




EXPLORING THE ANTECEDENTS AND DETERMINANTS OF JOB CRAFTING BEHAVIOR AMONG PROJECT MANAGERS

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KEYWORDS	ABSTRACT
<p>Job Crafting Behavior, AI Crafting, Perceived Organizational Support, Job Autonomy, Job Characteristics, Project Managers</p>	<p>The project managers face stressful environments and burnout, leading to low job satisfaction and career uncertainty. Despite such issues, job crafting strategies helps project managers to redesign to improve job satisfaction. Therefore, is essential to identify the antecedents and determinants of Job Crafting Behavior (JCB) of Project Managers. Even though job crafting has been empirically proven to enhance employee wellbeing and performance, factors that enable job crafting to be implemented in project management field have not been thoroughly investigated. An online survey conducted to collect the data from project managers registered with PMI Pakistan. The study found that AI crafting, perceived Organizational Support and LMX are the key incidents of job crafting behavior among project managers. The study also identified that PMI certified Project managers identified the Job Autonomy, job characteristics & proactive personality as vital determinants of job crafting behavior. In this regard, study provide significant theoretical and empirical outcomes for reaching the anticipated conclusion & making suitable decisions. The study also provides the managerial implications for project managers.</p>
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INTRODUCTION

The contemporary organizations operate within the increasingly volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous (VUCA) environments that fundamentally challenge traditional conceptualizations of work design and employee agency (Bennett & Lemoine, 2014). Within this context, employees are no longer passive recipients of predetermined work roles but active agents who proactively shape their work experiences through task, relational and cognitive perspective known as job crafting. In

environment of hypercompetition, traditional work designs have become inadequate to capture the essence of proactive capabilities for superior firm performance (Parker, Broeck & Holman, 2017; Kanten, Pazarcik & Gülten, 2025). The success of Project based firms depends on flexibility, innovation and proactive work behavior of project teams. In these workplaces, job crafting of the project teams is key component of their job design (Besigomwe & Ssesanga, 2024). The improved performance, engagement, and well-being are closely associated with such behavior that is critical for tasks, relationships, and cognitive dimension of their work. Project managers work in uncertain environment faces extremely stress to deliver project on time, in budget & according to specification (Svejvig & Andersen, 2015).

The job crafting behaviour (JCB) represents proactive, self-initiated process through which project managers strategically redesign the specific dimensions of their work to create better alignment between job demands and personal strengths, values, and aspirations (Devotto, Freitas & Wechsler, 2020). In this linking, the job crafting empowers team members to take ownership of their work for quality work experiences for success of the projects (Singh & Rajput, 2021). The job crafting is a mechanism by which a project team continuously re-design certain dimensions of his/her job to improve the quality of work for improving the project outcomes (Singh & Rajput, 2021). The self-initiated changes in job design by the employees may enhance job satisfaction and project success (Bakker & Demerouti, 2020). The recent research has underscored the significance of JCB in the productive work environment and promoting workforce ownership, which is necessary for attaining high performance for IT projectized organization (Bakker, Tims & Derks, 2022). Recent studies have acknowledged that several key factors influence project managers and his teams job crafting behaviour. For example, empowering leadership plays a key role in crafting their jobs (Rodriguez & Williams, 2023).

Cheng, Lin and Kong (2023) confirmed that having a proactive personality is key determinants of job crafting behaviour. Schmidt and Okafor (2024) acknowledged that job characteristics plays important role to determine the level of job crafting behaviour. Prevalence of job crafting tends to be considerably differed as function of variation of antecedents and determinants across countries. It is also evident from contemporary literature that very few studies have focused on accidents and determinants of job crafting behavior of project managers and his team. Studies such as Park and Park (2021) have identified specific contextual antecedent and determinants of job crafting behavior. Such gap restricts scholars to present clear guidelines for project-based firms or from identifying strategies to enhance the job crafting among project teams. To address this gap, this examined technological, personal, organizational contextual antecedents and determinants of job crafting behavior. Therefore, the study aims to examine the impact of Leader Member Exchange, Perceived Organizational Support and AI Crafting as antecedents of project teams' job crafting behaviour. In this drive, the study also examined the key determinants on project managers' job crafting behaviour.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Job crafting represents a fundamental way to project managers to reshape their job to create better alignment between their roles, career growth and project outcomes (Kanten, Pazarcik & Gülten,

2025). In contemporary rapidly evolving workplace, AI crafting, leader-member relationships, and perceived organizational support are key drivers job crafting behaviour. This study explores how these contemporary factors enable project managers to craft more meaningful and effective work experiences.

AI Crafting & Job Crafting Behaviour

AI crafting refers to how employees deliberately reorganize their work tasks and processes when AI tools enter their workplace. When a project manager uses AI to handle routine scheduling or data analytics, they have more time and mental energy for strategic decision making, innovation in problem-solving, and developing stakeholder relationships. Such transformation is not just about efficiency rather strategically changes how they can shape their role for project team satisfaction (McKevitt, Carbery & Collins, 2022). By optimizing repetitive tasks and reducing time constraints for innovative and goal-oriented activities, AI Crafting can motivate employees to participate in more purposeful job crafting. Bakker and Demerouti in (2020) emphasizes that JCB is strongly associated with workforce well-being and job satisfaction. The existing literature has demonstrated conflicting findings about antecedents and determinants of job crafting behavior. By creating standardized procedures or limiting opportunities for cognitive and relational crafting, the use of AI into work processes may reduce the traditional forms of job crafting. AI crafting provides more flexibility in their role to craft their jobs in more meaningful manners. Thus, the study proposed the following hypothesis.

H1. AI crafting is positively associated with job crafting behaviour among the project managers.

Perceived Organizational Support & Job Crafting Behaviour

The Perceived Organizational Support (POS) captures employees' beliefs about how much their organization genuinely values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger et al., 2001). The supportive practices such as professional development opportunities, encouraging supervisors, and an overall positive working culture give them the confidence to try new ways of working. These conditions reduce the fear of making mistakes or being judged for taking initiative. Lee and Lee (2023) found that employees who felt supported were more likely to turn their motivation into real job crafting behaviors. Likewise, Kim et al. (2022) showed that supportive environments help employees rethink the meaning of their work, which is especially important in complex and dynamic workplaces such as IT organizations. Employees who proactively design their engagement with AI based tools tend to experience lower stress levels and enhance job satisfaction which further enhances their motivation to participate in job crafting behaviors. The contemporary literature acknowledges that perceived organization support is related with teams' job crafting behavior, especially, in project-based workplaces (Rubenstein et al., 2017; Rockstuhl et al., 2020; Kurtessis et al., 2017). Thus, by keeping in view the above-mentioned literature, we postulate the following hypothesis.

H2. Perceived organizational support is positively associated with JCB among project managers.

Leader Member Exchange & Job Crafting Behavior

The quality of the relationship between leaders and their subordinates is called leader-member exchange (LMX) (Aggarwal et al., 2020). The LMX focuses on enhancing performance within an

organisation through good relations between followers and leaders (Thrasher et al., 2020). The Leader Member Exchange (LMX) perspective describes how roles and expectation are formed in the relationship between subordinates and their leader (Kanten, Pazarcik & Gülten, 2025). High-leader-member exchange relationships exhibit trust, respect, support and open communication demonstrate mutual respect and obligation. Such approach provides the foundation for job crafting behavior. Low LMX acts as a barrier to job crafting as extra-role is not offered in such relationship (Besigomwe & Ssesanga, 2024). When Project managers have a high-quality relationship with their team members, they feel psychologically safe to experiment with novel approaches. Such approach helps subordinate to trust their leader and enable them to craft their job. In this drive, the high leader-member exchange directly impacts a project manager's willingness as well as ability to craft their job.

H3: Leader-member exchange quality is positively associated with JCB among project managers.

Determinants of Job Crafting Behavior

The job crafting's determinants can be classified into personal and job factors (Petrou, Demerouti, Peeters, Schaufeli & Hetland, 2012; Teng & Chen, 2019). The job-related factors entail how team members' workplace engagement is related with job crafting. The job characteristics and team members having job autonomy illustrates willingness to adopt job crafting behavior (Teng & Chen, 2019). In this linking, personal factors such as proactive personality have the tendency towards job crafting behavior.

Proactive Personality & Job Crafting Behavior

Proactive personalities are referred to actively engage team members in self-initiating and future focused tasks to improve workplace environment (Li et al., 2010). The proactive workforce creates meaningful changes in their job roles (Crant, 2000). Less proactive workforce seems to be reactive and fails to search for opportunities for change (Teng & Chen, 2019). Consequently, proactive personality enhances creativity and job crafting behavior. The proactive employees modify their workplace conditions to achieve project outcomes. Project managers with proactive personalities rarely accept their job descriptions as fixed. They look for better ways to complete tasks, build useful relationships, and reinterpret challenges as opportunities. A meta-analysis conducted by Chen and Chen (2023) showed that proactive personality is one of the most consistent predictors of job crafting. Similarly, Davis and White (2024) found that proactive nurses were better able to adjust their roles to reduce burnout & stay engaged in crafting their roles. Thus, following hypothesis was formulated

H4. Proactive personality is positively related with job crafting behaviour amid project managers.

Job Autonomy & Job Crafting Behaviour.

Team members may improve skill sets and get new competencies through job autonomy, which also provides opportunities for job crafting behavior (Nie et al., 2023). Job autonomy describes extent to which team members manage project schedules, organize resources, and manage project scope through own judgment (Zang et al., 2025). For project managers, autonomy often means having room to tailor way they handle tasks, collaborate with stakeholders. When they have flexibility, they are willing to experiment and adjust their roles to better fit according to project environment.

The longitudinal study conducted [Chen and Chen \(2024\)](#) exhibited that job autonomy remains one of the key determinants of job crafting, especially among IT project teams who rely heavily on initiative and creativity. The authors acknowledge that job characteristics cause changes in job crafting behaviour. The degree of autonomy available to project managers serves as the critical enabler of relational crafting, allowing them to strategically build and modify their professional networks and stakeholder relationships to enable project success ([Bakker et al., 2012](#)). Thus, study formulates hypothesis.

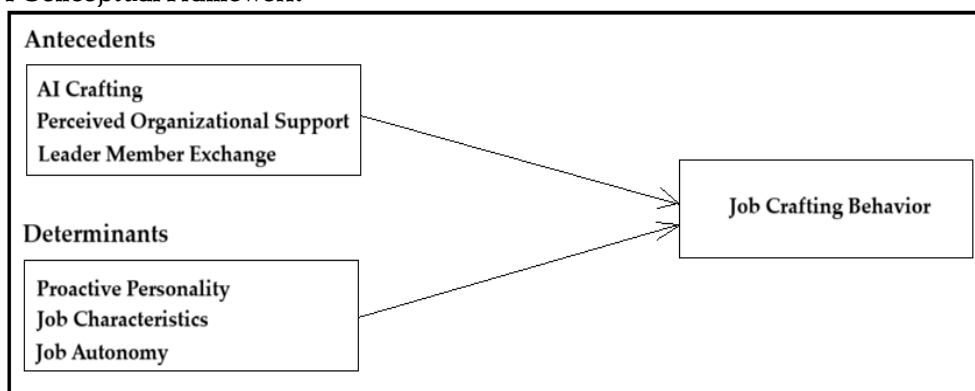
H5. Job autonomy is positively related with the job crafting behaviour amid the project managers

Job Characteristics & Job Crafting Behaviour

Job characteristics is described as skills, knowledge, working conditions and competencies may organized and evaluated to achieve project outcomes ([Kanten, 2014](#)). Thus, by drawing on the job characteristics theory, organization inspire team members to demonstrate positive work attitude through skill variety and task variety that help to adjust their roles throughout project lifecycle and across all forms of job crafting including task job crafting, relational job crafting and cognitive job crafting to deliver project successfully ([Rudolph et al., 2017](#); [Kanten, 2014](#); [Kim et al., 2018](#); [Zang et al., 2026](#)). Past studies have acknowledged job characteristics as organizational determinant of job crafting behaviour ([Kirkendall, 2013](#)). Thus, research demonstrates that job characteristics distinctively influence diverse dimensions of job crafting behaviour among project managers. Task significance positively relates to task crafting, where project managers actively modify the scope, and project activities to enhance meaning and engagement ([Petrou et al., 2012](#)). Furthermore, when project managers experience the regular feedback and high task identity—seeing the projects through from conception to completion—they are more inclined to engage in cognitive crafting by reframing their perceptions of their work to emphasize its influence and value to the organization ([Slemp & Brodrick, 2013](#)).

H6. The Job Characteristics are passively associated with and Job crafting behaviour of managers.

Figure 1 Conceptual Framework



RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The population of study comprises of the PMP certified project managers registered with the PMI Pakistan. Snowball sampling technique was used as key sampling approach. Through social media

platforms, the data was collected from 151 project managers to examine the impact of contextual antecedents and determinants of job crafting behaviour in extracting desired information to reach anticipated conclusion.

Measure & Scales

The AI Crafting was measured by Wanlu Li, (2024), the measure consists of 21 items. Job crafting behavior was measured by using Slemp and Brodrick (2013) scale that consist of 23 items. The perceived organizational support was measured by 6 items adopted from Eisenberger et al. (1997). Leader Member Exchange was measured by 3 Items scale of Chung and Jeon (2020). Proactive Personality was measured by four-item scale of Parker and Collins, (2010). The job Autonomy was measured by 8-item scale which was developed by Morgeson and Humphery (2006). The job characteristics was measured by six items developed by Hackman and Lawler (1971). Responses were recorded on five-point scale, where 1 indicate strongly disagree and 5 meant strongly agree, for all the constructs.

FINDINGS OF STUDY

The reliability analysis presented in Table 1 demonstrates that all measurement instruments achieved acceptable to good internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values ranging from .684 to .823. Job Autonomy exhibited the highest reliability (.823), followed by Job Crafting Behavior (.792) and Job Characteristics (.750). α value of .684 indicates that AI crafting construct in context of the project-based firms are reliable and consistent. The reliability coefficients indicate that the constructs were measured with the sufficient consistency, providing confidence in the validity of subsequent analyses.

Correlation Analysis

The table 2 exhibits that contextual antecedents and determinants of job crafting behavior factors that are significantly correlated that ranged from .369 to .698 at the $p < .01$ level that confirmed required association.

Table 1 Reliability Analysis

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Total Items
AI crafting	.684	21
Job Crafting Behavior	.792	23
Leader Member Exchange	.721	3
Proactive Personality	.700	4
Job Autonomy	.823	8
Job Characteristics	.750	6
Perceived Organizational Support	.722	6

It is also evident from table 2 that strongest bivariate relationship exists between AI crafting and JCB ($r = .698^{**}$), suggesting that project managers who engage in crafting through use of artificial intelligence tools are more likely involve in job crafting behaviour among IT project managers. LMX positively associated with Job Crafting Behaviour ($r = .600^{**}$), indicating that the quality of

relationships between project managers and their supervisors plays a critical role in enabling or constraining job crafting behaviours. Job Characteristics shows a robust correlation with JCB ($r = .604^{**}$), confirming that design and nature of project management work significantly influence job crafting tendencies.

Hypothesis Testing

This study proposed differential relationship between contextual antecedents and personal and organization determinants of three forms of job crafting behavior amid project managers in project-based IT firms.

Table 2 Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1 AI crafting	1						
2 Job Crafting Behaviour	.698**	1					
3 Perceived Organizational Support	.284**	.390**	1				
4 Leader Member Exchange	.530**	.600**	.255**	1			
5 Proactive Personality	.553**	.369**	.211**	.695**	1		
6 Job Autonomy	.550**	.410**	.608**	.474**	.421**	1	
7 Job Characteristics	.630**	.604**	.471**	.520**	.501**	.519**	1

Antecedents of Job Crafting Behavior

Three hypotheses were tested to examine the impact of AI crafting; perceived organizations support and leader member exchange upon Job crafting behavior. Hypothesis 1 postulates that AI crafting predicts positively JCB. Table 3 illustrates that that AI Crafting is expected to have a positive and significant effect on predicting job crafting behaviour among project managers ($\beta = 0.86$; $SE = 0.07$; $t = 11.91$). Thus, H1 is approved. Hypothesis 2 was proposed that the relationship between perceived organizational support and job crafting behavior is positive and significant. The value of $\beta = .36$; $p > 0.05$; $t = 6.00$) demonstrates that Perceived Organizational Support has a positive impact on job crafting behavior within the population. Therefore, H2 is accepted. Hypothesis 3 received strong empirical support for casual relationship between LMX and job crafting behavior with a positive beta coefficient ($\beta = .46$), P value value,000 and t value of 5.31. This finding indicates that leader member exchanges have ability to influence job crafting behavior of project managers. Therefore, H4 was confirmed.

Determinants of Job Crafting Behavior

Hypothesis 4, Hypothesis 5 and Hypothesis 6 was proposed to analyze individual & organizational determinants of job crafting behavior among project managers of Organizations. The study treats proactive personality, job autonomy and job characteristics as determinants of job crafting behavior among project managers. Hypothesis 4 proposed that proactive personality is key determinant of job creating behavior. The table 3 confirms that project managers with proactive personality are more likely to engage in job crafting behavior ($\beta = .35$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 3.89$). Hypothesis 4 is confirmed. Hypothesis 5 postulates that job autonomy predicts job crafting behaviour. The value of $\beta = .70$; $p = 0.000$; $t = 3.43$ demonstrates job autonomy support team members to change their

role according to project requirement and context in which project is executed. Thus, it is confirmed from table 3 that as Job autonomy enhances JCB among project managers. Hypothesis 6 suggested that job characteristics is an important predictor of JCB. Table 3 illustrates that improvement in job characteristics is key condition for job crafting behavior ($\beta = .082$; $p=0.000$; $t=2.4$.) Therefore, H6 is supported

Table 3 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Relationship	B	SE	t-value	p-value	Status
H1	AI Crafting---->JCB	0.86	0.07	11.91	.000	Supported
H2	POS----->JCB	0.36	0.06	6.00	.000	Supported
H3	LMX----->JCB	0.46	0.09	5.31	.000	Supported
H4	PP----->JCB	0.35	0.09	3.89	.000	Supported
H5	JA----->JCB	.070	.02	3.43	.000	Supported
H6	JC----->JCB	0.082	0.033	2.48	.000	Supported

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that individual, organizational, and job-related factors significantly influence project managers' job crafting behavior, enabling them to boost work effectiveness, adaptability, and professional performance. The findings reveal a multi-level, integrative model of job crafting contextual & determinants for project managers that includes technological (AI crafting), structural (job autonomy & characteristics), relational (LMX), organizational (POS), and individual (Proactive Personality) factors. First and foremost, this study extends job crafting theory by incorporating AI crafting as a technology aspect of proactive behavior with tradition work behavior. Results show that AI Crafting has positive and significant relationship with job crafting behavior suggesting that active use and adaption of AI tools support employees proactive shaping of their work. Second job-related antecedents of job crafting may support project managers to identify specific contexts in which project teams do their jobs. Analyzing the project context may improve understanding for diverse situations and project settings that require team members to craft their jobs. On the other hand, this study clarifies the distinct yet complementary roles of contextual and individual and organizational factors. This study extends job crafting theory and applied in project-based firms by offering more holistic & structured understanding of what shapes job crafting behavior in project-based organization.

Practical Implications

Organizations seeking to cultivate job crafting behaviours amid project managers should prioritize in contextual antecedents along with personal and organizational factors. The job crafting behavior of project managers is a dynamic behavior significantly influenced by a blend of organizational support, leadership quality, technological adaptation, personal proactivity, and job design. Project managers with higher levels of work experience and professional expertise are better equipped to recognize, leverage job characteristics as platforms for crafting, as they possess greater confidence & competence in navigating organizational boundaries and negotiating task modifications (Zhang & Parker, 2019). By understanding and leveraging the antecedents & determinants, organizations can unlock full potential of their project managers, fostering a workforce that is more agile, resilient,

innovative, and ultimately, more successful in delivering the complex projects in an ever-changing business landscape.

Limitations & Future Research

This study is limited to cross sectional research. The future studies may adopt longitudinal research design to provide the holistic overview regarding antecedents and determinant of JCB. This study examined only six antecedents & determinants of job crafting behavior in IT sector. Future research is therefore encouraged to replicate and extend model across different sectors such as construction, healthcare and to confirm whether antecedents and determinants remain consistent or vary across different industries.

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