

Research Article

Significance of Supportive HRM Practices and Job Satisfaction towards Work Engagement

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Abstract: The main intention is to probe the impression of the HR practices on work engagement. The study has tested the intervening role of job satisfaction in the connection between supportive HR practices (job security and job crafting) and work engagement. In line with this, partial least square (PLS-SEM) through SmartPLS software 3.0 was used to perform the analysis. 576 instruments were disseminated, out of which 465 were received returned, whereas 85 questionnaires were discarded because they were not filled correctly. Therefore, final analysis was executed on 380 responses and the response rate of 80.729%. The current research concluded a significant affirmative link exists among supportive HRM practices towards job satisfaction and work engagement. Findings show that workers of the hotel industry in Oman found time job security and job crafting better sources of job satisfaction and work engagement. Additionally, this research also found significant intervening influence of job satisfaction on the association of job security, job crafting with work engagement. This research has valuable theoretical and practical implications.

Keywords: *Supportive HRM Practices; Job Security; Job Crafting; Job Satisfaction; Work Engagement*

1. Introduction

Since decades, organizations are facing huge complex obstacles like changes in demographics, performance expectations and globalization (El-Kot & Leat 2008; Chandrakumara & Sparrow 2004; Othman, 2009). Due to such obstacles, there is a need to manage human resources competitively for strategic survival in the market. Scholars such as Huertas-Valdivia et al. (2019); Chen and Peng (2019) narrate that the hospitality sector, like the hotel industry, focuses on engaged workforce. Engaged workforce is a source of competitive edge, long-term achievement, and most importantly, financial success (Albrecht et al. 2015; Xanthopoulou et al. 2009). According to Bakker et al., 2011; Schaufeli et al., 2006) that engaged employees deliver dedication, high energy and work with concentration. Disengaged employees are opposite to engaged employees and can be a reason of loss in trillion dollars on yearly basis globally (Christian & Ellis, 2013).

Hence, retaining and hiring employees with skills is utmost need of the hotel industry, especially for front desk employees (Karatepe & Ngeche, 2012). Frontline employees have a significant contribution to the hotel industry's success, but unfortunately, most of the frontline staff work under immense stress. Even they face huge difficulty in handling clients (Karatepe et al., 2013). These employees are the presenters of an organization and the ones who meet all the challenges towards serving clients (Kusluvan, 2003). Another issue faced by frontline staff is lower wage rate and high turnover intentions (Nadiri & Tanova, 2010). Employees who think of switching the job tend to deliver low performance, which can harm customers and employee relations (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). Therefore, businesses, especially the hotel sector, are much concerned about employee engagement by imparting their role for organizational success (Shuck & Wollard, 2010; Bakker & Demeterouti, 2008). The current research is equipped with literature on engagement in the hotel industry and how the hotel sector can influence employee engagement and identify the predictors through empirical evidence. The current research includes a discussion on work engagement and its predictors in the hotel industry. This research also provides implications for both practitioners and researchers for understanding the engagement of employees in the hotel industry. The Job Demand resource model (JDR) and social exchange theory were used to devise the research model. The main idea of this research was to identify the key predictors of work engagement that came in the name of supportive HRM practices.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Work Engagement

Though work engagement has not been properly defined, still concept is growing (Saks, & Gruman, 2014). Kahn (1990) first defined engagement concept as psychological conditions and experience, which helps employees use emotionally and cognitively during role performing. Work engagement or employee engagement are interchangeably used in research. Empirical evidence such as Bakker and Demerouti (2008); Koyuncu et al. (2006) suggest that employees with work engagement are better to perform and remain part of the organization. The role of frontline employees is best suited for work engagement, in which they involve themselves in their work and are enthusiastic. Such a level of engagement is highly needed in hotel employees. Research by Li and Frenkel (2017) and Choo (2007) show that job resources like HRM practices help in promoting work engagement in the hotel sector. Supportive HRM practices such as job security (Senol, 2011; Boya et al., 2008; Krsimer et al., 2005), job crafting (Wrzesniewski & Dutton 2001), and job satisfaction (Van Den Heuvel et al., 2015). Hence work engagement has been noted as an important concept. Current research also identified the prominence of work engagement in the hotel industry of Oman.

2.2. Job Security and Work Engagement

Job security is a factor to which firms provide secure employment to employees. Importance of the job security generate from a situation that influences work behavior. If employees feel insecure, they show negative behavior (Domenighetti et al., 2000; Boya et al., 2008). Empirical evidence has shown a significant effect on work-related outcomes (Senol, 2011; Boya et al., 2008; Sverke et al., 2002; Kraimer et al., 2005). With more job security, employees will show more work engagement (Altinay et al., 2018). Although there is a dearth of literature on this relationship. However, the available literature shows the worth of job security in predicting work engagement. Based on this, the present research proposed:

H1. Job security significantly predicts work engagement

2.3. Job Crafting and Work Engagement

Based on the study by Petrou et al. (2012), job crafting is a behavioral technique used by employees who feel the requirements of changes necessary for jobs to perform. Job crafting can be narrated as a set of activities to make some variations in condition and boundaries to perform the job better (Wrzesniewski & Dutton 2001) by keeping in view challenges, downfall in demands, and demands or acquiring resources (Tims & Bakker 2010). Tims and Bakker (2010) stated that person-job fit could be enhanced by adapting different characteristics through job crafting. Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) stated that positive results can be generated through job crafting, like increasing gains, performing different acts, and controlling meaningful work. Even goals can be easily achieved through better job crafting (Parker et al., 2010). According to scholarly work by Bakkers, Tims, and Dekes (2012); De Beer, Tims and Bakker (2016) that there is a positive connection of job crafting with work engagement. Furthermore, it is debated that when employees redesign work setup to have sufficient resources and be able to perform different tasks, it brings energy, absorption and dedication. Hence based on this, the present research proposed:

H2. Job crafting significantly predicts work engagement

2.4. Job Satisfaction and Work Engagement

Reason to select job satisfaction as a predictor of work engagement to find out satisfaction differentiation. According to Macey and Schneider (2008), that job satisfaction is job evaluation and is associated with the state of satisfaction, while, Salanova et al. (2011); Macey and Schneider (2008) stated that work engagement is a state of motivation. So it depends on job evaluation by the employee as to whether he/she is satisfied. Based on SET theory, there is a reciprocal relationship between organization and employee to bring up the attitude that increases satisfaction (Seers et al., 1995). So with higher satisfaction in employees with the job, they tend to increase work engagement. Literature by Kahn (1990) and May et al. (2010) state that employees who see their job as meaningful are more engaged. Besides, Saks (2006) states that suitable job characteristics that favor employees bring more work engagement among employees. According to Alarcon and Lyons (2001); Saks (2006); Tims et al. (2013), job satisfaction which positively associated with the work engagement of the employees. From the literature, it is clear that there is an association between engagement and job satisfaction, but it is still underresearched. Therefore, the current research proposed:

H3. Job satisfaction significantly predict work engagement

2.5. Job Security and Job Satisfaction

Identifying the factors of job satisfaction is a critical area in the investigation. Job security is one of the essential factors studied in the developed world. Additionally, in the case of Covid-19, job loss has been increasing, thus increasing the importance of job security. Moreover, changes in job satisfaction level due to job security are not only created by chances of job loss but it is also from workers' side. When job security is more important than job loss, employees' job satisfaction increases due to increased job security. Job security has been noticed as the most valuable factor as a determinant of job satisfaction. A study based on British households identified job security as an essential aspect of the job (Clark, 2001). Similarly, it is shown that job loss has a negative effect on job satisfaction (Blanchflower & Oswald, 1999). According to Burke (1991) job security has remained a key determinant of job satisfaction. Based on the given evidence, the present research proposed:

H4. Job security significantly predicts job satisfaction.

2.6. Job Crafting and Job Satisfaction

Job crafting is stated as an employees' initiatives to make alterations in job settings to achieve the goals by enhancing resources and lessening the demands at work (Tims et al., 2012). Besides this, job satisfaction refers to a positive response towards the work, which shows that an employee has a positive attitude towards their job. Van Den Heuvel et al. (2015) specified job crafting as a cultivator of job satisfaction. Working conditions are essential elements that influence job satisfaction. A better working environment can enhance job satisfaction (Parvin & Kabir 2011). From end to end in job crafting, staff of employees can redesign the working environment with their choice and skills, including engagement. De Beer et al. (2016) stated that job crafting is an important factor in increasing job satisfaction. Based on given evidence, the present research proposed:

H5. Job crafting significantly predicts job satisfaction.

2.7. Job satisfaction as a Mediator

Job satisfaction denotes to a pleasurable and positive emotional condition experienced by the employees at work. The association between job crafting and work engagement (Petrou et al., 2018; Tims et al., 2005), The association of job security and work outcomes (Kraimer et al., 2005; Boya et al., 2008; Ahmed et al., 2020; Ahmed 2019a; Ahmed et al., 2018) are studied separately and thus, the potential mediation of job satisfaction appears to be missing. Therefore, the present study attempts to check the indirect effect of job security and job crafting on employee work engagement in mediating job satisfaction in frontline employees in the Oman hotel sector.

Employees with satisfaction with their job perform better in comparison with the remaining employees of the organization for a longer period by showing their engagement with work. Satisfied employees utilize their energy effectively for better performance. Notably, employees' job satisfaction is closely linked with job security and job crafting, leading to work engagement (Alarcon & Lyons 2001; Saks 2006; Tims et al., 2013). Therefore, job security and job crafting can increase work engagement by the involvement of job satisfaction as an intervention. Keeping in view the significance of job satisfaction, the current research has attempted to inspect the intervening role of job satisfaction in the relationship between job security, job crafting and work engagement. Hence the present study proposed:

H6. Job satisfaction has significant mediating effect in the relationship between job security and work engagement.

H7. Job satisfaction has significant mediating effect in the relationship between job crafting and work engagement.

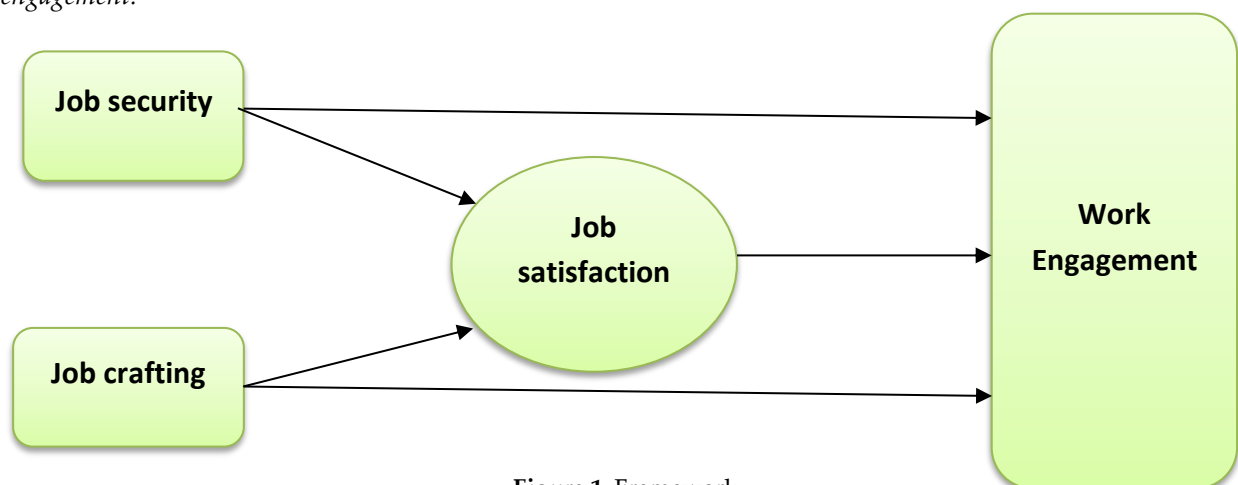


Figure 1. Framework

3. Methodology

3.1. Measurement

Job security was measured through a four-item adapted scale (Delery & Doty 1996). Reliability for job security was 0.763. Work engagement was measured through nine items adapted scale (Schaufeli et al., 2006). Reliability for work engagement was 0.948. Job crafting was evaluated using the 21-item adapted scale (Tims et al., 2012) with a reliability score of 0.88. Lastly, seven items scale was adapted (Brayfield & Rothe, 1951) to measure job satisfaction.

3.2. Population and Sampling

Hotel industry's employees were the research population, with frontline employees as the primary sample of the study. The exact population was unknown and the expected number of employees in the entire industry could be more than 1000,000. Therefore, Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) sampling table was applied, which gave the sample size of 384. Importantly, for better response rate, an additional 50% questionnaires were distributed among the target population, making a total of 576 instruments distributed through random sampling approach through the list available in the shape of employees signing in and signing out of the duty. First, hotel managers were contacted to reach the target audience, making the data collection process smooth.

3.3. Analysis and Interpretation

The proposed model was assessed through two approaches, measurement and structural model assessment (Anderson & Gerbing, 1988), as these techniques are being used widely in the research (Ibrahim & Arshad 2018). At first, assessment of measurement model was executed using the Smart PLS algorithm in which construct reliability and validity were checked. Second, the assessment of the structural model was executed through bootstrapping by using Smart PLS3 to test the proposed hypothesis. We assessed the measurement model (MM) to determine loadings of specific constructs and indicators relevance in PLS analysis, we assessed the measurement model (MM). We also assessed the construct reliability and consistency of the scales.

Table 1. Loadings, CR and AVE

Variable	Loading	CR	AVE
Job Crafting		0.89	0.56
JC-1	0.722		
JC-2	0.85		
JC-3	0.666		
JC-4	0.636		
JC-5	0.759		
JC-6	0.767		
JC-7	0.641		
JC-9	0.781		
JC-10	0.631		
JC-16	0.865		
JC-17	0.662		
JC-18	0.792		
JC-19	0.853		
JC-20	0.854		
JC-21	0.671		
Job Security		0.873	0.633
JS1	0.818		
JS2	0.839		
JS3	0.819		

JS4	0.699		
Job Satisfaction		0.923	0.761
JSAT1	0.96		
JSAT2	0.705		
JSAT3	0.835		
JSAT4	0.978		
JSAT5	0.837		
JSAT6	0.96		
JSAT7	0.823		
Work Engagement		0.936	0.626
WE-1	0.829		
WE-2	0.623		
WE-3	0.805		
WE-4	0.849		
WE-5	0.846		
WE-6	0.829		
WE-7	0.523		
WE-8	0.882		
WE-9	0.855		

Moreover, construct validity was provided by convergent and discriminant validity (DV) of the instruments (Hair, Hult, & Ringle, 2016). For individual constructs, the estimation of outer loadings and reliability of items was measured by employing the PLS-SEM approach. The range of item loadings resulted between 0.523 to 0.978, thus fulfilling the recommendations of Hair et al. (2016). However, the most suitable value for outer loading must be equal or greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2016; Henseler, Hubona & Ray, 2016; Ramayah, Cheah, & Memon, 2018). Convergent validity was also measured (Hair, Matthews, Matthews, & Sarstedt, 2017). This research has also checked the composite reliability (Hair et al., 2017). The better level of composite reliability is .70 (Hair et al., 2017; Singh & Prasad, 2018) and above. All the values of CR are mentioned in Table 1 all construct values are lying between the ranges of 0.873 to 0.923 which is above the recommended threshold. AVE is the level of variance between the latent variables and their indicators (Hair et al., 2017; Singh & Prasad, 2018). The recommended value of AVE is suggested to be no less than 0.50. Table 1 provides AVE values resulting between 0.56 and 0.761. Table 1 above provides more detail for this matter.

Accordingly, for measuring the discriminant validity, two approaches were used i.e, Fornell and Larcker (1981) and HTMT were used. Table 3 shows that all diagonal values are higher than values of other rows and columns, representing the DV of the outer model as per the recommendations of Ong and Puteh (2017), except for one value of job crafting to work engagement.

Table 3. Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria (discriminant validity)

Construct	Job Crafting	Job satisfaction	Job Security	W. Engagement
Job Crafting	0.748			
Job Satisfaction	0.488	0.876		
Job security	0.453	0.597	0.795	
Work Engagement	0.91	0.661	0.564	0.791

Besides Fornell and Larcker (1981) criteria, the current study also used HTMT criteria (Henseler, Ringle & Sarstedt, 2015) to assess the discriminant validity. Recommended range of HTMT values is less than HTMT0.85 (Clark & Watson, 1995; Kline 2011) and HTMT0.9 (Gold et al. 2001; Teo et al. 2008). All values in HTMT were found to be less than HTMT0.85. For further detail, HTMT values are presented in table 4.

Table 4. HTMT Criteria

	Job Crafting	Job Satisfaction	Job Security	W. Engagement
Job Crafting	----			
Job Satisfaction	0.513	----		

Job security	0.475	0.683	---	---
Work Engagement	0.808	0.705	0.65	---

In PLS-SEM, the coefficient of determination is the most appropriate term for the estimation of SM, represented by R-square (Hair et al., 2016; Henseler et al., 2016; Ramayah et al., 2018). The value of the R-square (endogenous construct) indicates the model strength. R-square specifies the amount of change by exogenous variable to endogenous variable. According to the available literature, the adequate value of R-square must be equal or greater than 0.10 (Ong & Puteh, 2017). It cannot only evaluate the values of R-square for endogenous variables to check the strength of model. Table 5 provide further detail on this.

Table 5. R-Square

Factor	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Job Satisfaction	0.416	0.413
Work Engagement	0.894	0.893

It can be calculated as an increase in the value of square in one variable with respect to other variables (Hair et al., 2017). According to the study of Hair et al. (2017), if the values of f square are 0.35, 0.15 and 0.02, they specify the effect as large, medium, and small. Table 6 provide further detail on this.

Table 6. F-Square

	Job Crafting	job Satisfaction	Job Security	Work Engagement
Job Crafting		0.102		3.898
Job Satisfaction				0.343
Job Security		0.305		0.031

By following the criteria, job crafting has weak effect on job satisfaction and strong effect on work engagement. Similarly, job satisfaction has medium effect on work engagement. Beside this, Job security has medium influence on job satisfaction and weak influence on work engagement.

3.4. Findings

Table 7 provides details of the overall results from the structural model

Table 7. Structural Model Assessment

Relationship	β	t value	p value	Decision
H1: JS→WE	0.073	2.89	0.004	Significant
H2: JC→WE	0.756	29.943	0.000	Significant
H3: JSAT→WE	0.249	6.235	0.000	Significant
H4: JS→JSAT	0.474	9.804	0.000	Significant
H5: JC→JSAT	0.273	5.924	0.000	Significant
H6: JS→JSAT→WE	0.118	4.769	0.000	Significant
H7: JC→JSAT→WE	0.068	5.843	0.000	Significant

JS= Job security, JC=Job Crafting, JSAT=Job Satisfaction, WE= Work Engagement

Table 7 shows findings of both direct effect (H1 to H5) and indirect effect (H6 and H7). During assessing the direct connection between job security and work engagement, a positive significant relationship was found ($\beta = 0.73$, $t = 2.89$, $p = 0.004$). Based on the findings, H1 of the current study was accepted. Moreover, job crafting also resulted in a substantial positive relationship with work engagement ($\beta = 0.756$, $t = 29.943$, $p = 0$); hence H2 was also accepted. In addition to this, job satisfaction with work engagement in H3 ($\beta = 0.249$, $t = 6.235$, $p = 0$), job security with job satisfaction in H4 ($\beta = 0.474$, $t = 9.804$, $p = 0.000$), and job crafting with job satisfaction in H5 ($\beta = 0.273$, $t = 5.924$, $p = 0$) were also found significant in results. Along with this, current study also tested the mediation of job satisfaction between job security and work engagement relationship in H6 ($\beta = 0.118$, $t = 4.769$, $p = 0$), and job crafting and work engagement relationship in H7 ($\beta = 0.068$, $t = 5.843$, $p = 0$). Hence based on the significant mediation results, it can be narrated that job satisfaction has significantly mediated the link between job security, job crafting, and work engagement.

4. Discussion

The present study was aimed to assess the influence of supportive HRM practices (job security and job crafting) on work engagement both, directly and indirectly through the mediation by job satisfaction in the hotel industry of Oman. The research findings are in line with the empirical evidence between supportive HRM practices and work engagement (Choo, 2007; Li and Frenkel, 2017; Kraimer et al., 2005; Senol, 2011; Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001).

Significant findings in this research show that job security is positively associated with the front-line hotel staff (employees). Results are consistent with existing literature (Wu & Chen, 2017; van den Heuvel et al., 2015; Kraimer et al., 2005; Senol, 2011; Li and Frenkel, 2017). Results entail that hotel front-line employees are more keenly engaged with work when they have job security. Additionally, the findings propose that when there is fit between person and organization and organization show supportive practices and provide job security even in such pandemic and risky situation under covid-19 employees show more engagement with work. Since people are surrounded by many issues and job insecurity is one of the major issue, that employee in Covid-19 situation do not know that when their boss or organization fires them. In such a situation, if organizations show supportive HRM practices in shape of job security, which reduces major burden of employees, job security employees tend to show more engagement with work.

In the second hypothesis, a significant positive effect of job crafting on work engagement among hotel employees in Oman was found. The empirical evidence from the literature also supports the results of the second hypothesis (Petrou et al., 2018; Tims et al., 2015). Through job crafting, employees can make some changes in daily working style (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001) if they feel necessary (Petrou et al., 2012). So when the organization supports employees to make some routine changes in work style, make employees motivated and engaged with organization and with their work, it makes them engaged with work. Therefore, more job crafting in the organization should be encouraged to make employees engaged with their work. Similarly, hypothesis 3 also found significant results. Again findings of this research are supported by the literature (Saks, 2006; Alarcon & Lyons, 2011; Tims et al., 2013). This finding is based on SET. Another way employees with a higher level of satisfaction show dedication and engagement with work. Those organizations who care about their employees and try to achieve goals try to help their staff or employees in their problems will have satisfied employees and have a higher engagement level with work.

Likewise, hypotheses four and five also found a significant positive effect. Again findings of this research are following the pattern in the existing literature. Job security is an important aspect of job satisfaction. The workers with the perception that they have a secure job report a higher level of job satisfaction. Therefore job security has been recognized significant factor in enhancing job satisfaction. This can be concluded that an increased level of job security will increase the level of job satisfaction. Similarly, positive significant association of job crafting with job satisfaction is found in literature and also in this research. In association with a considerable extensive part of job crafting, it has been found that job satisfaction is in association of job crafting. Hence this can be concluded that, job crafting is better predictor of job satisfaction; reason being that in job crafting employees are motivated because they have some sort of option to alter job demands keeping in view the resources of the organizations to perform the particular job.

Since we show that job security and job crafting increase job satisfaction and work engagement, job satisfaction has been linked to increased employee engagement. Hence, job satisfaction on job security and job crafting with work engagement has been mediated significantly. This significance of job satisfaction mediation shows that job satisfaction has a great mediation potential.

4.1. Implications

Results of the research add to literature related to supportive HRM in different ways. This is one of the very rare researches conducted in the hotel industry. Additionally, research has contributed to HRM practices in the Omanese context. Another important implication is that the current study investigated supportive HRM practices (job crafting and job security) in light of social exchange theory and the job demand resource model. Regarding job crafting, employees need two things to know the demands of the jobs and the availability of the resources. Further, these activities lead to engagement.

Practically, this research results will provide a comprehensive model for HR managers in the hotel industry to bring more engaged employees. This research suggests that more job security from the organization and better job crafting by employees will bring more satisfaction towards job for better level of work engagement. Hence hotel management needs to devise strategies to uplift the concept of job crafting and job security for better and enhanced job satisfaction and work engagement. It is highly suggested that employees should be allowed for suitable job crafting, which makes them feel that their organization values them and understands them the real part of the organization so that these employees will show more of work engagement and remain the part of the organization. Furthermore, this research shows that providing a secure job in pandemic situations can sustain more engaged employees. Managers need to develop factors that help employees deliver better services and develop a sense of satisfaction engagement among employees.

4.2. Limitations and Future Prospects

Besides several contributions, the present research has some limitations. First, this study was structured on single-time analyses. Future research can be done on multiple time analyses with more or multiple respondents in multiple industries. This study only included simple mediation, future research can be done through adding more serial or sequential mediation or moderation like moderated mediation of mediated moderation. This research only focuses on front-line employees and collected responses from the frontline employees. Future research may therefore include opinion from managers also to find better results.

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