contexts as they progressively modernize and go global. Therefore, self-motivated and independent workers are essential to companies. Those who have a proactive disposition, which is characterized by willingness and a strong desire to take on more duties, are very well equipped to make significant changes for these unpredictable conditions. One method through which proactive workers might bring about change is the job crafting process. Job crafting is characterized as a continuous activity where workers alter their work duties and shape their surroundings. Despite the fact that job crafting and proactivity are always taken in a duet manner, the role of proactive personality in predicting job crafting is mostly investigated. The emergence of innovations in almost every organization has transformed everyday physical and intellectual work. Additionally, proactive staff-members use innovative methods to improve the workplace, which is essential to achieving the desired results like work performance (AlShamsi, 2017).

Despite the fact number of studies has been conducted on the factors influencing work performance, but there is still a vacuum in the literature that needs to be filled in order to help companies improve employee performance. Work performance stands as a very important domain in literature of organizational behavior (OB) and human resource (HR) development and is of high relevance for organizations and individuals alike. Also more research is needed to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of what happens when individuals are performing, the underlying factors which influence individual performance at the personal and organizational levels.

Literature Review

This section includes a thorough analysis of the PP, JC, WE and WP variables. This section discusses the importance of ideas put forth by various analysts and researchers as well as how these factors affect employee performance. It also includes earlier studies that shed light on how these factors relate to one another.

Proactive Personality: According to Crant (2000), proactivity refers to the propensity to take the initiative and start things moving rather than adapting to the situation and waiting for anything to happen. The creative worker looks for opportunities to seize them by implementing innovative strategies in order to gain an edge (Bateman & Crant, 1993). The PP experiences beneficial developments regardless of unanticipated environmental constraints. The typical approach of PP is to consider the situation, show action, make a move, and keep going until they reach a conclusion through recognizing change (Bateman & Crant, 1993). In reality, passive people won't be the ones to take advantage of the opportunities that present themselves (Bateman & Crant, 1993).

According to OB and psychology, an individual's behaviour is under internal and external control, whilst their environment is under their control and their behaviour depends on their environment (Jawahar & Liu, 2017). The scholars, on the other hand, view conditional and individual collaboration as a dynamic process. Keeping in mind, that individuals and conditions can have an impact on one another in this way (Bateman & Crant, 1993). A few decades ago, specialists concentrated on POB, where factors like workplace proactivity increased productivity. Additionally, because PPs are often dynamic and activity-based, they are constantly looking for new opportunities for advancement and attempting to create their own conditions in accordance with their professional requirements. Because of this, proactive individuals are more adaptable and stable (Tolentino et al., 2014).

For every organization, having a proactive workforce is now more of a must than a choice (Bergeron, Schroeder, & Martinez, 2014). An analysis by Greguras and Diefendorff (2010) revealed PP has a link with the in-role behaviour and OCB, which has three dimensions of civility, sportsmanship, and altruism. Studies have shown that PP might be a decent signal of another authoritative conduct.

According to Crant's recommendation from 2000, PP has a good impact on the attitudes and behaviours of representatives since it tries to open doors that are especially related to group adequacy. According to Uy, Chan, Sam, Ho, and Chernyshenko (2015), PP places a greater emphasis on self-management tactics are interested in developing routines that help them develop skills that will increase their chances of finding employment and these skills are seen to be optimal for the development of the associations' human capital.

Research has shown direct support for the positive association between proactive personality and job crafting. For example, a cross-sectional study conducted by Bakker et al. (2012) among 95 dyads ($n = 190$) in the Netherlands found that employees who have a proactive personality were more inclined to craft their jobs (i.e. increasing structural or social job resources and challenging job demands). Comparable results were reported by Plomp et al. (2016) among a heterogeneous group of 574 employees and by Zhang, Lu and Li (2018) among 1971 employees. Crant's (2000) theory of proactive personality argues that proactive individuals are more inclined towards influencing their environment to create favorable work conditions and opportunities. They willfully initiate changes that result in synchronization of their abilities and preferences with the characteristics of job

Job Crafting: The job design has been a starting point for examining how workers feel about their employment over time (Wresniewski & Dutton, 2001). What employees do on a daily basis, how they do it, and who they engage with is, in part, determined by the job design. However, more recently, a more active role for employees has been stressed in place of traditional work design ideas (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli, & Hetland, 2012). According to Wresniewski, LoBuglio, Dutton, and Berg (2013), the psychological experiences workers have at work have a significant impact on their performance and satisfaction.

The interdisciplinary approach to job design (Campion, 1988) proposes that employees can be motivated through the design of their jobs. However, since employees working in contemporary organizations likely has at least some latitude to modify their jobs (Oldham & Hackman, 2010), there is increasing interest in the way employees influence or shape their own jobs. Wrzesniewski & Dutton (2001) formally refer to this influence as job crafting and defined it as "the actions employees take to shape, mold, and redefine their

jobs". Job crafting is viewed as the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in their task or relational boundaries. Physical changes refer to changes in the form, scope or number of job tasks, whereas cognitive changes refer to changing how one sees the job. Relational changes refers to the determination of how often and with whom employees interact at work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton 2001). Job crafting, according to Tims et al. (2012), is the alteration that employees may do to strike a balance between the demands and resources of their jobs and their own personal needs and capabilities. Tims and Bakker (2010) framed job crafting in the context of the Job Demands-Resources model (JD-R model; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Tims et al. (2012) suggested that job crafting consists of four dimensions; increasing challenging job demands, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing structural job resources and increasing social job resources. Increasing challenging job demands requires acting in ways like requesting for additional assignments and volunteering for special initiatives. Decreasing hindering job demands refers to those behaviours, where people tend to reduce emotional, cognitive, and physical demands, such as reducing workload and resolving work-family problems. Increasing structural job resources refers to behaviors that aim to boost skill diversity, autonomy, and previous motivating aspects of the one's job. Eventually, increasing social job resources entails requesting guidance and feedback from coworkers and superiors (Rudolph et al., 2015)

Job crafting has a specific positive relationship with work performance as workers can perform better when they make changes to their jobs (Tims, Bakker and Derks, 2015). Berg, Dutton and Wrzesniewski (2008) called attention to the fact that job crafting promotes positive behaviour at work such as increase in personal advancement and capabilities, ability to cope up with any unpleasant situation and increased distinguishing proof with one's work. According to Dorenbosch, Bakker, Demerouti, and Van Dam (2013), job crafting affects not only work engagement but also work performance. Employees' who craft their job optimize the demands and resources in their work environment, which helps them to achieve their work related goals (Tims, Bakker, Derks, & Van Rhenen, 2013). Van Dam, Nikolova, and Van Ruyseveldt (2013) showed that employees who actively pursued job crafting reported more confidence and involvement with the organization and performed better than employees who made few changes in their work.

Work Engagement: Employees are said to be reined in to the workplace by providing them with a space where they may express what is needed on a physical, mental, and sincere level at work (Kahn, 1990). Work Engagement was termed as a pleasant and optimistic attitude by Schaufeli and Bakker in 2004. Oftenly, this phrase is associated to working environment; it very well may be described as the association of pleasant attitudes towards the job and workplace (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Kahn (1990) has highlighted the effects of Work Engagement as workers become more engaged with their job, feel protected, and have access to every resource provided by the association to carry out their task more effectively.

In addition to authoritative duty, vigor, dedication, energy commitment, job inclusion, and satisfaction alone, the concept incorporates several implications and sub-measurements (Macey & Schneider, 2008). Work engagement is considered as the positive absolute opposite of burnout. As opposed to the individuals who experience the ill effects of burnout, engaged employees have a feeling of dynamic and effective association with their work; rather than stressful and demanding they view their work as challenging. WE is regarded as one of the crucial elements that contribute to the overall success of the task and to gaining the upper hand (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). According to Costa, Passos, and Bakker (2015), the reason for WE's recognition is that it is a potent predictor of successful work outcomes, as well as individual and group performance. Additionally, employees' strong commitment to their jobs aids in improving work performance. Because they are open to new experiences, engaged people are more likely to generate creative ideas and do excellent work (Gawke, Gorgievski, & Bakker, 2017; Orth and Volmer, 2017).

As significant positive correlation between Work Engagement and group performance has been discovered, it has also been acknowledged that drawn-in experts are incredibly helpful to their colleagues (Costa et al., 2015; Tims et al., 2013). While doing a group assignment, it has been observed that WE has a progressively growing effect as it moves from one employee to the next (Bakker et al., 2006; Gutermann, Willenbrock, Boer, Born, & Voelpel, 2017; Van Mierlo & Bakker, 2018). Demerouti and Cropanzano (2010) have found positive connection between employee's engagement and work performance. In one of the investigations, Bakker and Bal (2010) found that teacher's weekly level of work engagement predicts their weekly level of work performance. A high level of employee engagement is related to increase in return on investment,

earnings per share, high performance, high sales growth and low absenteeism (Harter et al., 2002; Salanova et al., 2005; Towers Perrin, 2003). From an organizational standpoint, it is crucial to understand changes in employee engagement at work as well as the overall levels of WE and if these varying levels of engagement have any effects on HR operations (Bakker & Albrecht, 2018). According to Ashforth and Humphrey (1995), investing in employees increases their engagement and zeal to produce good outcomes. Sonnentag (2017) argued that, unless it differs from work tasks, WE emerged while at work and that it cannot be distinguished from person to person interactions or ordinary occurrence.

Work Performance: Work performance is the visible conduct that workers exhibit while doing their duties and is pertinent to the objectives of the business Campbell, (1990). Traditionally, an employee's work performance was assessed, based on how well they performed the activities outlined in their job description. However, the traditional understanding of job performance has been challenged by the changing nature of work and organizations.

Work performance, which stands for stunning appropriateness, relevance, and fittingness, is seen as the behavioral outcome of the employee who displays good mental states and attitudes at work (Ramawickrama, Opatha, & Pushpa Kumari, 2017). Various experts have described it using a range of metrics. Work performance is depicted by a worker's talents, abilities, and efforts at work. According to Murphy (1989), WP should be evaluated by personal behavior norms rather than outcomes. Whatever the case, WP is described as an employee's quick and covert commitment and contribution to corporate goals (Borman & Brush, 1993).

Porter and Lawler (1974) considered job performance as a function of individual ability, skills and effort in a given situation. Others added several highlighted elements to this concept and some considered it as an individual behaviour, closely linked with organizational goals. Murphy (1989) explained that job performance in terms of behaviour rather than results. Ferris et al.(1998) considered employee's job performance depends on or is a consequence of some combination of ability, effort and opportunity. Viswesvaran and Ones (2000) explained it as scalable actions, behaviour and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with and contribute to organizational goals.. Opatha (2015) suggested that "an employee's job performance is the extent to which duties and responsibilities have been carried out". Two major criteria of measuring job performance are quantity of work and quality of work.

According to Arulrajah, Opatha, and Nawaratne (2015), WP is defined as a degree in which assigned responsibilities and duties are moved; thus, the two criteria to measure WP are the quality and volume of work in the interim. Griffin, Neal, and Parker (2007) added that it was the summarization of an employee's behavior. In organizational and industrial research, WP is the crucial variable. A two-factor theory of work performance was presented by Borman and Motowidlo in 1993, according to which task performance and contextual performance make up the majority of occupations. They defined task performance as the actions directly associated with finishing the task. Task-related actions support the technological foundation of the organization. Typically, task performance-related behavior is acknowledged as a formal condition of employment. The requirements of these tasks are frequently stated explicitly in job descriptions Although this kind of performance is frequently not listed in a job description, it is nonetheless thought to be a crucial part of work performance.

After examining these definitions from multiple academics, WP was initially thought of as a person's organizing skills, but as time went on, scientists began to shed light on its connection to organizational goals. The degree of the WP of a worker in an organization may be determined by a number of factors. According to Baytos and Kleiner's (1995) theory, a worker's accurate WP estimate is determined by their productivity, timeliness, work performance, and quality. Fair judgment, effective training, HR, and productivity, according to Borman and Brush (1993), are the appropriate metrics to assess WP.

According to Borman and Brush (1993), the proper indicators for evaluating WP include employee actions, job outcomes, and worker personal attributes. While Campbell, Campbell, and Chia (1998) proposed that motivation and group interdependence are excellent measures of performance improvement. Businesses and working conditions are changing; WP's assessment of personnel has moved from traditional methods to novel ones. According to Griffin et al. (2007), there have been two changes: the first is an increase in interdependency, and the second is the vulnerability of working methodologies.

The formal techniques for WP measuring, in a similar vein, did not take into account all of the behaviors and attitudes toward evolving and dubious requirements of present working contexts. Despite the similarities between culture and nature, individuals differ from one another in their perspectives, identities, attitudes, and interactions (Ramawickrama et al., 2017).

Conceptual Framework: Positive relationship between proactive personality and job crafting has been cited in various studies of Rudolph, et al. 2017; Kirkeldall, 2013; Tims & Bakker, 2010). Comparable results were reported by Plomp et al. (2016) among a heterogeneous group of 574 employees and by Zhang, Lu and Li (2018).

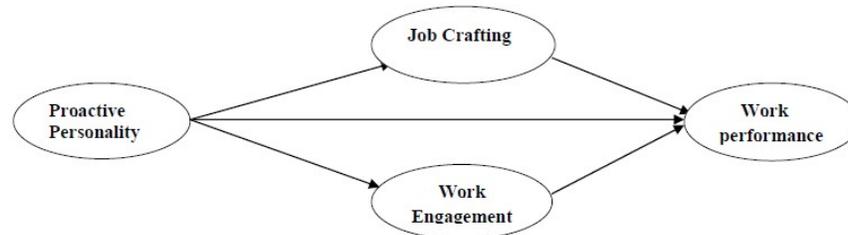


Figure1: Proposed conceptual framework

A significant positive relationship has been also revealed in two researches in PP and WE (Jawahar, & Liu, 2017; Josje et al., 2010; Dikkers et al; 2010). Hakanen et al. (2008) found a positive link between personal initiative and work engagement.

Studies have also shown PP, and WP are positively correlated (Thompson, 2005; Baba et al.'s (2009); Fuller, Hester, & Cox, 2010; Bakker, Tims, & Derks, 2012. Previous studies of Greguras and Diefendorff (2010) have demonstrated a favorable, direct correlation between proactive personality and work performance. Proactive personality is another factor that Daniel's (2006) study suggests is crucial for measuring work performance. Therefore, by integrating all the studies regarding the positive relations between proactive personality and job crafting behavior and between proactive personality and work engagement our theoretical arguments suggest that proactive personality is a predictor of employee work performance, through the effects of job crafting behavior and work engagement. Proactive employees optimize their job demands and resources to align their working conditions to their own needs and abilities. By optimizing their working conditions via job crafting, employees create a work environment that fosters their enthusiasm and engagement and subsequently their work performance. This is in line with Thompson (2005), who demonstrated that people with proactive personalities do well because they use their own initiative and participate in socializing. Previous studies have demonstrated a favorable, direct correlation between a PP and effective job performance (Greguras and Diefendorff, 2010), and this theoretical framework incorporates this direct connection.

Conclusion

The primary factor in any firm is regarded to be employee performance on the job. Recalling the purpose of this paper, the suggested framework will assist the researchers in examining the relationships between proactive personality, job crafting, work engagement and work performance, while analyzing the critical views. The conceptual framework of the current study will assist in elucidating how PP via job crafting and work engagement can increase employee work performance.

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