



Exploring the relationship between job crafting and resilience



Authors:

Nameera Munnisunker¹ 
Nelesh Dhanpat¹ 

Affiliations:

¹Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management, College of Business and Economics, University of Johannesburg, Johannesburg, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Nelesh Dhanpat,
neleshd@uj.ac.za

Dates:

Received: 11 Feb. 2025

Accepted: 06 May 2025

Published: 27 June 2025

How to cite this article:

Munnisunker, N., & Dhanpat, N. (2025). Exploring the relationship between job crafting and resilience. *SA Journal of Human Resource Management/SA Tydskrif vir Menslikehulpbronbestuur*, 23(0), a2997. <https://doi.org/10.4102/sajhrm.v23i0.2997>

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Orientation: Employees undertake self-initiated processes like job crafting to reshape their work. Within financial services organisations where work is characterised by high pressure and demanding conditions, assessing relationships between job crafting and resilience becomes particularly interesting.

Research purpose: To investigate the relationships between job crafting and resilience, and how these variables influence one another in a financial services organisation.

Motivation for the study: Limited research has examined job crafting's role in fostering resilience, particularly in South Africa's financial services sector.

Research approach/design and method: A positivist, quantitative, cross-sectional design was employed, utilising survey data from 332 financial services employees (convenience sample). Pearson correlations and multiple regression analyses examined the relationships between job crafting dimensions and resilience.

Main findings: The study identified positive correlations between all three dimensions of job crafting and resilience. Among the crafting dimensions, cognitive crafting demonstrated the strongest association with resilience, followed by task and relational crafting. The findings indicated that employees who engage in job crafting tend to exhibit higher levels of resilience, which suggests that job crafting can play a key role in helping employees cope with challenges at work.

Practical/managerial implications: The results suggest that organisations can foster greater resilience by encouraging job crafting, particularly cognitive crafting. Human Resource professionals can integrate job crafting into well-being initiatives and offer training that helps employees reshape tasks to enhance meaning and engagement. Managers should also create an environment that supports job crafting behaviours, enabling employees to tailor their roles to align with their personal strengths and values.

Contribution/value add: This study contributes to the literature by examining the relationship between job crafting and resilience in the South African context. It provides practical insights for organisations seeking to improve employee resilience, particularly in high-pressure industries like financial services.

Keywords: job crafting; resilience; financial services; well-being; job design.

Introduction

The contemporary work environment is rapidly changing (Stofile et al., 2023), with increasing focus on employee well-being (Fox et al., 2022), engagement (De-la-Calle-Durán & Rodríguez-Sánchez, 2021) and resilience (Ong & Kou, 2023), particularly in hybrid settings (Sharma, 2023). In this context, job crafting, at its core, is a dynamic process of job redesign, through which employees independently alter parts of their work tasks and jobs to better align with their preferences, abilities and work styles (Berg et al., 2013; Tims et al., 2022) and has emerged as a critical factor influencing various workplace outcomes. Despite a growing body of research on job crafting, limited attention has been paid to its relationship with resilience, particularly in the South African context. Resilience is a significant concept in today's disrupted world, as it is foundational to understanding how employees react to and cope with adversity (Hartmann et al., 2020; Rook et al., 2018). Resilience, the capacity to adapt and thrive in the face of adversity, is a crucial resource for employees navigating the challenges of today's volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) work environments.

This study explores the relationship between job crafting dimensions, task crafting, cognitive crafting and relational crafting and resilience. By understanding how job crafting behaviours

contribute to resilience, organisations can implement targeted strategies to support employees' ability to cope with workplace challenges. The study contributes to the growing literature on job crafting by examining its role in fostering resilience among South African employees, an area that remains underexplored.

Background and motivation

Job crafting has been conceptualised as an important proactive behaviour that enables employees to enhance their job fit (Tims & Bakker, 2010) and engagement by altering task, cognitive and relational aspects of their work (Mkhwanazi & Dhanpat, 2023). Task crafting involves modifying job tasks, cognitive crafting refers to changing how employees perceive their work and relational crafting focuses on adjusting interactions with colleagues and supervisors. In the past, these behaviours have been shown to improve employee engagement, well-being and job satisfaction. However, the effect of job crafting on resilience, a key factor in an employee's ability to bounce back from stress and adversity, remains largely unexplored.

Resilience is particularly pertinent in dynamic work settings where employees must adapt to changes and setbacks. Resilient employees are better equipped to manage stress, remain engaged and maintain high performance. Given that South Africa's labour market faces unique challenges, including economic uncertainty and high levels of unemployment, understanding factors that bolster resilience is critical. This study is motivated by the need to explore whether job crafting, an employee-driven intervention, can serve as a significant predictor of resilience in this context. The main contribution of this study is to investigate the relationship between job crafting and resilience among South African employees, employed at an financial services organisation, a perspective that has been underrepresented in existing research. This study makes several key contributions by examining task, cognitive and relational crafting as distinct dimensions. This study offers an understanding of how different aspects of job crafting contribute to resilience. The findings offer practical implications for organisations looking to improve employee resilience, especially in a diverse and complex work environment.

Despite the increasing interest in job crafting as a means of enhancing employee outcomes, limited research has examined its role in fostering resilience, particularly in the South African context. While job crafting is associated with various positive workplace outcomes such as performance (Junça-Silva et al., 2022; Peral & Davidovitz, 2024; Zhang & Liu, 2021), meaningful work (Dhanpat et al., 2019; Geldenhuys et al., 2021), engagement (Mhwanazi & Dhanpat, 2023) and well-being (Ho et al., 2024; Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016), the specific mechanisms through which it influences resilience remain unclear. The problem addressed in this study is the lack of empirical evidence on the relationship between job crafting dimensions and resilience, particularly within the financial

services sector. This study aims to fill this gap by investigating how job crafting behaviours contribute to the development of resilience of financial employees.

Literature review

Job crafting

The dynamic and competitive business environment demands employees to be adaptable to changing job demands (Bakker et al., 2023; Dash & Vohra, 2020). Job crafting is a process through which employees independently modify their work to align with their preferences and abilities (Berg et al., 2013; Tims et al., 2022). This study adopts Wrzesniewski and Dutton's (2001) conceptualisation, which defines job crafting as 'the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work' (p. 179). According to this model, job crafting manifests through three primary dimensions: Task crafting involves altering the nature, scope and quantity of work tasks (Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). Berg et al. (2013) identified three ways employees adjust tasks: engaging in additional tasks, allocating more time to meaningful aspects of work and re-engineering work processes. This dimension represents tangible modifications to job characteristics (Devotto & Wechsler, 2019). Cognitive crafting occurs when employees psychologically reframe how they perceive their work, aligning it with personal values and purpose (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Berg et al. (2013) outlined three cognitive crafting strategies: expanding perceptions of work impact, focusing on specific meaningful tasks and linking work to personal identity. This inward-focused behaviour enhances the fit between one's job and personal values (Niessen et al., 2016). Relational crafting involves modifying workplace relationships, including whom to interact with and the frequency and depth of these interactions (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Berg et al. (2013) identified three approaches: deepening relationships with individuals who enhance feelings of pride, viewing relationships as purposeful and adapting relationships by offering support to others. This dimension focuses on the social context of work (Devotto & Wechsler, 2019).

The dynamic and competitive business environment demands employees to be high-performing, innovative and adaptable to changing job demands (Bakker et al., 2023; Dash & Vohra, 2020; Lee, 2022). Job crafting is a process through which employees independently modify their work tasks to align with their preferences, abilities and work styles. It also involves resourcefulness, where individuals use available resources to reshape their jobs to their advantage (Berg et al., 2013; Tims et al., 2022). Initially, job crafting described self-initiated behaviours that influence an employee's sense of work meaningfulness and identity, with proactivity as a key element (Dash & Vohra, 2020; Demerouti & Bakker, 2013).

Job crafting theory is shaped by two main perspectives: the model by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) and the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model by Tims and Bakker (2010). A third perspective, by Zhang and Parker (2019),

synthesises these conceptualisations. Additionally, Bindl et al. (2019) introduced a typology of job crafting, which has also gained attention in recent research.

Resilience

Resilience is critical in today's disrupted workplace, underpinning how employees respond to adversity (Hartmann et al., 2020; Rook et al., 2018). To remain sustainable, organisations impose greater productivity demands, which can lead to workplace stress (Rees et al., 2015). Thus, employee resilience is essential for adapting to change and responding effectively to work demands (Hartmann et al., 2020; Orozco et al., 2023).

This study adopts Smith et al.'s (2008) conceptualisation of resilience as an individual's ability to recover from stress, while recognising that broader conceptualisations exist, particularly those emphasising contextual and systemic factors advocated by Michael Ungar and South African researchers like Linda Theron. This study focuses specifically on the individual's capacity to 'bounce back' from adversity. This operational definition aligns with Luthans' (2002) description of resilience as 'the positive psychological capacity to rebound from adversity, uncertainty, conflict, failure or even positive change' (p. 702) and emphasises the individual's psychological resources rather than ecological or systemic factors.

From an employee perspective, individual resilience enables people to manage job demands, maintain well-being and sustain performance in challenging conditions (Ferreira & Gomes, 2021; Hanu & Khumalo, 2023). It mitigates burnout, enhances work-life balance (Ang et al., 2018) and fosters psychological well-being (Robertson et al., 2015). Resilient employees exhibit higher job satisfaction (Badran & Youssef-Morgan, 2015) and adaptability to change (Malik & Garg, 2017).

From an organisational perspective, employee resilience reduces turnover intentions (Ha et al., 2024; Liu et al., 2021), as resilient employees are more likely to problem solve and adapt rather than leave when facing workplace challenges (Mujajati et al., 2024).

The relationship between job crafting and resilience can be understood through person-job fit theory, which posits that alignment between an individual's capabilities and job requirements enhances performance while reducing stress (Carless, 2005). Job crafting serves as an adaptive strategy, enabling employees to modify their work environment to better manage stressors and potentially enhance resilience.

From a task-modification perspective, setting clear boundaries between work and home allows individuals to replenish their capacity to handle adversity (Jensen et al., 2008; McMurtrie & Crane, 2020). From a work-relationship perspective, strong professional networks contribute positively to resilience (Jensen et al., 2008; Todt et al., 2018).

Similarly, employees who find meaning in their work through cognitive crafting tend to be more resilient in challenging situations (Hartmann et al., 2020; Stevenson et al., 2011).

Research supports the role of job crafting in fostering individual resilience. Early South African research established positive correlations between job crafting, particularly increasing structural resources and challenging job demands and work engagement, with psychological meaningfulness serving as a mediator among high school teachers (Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016). Subsequent studies reinforced job crafting's beneficial implications for work engagement (De Beer et al., 2016; Mkhwanazi & Dhanpat, 2023; Thomas et al., 2020) and employee performance (Du Toit et al., 2021; Peral & Davidovitz, 2024; Sloan & Geldenhuys, 2021). Dhanpat (2025), in advancing job crafting research to incorporate job crafting agility, highlights the importance of exploring how job crafting agility contributes to enhancing organisational agility and resilience amid disruption and change.

Recent South African research by Marx et al. (2025) revealed that despite remote work challenges during the pandemic, employees demonstrated resilience through task crafting. Their findings highlighted how open communication and managerial support facilitated relational-crafting, while work fulfilment enhanced resilience, with employees building mental fortitude through growth opportunities and positive mindsets (Jung et al., 2023; Renfrew et al., 2021).

The relationship between job crafting and resilience has been confirmed internationally. Wassink et al. (2022) demonstrated that teacher resilience positively correlates with job crafting as conceptualised through the JD-R model (Tims et al., 2012). Similarly, Morales-Solis et al. (2023) found that resilience directly influences work meaningfulness, with relational and cognitive crafting serving as partial mediators. In healthcare settings, Sahay et al. (2022) observed that job crafting enhanced adaptive resilience among nurses during coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19), enabling both individuals and organisations to develop unexpected crisis response capabilities.

A study across three European countries found that employees who actively shaped their work environments demonstrated higher resilience (Vogt et al., 2016). Similarly, during the COVID-19 pandemic, Sulistiyorini and Zahra (2021) observed a positive correlation between job crafting and resilience in industrial settings, with employees who adjusted their tasks, cultivated meaningful work relationships and cognitively reframed their roles exhibiting greater resilience.

Research design

Research approach

This study employed a positivist philosophy, quantitative methodology and cross-sectional survey design. The positivist stance treated job crafting and resilience as objective, measurable constructs whose relationships could

be empirically examined (Alharahsheh & Pius, 2020). Ontologically, these were viewed as discrete phenomena interacting to generate knowledge (Dominion Dominic, 2023; Saunders et al., 2019), while epistemologically, scientific methods were applied to investigate causal relationships between quantifiable concepts (Creswell & Creswell, 2017). The quantitative approach focused on measuring numerical data to address the research question: what is the relationship between job crafting and resilience? (Goertzen, 2017; Kotronoulas et al., 2023). The cross-sectional design collected data at a single point in time, offering efficiency while acknowledging limitations regarding causal inference (Setia, 2016; Wang & Cheng, 2020).

Research setting, sampling and participants

The study was conducted within a financial services company operating in the Western Cape and Gauteng provinces of South Africa, as well as in Windhoek, Namibia. The target population included financial services consultants and employees in support services roles within the financial industry. Convenience sampling, a type of non-probability sampling, was employed because of the impracticality of including every subject in the large population. A target population of 600 was identified, aligning with Israel's (1992) recommendation that a sample size of 200 to 500 is necessary for multiple regression analysis to determine predictive variables. The final sample comprised 332 respondents.

Table 1 provides the biographical summary of the participants. In terms of job level, 38.25% were at the entry level, 19.58% in junior management, 25.00% in middle management, 13.86% in

TABLE 1: Characteristics of the sample.

Variable	Category	Frequency	Valid %
Job level	Entry level	127	38.25
	Junior management	65	19.58
	Middle management	83	25.00
	Senior management	46	13.86
	Executive	11	3.31
Gender	Male	143	43.07
	Female	189	56.93
Race	Black people	211	63.55
	White people	34	10.24
	Indian people	16	4.82
	Coloured people	63	18.98
	Chinese people	1	0.30
	Other people	6	1.81
Tenure (years)	0–1	36	10.88
	2–5	126	38.07
	6–10	81	24.47
	More than 10	88	26.59
Age (years)	18–29	59	17.82
	30–39	135	40.79
	40–49	94	28.40
	50–59	39	11.78
	60–69	4	1.21

senior management and 3.31% at the executive level. Gender distribution showed that 43.07% were male and 56.93% were female. The racial composition included 63.55% black people, 10.24% white people, 4.82% Indian people, 18.98% Coloured people, 0.30% Chinese people and 1.81% from other racial groups. Regarding tenure, 10.88% had 0–1 year, 38.07% had 2–5 years, 24.47% had 6–10 years and 26.59% had more than 10 years of service. Lastly, the age distribution revealed that 17.82% were aged 18–29 years, 40.79% were aged 30–39 years, 28.40% were aged 40–49 years, 11.78% were aged 50–59 years and 1.21% were aged 60–69 years.

Measuring instruments

Two pre-established scales, administered as self-report questionnaires, were utilised to enhance the quality, reliability and validity of the data. These scales included the Job Crafting Questionnaire (JCQ) (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013) and the Brief Resilience Scale (BRS) (Smith et al., 2008), as described below.

Job crafting

Slemp and Vella-Brodrick's (2013) JCQ was used to measure job crafting. The JCQ comprises three subscales assessing task, cognitive and relational crafting, based on 15 items scored on a 6-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (hardly ever) to 6 (very often). Sample items include: 'Choose to take on additional tasks at work' and 'Make an effort to get to know people well at work'. Previous studies have reported acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.73 to 0.88 for the subscales and above 0.70 for the overall scale (Mkhwanazi & Dhanpat, 2023).

Resilience

Smith et al.'s (2008) BRS was employed to assess individuals' ability to recover from stress. The six-item scale is scored on a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), with alternate items reverse coded. Sample items include: 'I tend to bounce back quickly after hard times' and 'I usually come through difficult times with little trouble'. The BRS has demonstrated an acceptable Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.83 in prior research (Qiu, 2023).

Research procedure

Data were collected from a large Southern African financial services organisation with offices in the Western Cape, Gauteng and Windhoek, Namibia. Permission was obtained to access and contact employees before disseminating the questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed on Google Forms, with a pre-test conducted to assess its visual layout, format and functionality for ease of completion. Technical issues were resolved before the actual distribution. On 01 November 2023, the questionnaires were emailed to all target population members, with data collection continuing for 14 weeks until the response rate declined. The email clearly explained the research topic, survey purpose and confidentiality assurances. Participants accessed the

questionnaire via a link in the email, enabling quick and easy responses from geographically dispersed individuals. The response rate was monitored weekly, with follow-up reminders sent regularly. Hard-copy questionnaires were also distributed for those preferring this method, maintaining the same parameters as the online version. All data received were treated confidentially and stored on an electronic device with restricted access.

Statistical analysis

Reliability was assessed using Cronbach's alpha, with scores of 0.70 or higher considered acceptable (Pallant, 2011). Descriptive and inferential statistics were calculated. Data from completed questionnaires were entered and analysed using SPSS® version 28. Measures of central tendency (mean), variability (variance) and distribution shape (skewness and kurtosis) were calculated to summarise the data and perform preliminary checks for errors (Samuels, 2020). Outliers were identified and assessed to enhance data accuracy.

Exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted for job crafting and resilience. The Kaiser–Meyer–Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity were used to assess data suitability for factor analysis. A KMO value above 0.80 was considered meritorious; values between 0.70 and 0.79 were acceptable (Shrestha, 2021). A significant Bartlett's test ($p < 0.05$) indicated sufficient correlations between items (Shrestha, 2021).

Factors were extracted using principal components analysis. Kaiser's criterion (eigenvalues > 1) and the scree plot were used to determine the number of factors to retain. Factors above the eigenvalue threshold and those preceding the inflection point on the scree plot were extracted (Shrestha, 2021). Pearson product–moment correlation coefficients were calculated to examine relationships between job crafting and resilience, with coefficients interpreted between -1 and $+1$ (Schober et al., 2018). Multiple regression analysis was conducted to identify which dimensions of job crafting (task, cognitive or relational crafting) best predicted resilience. Multicollinearity was assessed through tolerance and variance inflation factor (VIF) values. Tolerance values approaching 0 and VIF values substantially greater than 1 indicated potential multicollinearity concerns (Oke et al., 2019). The statistical analyses guided the interpretation of findings relevant to the study's research questions.

Ethical considerations

Ethical clearance to conduct this study was obtained from the University of Johannesburg, Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management (IPPM) Research Ethics Committee (No. IPPM-2023-740 [M]). Permission to access and gather data from respondents at the selected financial services institution was obtained in writing. Participants were provided with a clear explanation of the study's purpose and assured that their responses would be handled with discretion, respect and professionalism, enabling

them to make an informed choice regarding participation (Cacciattolo, 2015; Sobočan et al., 2019). Participation was voluntary, with respondents free to decline or withdraw at any point without consequence. Questionnaires were reviewed to ensure language appropriateness, and data have been stored securely on an electronic device for 5 years, accessible only to the researcher and supervisor. The spreadsheet containing data are password protected to uphold privacy and confidentiality obligations (Cacciattolo, 2015; Sobočan et al., 2019). The study was conducted with objectivity and honesty to avoid data exaggeration or manipulation.

Results

Descriptive statistics

The descriptive statistics for the job crafting dimensions and resilience are presented in Table 2. Mean scores for task crafting ($M = 4.38$, standard deviation [SD] = 0.99), cognitive crafting ($M = 4.74$, $SD = 0.90$) and relational crafting ($M = 4.31$, $SD = 0.98$) indicate moderate to frequent engagement in job crafting behaviours. Cronbach's alpha values ranged from 0.71 to 0.85, demonstrating acceptable internal consistency. For resilience ($M = 4.30$, $SD = 1.12$), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient was 0.92, indicating excellent internal consistency. Skewness and kurtosis values were within acceptable limits, supporting the assumption of normality for parametric analyses.

The 15 items of the JCQ were subjected to EFA using principal component analysis. Sampling adequacy was verified by the KMO value (0.88), exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.60 (Pallant, 2011). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 1824.28$,

TABLE 2: Descriptive statistics for job crafting dimensions and resilience.

Dimension	M	SD	Variance	Skewness	Kurtosis	α
Task crafting	4.38	0.99	0.98	0.72	2.27	0.71
Cognitive crafting	4.74	0.90	0.80	-0.95	1.53	0.85
Relational crafting	4.31	0.98	0.96	-0.64	0.29	0.80
Resilience	4.30	1.12	1.26	-0.62	0.06	0.92

M, Mean; SD, standard deviation.

TABLE 3: Factor loadings for components for job crafting.

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Component 3	Communalities
TC1	-	0.79	-	0.67
TC2	-	0.79	-	0.62
TC3	-	0.51	-	0.36
TC4	-	0.67	-	0.49
TC5	-	0.67	-	0.50
CC1	-	-	-0.64	0.56
CC2	-	-	-0.77	0.67
CC3	-	-	-0.87	0.72
CC4	-	-	-0.76	0.70
CC5	-	-	-0.74	0.55
RC1	0.78	-	-	0.68
RC2	0.82	-	-	0.67
RC3	0.77	-	-	0.55
RC4	0.57	-	-	0.45
RC5	0.60	-	-	0.51

TC, task crafting; RC, relational crafting; CC, cognitive crafting.

degrees of freedom [df] = 105, $p < 0.001$), confirming the factorability of the correlation matrix. Communalities ranged from 0.36 to 0.72. Three components with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, explaining 57.22% of the variance. All items loaded above 0.40 on their respective components. The scree plot supported the three-factor solution.

The six items of the BRS were subjected to EFA using principal component analysis. The KMO value (0.69) exceeded the recommended minimum of 0.60 (Pallant, 2011). Bartlett's test of sphericity was significant ($\chi^2 = 466.57$, $df = 15$, $p < 0.001$). Communalities ranged from 0.58 to 0.72. Two components with eigenvalues greater than 1 were extracted, accounting for 65.24% of the variance. Although two factors emerged, the strong loadings of R1, R3, R4 and R6 on Component 1 supported the interpretation of resilience as a primarily unidimensional construct.

Pearson correlation

A Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to assess the relationships between the job crafting dimensions (task crafting, relational crafting and cognitive crafting), work engagement and resilience. Preliminary checks indicated no violations of normality, linearity or homoscedasticity. According to Pallant (2011), a correlation coefficient of 1.0 indicates a perfect linear relationship between variables, regardless of direction.

The results (Table 5) showed that task crafting had a moderate, significant positive correlation with work engagement ($r = 0.360^{**}$, $p < 0.01$) and a weak but significant positive correlation with resilience ($r = 0.248^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). Cognitive crafting demonstrated a weak, significant correlation with resilience ($r = 0.229^{**}$, $p < 0.01$). Relational crafting also showed a weak but significant correlation with resilience ($r = 0.283^{**}$, $p < 0.01$).

TABLE 4: Factor loadings for components for resilience.

Item	Component 1	Component 2	Communalities
R1	0.75	-	0.63
R2	0.62	-0.53	0.66
R3	0.67	0.50	0.71
R4	0.74	-	0.63
R5	0.49	0.58	0.58
R6	0.77	-	0.72

R, resilience.

TABLE 6: Multiple regression analysis: Job crafting predicting resilience.

Model	Unstandardised coefficients		Standardised coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.	<i>R</i>	<i>R</i> ²	Adjusted <i>R</i> ²	Collinearity statistics	
	<i>B</i>	SE	Beta						Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	2.14	0.23	-	9.32	0.00	0.35	0.12	0.11	-	-
Task crafting	0.11	0.04	0.16	2.91	0.00	-	-	-	0.86	1.17
Cognitive crafting	0.14	0.05	0.18	2.83	0.00	-	-	-	0.68	1.47
Relational crafting	0.08	0.04	0.11	1.83	0.07	-	-	-	0.75	1.32

SE, standard error; Sig., significance; VIF, variance inflation factor.

Regression analysis

Table 6 indicates that the model explained 12% of the total variance in the dependent variable. Tolerance values ranged from 0.68 to 0.86, and variance inflation factor (VIF) values ranged between 1.17 and 1.47, confirming the absence of multicollinearity (Pallant, 2011). A significant regression equation was found, $F(3, 326) = 14.73$, $p < 0.001$, $R^2 = 0.12$. Cognitive crafting emerged as the strongest predictor of resilience ($\beta = 0.18$, $p < 0.001$), followed by task crafting ($\beta = 0.16$, $p < 0.001$). Relational crafting was not a significant predictor ($\beta = 0.11$, $p = 0.07$). Table 6 presents the multiple regression results for job crafting dimensions predicting resilience.

Discussion

Descriptive statistics: Job crafting and resilience

Job crafting

The mean values for all job crafting dimensions ranged between 4.31 and 4.74, which is indicative of the participants being actively involved in changing aspects of their work, on an occasional to frequent basis. According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), individuals are motivated to seek ways in which they may alter the task, cognitive and relational aspects of their work, with the objective of creating work that aligns more closely with their skills and preferences (Dash & Vohra, 2020; Lazazzara et al., 2020). More specifically, job crafters proactively read cues in their jobs and work environment and respond by making changes to their task, cognitive and relational boundaries, which has a fundamental impact on their experience at work, their meaning of work and their work identities (Indinger, 2024; Lin & Meng, 2024).

More specifically, the financial services sector, which is the context in which this study was conducted, is characterised by rapid change, high risk, sweeping technological advancements and the highly competitive business environment in which it operates (Khatwani et al., 2023; Zouari-Hadiji, 2023). In response, individuals actively craft their jobs as an adaptive strategy to positively reorientate their attitudes and perceptions towards change

TABLE 5: Pearson correlation of job crafting dimensions and resilience.

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Task crafting	-	-	-	-
2. Relational crafting	0.42**	-	-	-
3. Cognitive crafting	0.26**	0.52**	-	-
4. Resilience	0.25**	0.28**	0.23**	-

** $p < 0.01$ (2-tailed).

(Mukherjee & Dhar, 2023) and to evolve their meaning of work and purpose in response to change (Walk & Handy, 2018).

Task crafting

The task crafting dimension yielded a mean value of 4.38, indicating that participants occasionally engage in task crafting. According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), individuals can alter how they perform work tasks, thereby adjusting their work boundaries. Task crafting occurs when individuals modify the nature, scope or volume of their tasks. This includes changing how tasks are performed, such as selecting different processes or methods to achieve desired outcomes; altering what tasks are performed, such as completing different tasks, and strategically choosing the time of day for specific tasks (e.g. performing 'thinking work' in the morning when more alert; Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2023). Job crafters may also increase their task load by taking on additional responsibilities or participating in extra projects (Berg et al., 2013; Lazazzara et al., 2020). Task crafting involves tangible changes to job characteristics (Devotto & Wechsler, 2019) and represents a situationally driven, externally focused form of control over one's work (Hornung, 2019).

The financial services environment in Southern Africa is highly regulated, with organisations required to comply with regulatory and governmental policies (Anarfo & Abor, 2020). In this context of stringent regulation and compliance, the occasional occurrence of task crafting may reflect the structured nature of the work environment in which financial services employees operate. Work in this sector is process driven to meet compliance standards and minimise risk, limiting decision-making autonomy, particularly in mid- to lower-level roles, regarding when and how work tasks are performed.

Cognitive crafting

The cognitive crafting dimension yielded a mean value of 4.74, the highest among the three job crafting dimensions, suggesting that participants frequently reframed their perceptions of work. According to Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2014), cognitive crafting is often employed by employees to enhance the meaningfulness of their work, particularly in demanding contexts. It occurs at a psychological level, where individuals actively rethink and redefine their work perceptions to better align it with their personal values and purpose. Cognitive crafters focus on the positive aspects of their work (Vuori et al., 2012) or link their work to areas of personal interest (Batova, 2018).

Cognitive crafters may redefine their work by evaluating its holistic impact, linking purpose and meaning to specific tasks or connecting their work to aspects of their identities they value (Berg et al., 2013). Cognitive crafting is an inwardly focused behaviour centred on the self (Hornung, 2019).

Data for this study were collected approximately 2 years after the COVID-19 pandemic, and the high mean score for

cognitive crafting may reflect the influence of the pandemic on participants. The COVID-19 pandemic, a global health crisis with profound social and economic effects, likely influenced participants' rethinking of their work's importance and value. Wijngaards et al. (2022) suggest that the pandemic significantly affected the organisation of work, and cognitive crafting has been shown to enhance work meaningfulness and engagement in the post-pandemic context.

Relational crafting

The relational crafting dimension yielded a mean value of 4.31, the lowest of the three job crafting dimensions, suggesting that participants occasionally evaluated and constructed their work relationships. According to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), individuals can choose their work interactions, including whom to engage with, the frequency of these interactions and their depth. This is known as relational job crafting. Relational crafting can take various forms, such as building deeper relationships with specific colleagues or offering help and support to those in need (Berg et al., 2013). Rofcanin et al. (2019) suggest that individuals may pursue expansion-oriented relational crafting activities (e.g. involving stakeholders from various functional areas in an organisation-wide project) or contraction-oriented activities (e.g. reducing the number of meetings attended or limiting interactions with certain individuals).

In the context of the selected financial services organisation, relational crafting may occur less frequently because of the COVID-19 pandemic, as employees spent approximately 2 years working remotely. This shift may have altered the frequency and depth of their interactions with colleagues.

Resilience

The overall mean resilience score was 3.10, indicating that respondents, on average, displayed moderate levels of resilience. Resilience is characterised by an individual's ability to positively adapt to and recover from adverse events or stressors (Child & Medvedev, 2024; Elshaer, 2024; Luthans, 2002; Luthar et al., 2000).

The selected financial services organisation positions itself as a high-performance organisation, demanding high-quality work outputs delivered quickly. In this context, employees face stressors, which may explain the moderate resilience levels reported by participants. Fisher et al. (2019) suggest that work stressors may manifest as infrequent, high-intensity events (e.g. a project that fails to meet expectations) or as frequent, low-intensity events, both of which can negatively impact well-being and performance. Thus, it is essential for employees to exhibit resilience in order to effectively adapt to and respond to work demands and changes in a fast-paced environment (Hartmann et al., 2020; Orozco et al., 2023).

Correlation analysis: Job crafting and resilience

The Pearson correlation analysis revealed significant relationships between the dimensions of job crafting (task, relational and cognitive) and the outcome variables of resilience. These findings contribute to the growing body of research on the role of job crafting in promoting positive work outcomes. The analysis confirms a significant positive correlation between job crafting and resilience.

Task, cognitive and relational crafting were all significantly correlated with resilience, supporting recent studies linking job crafting to resilience, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic (Sahay et al., 2022; Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2021). Although few studies have examined this relationship, earlier research also highlights positive correlations between job crafting and resilience (Vogt et al., 2016; Wong et al., 2021). Task crafting exhibited a weak but significant correlation with resilience. Resilience, defined as the capacity to adapt to stressors, may also be influenced by factors like organisational support or individual coping mechanisms. Nevertheless, employees who engage in task crafting may develop greater resilience by aligning tasks with their strengths, which helps mitigate stressors. Cognitive crafting showed a weak positive correlation with resilience, indicating that employees who reframe their work experiences to find greater meaning are more likely to be resilient. This aligns with prior studies suggesting that cognitive crafting enhances resilience by fostering a stronger sense of control and purpose (Berg et al., 2013; Dhanpat et al., 2019; Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Hornung, 2019; Melo et al., 2021). Cognitive reframing helps employees better navigate challenges and stressors (Hu et al., 2020; Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2021; Vogt et al., 2016). Relational crafting also showed a weak positive correlation with resilience, suggesting that while the social aspect of job crafting contributes to resilience, its effect is modest. The positive relationship may be attributed to the support systems and networks employees develop through their interactions, which provide emotional and practical resources during challenging times (Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Li et al., 2022; Zellars et al., 2011).

Regression analysis: Job crafting and resilience

The multiple regression analysis revealed that only two dimensions of job crafting, task and cognitive crafting, were significant predictors of resilience with varying degrees of association. Relational crafting was not a significant predictor. Job crafting serves as a proactive strategy for individuals to alter aspects of their work, countering stress and enhancing resilience (Leon & Halbesleben, 2013; Zellars et al., 2011).

Cognitive crafting accounted for the largest variance in resilience ($\beta = 0.14$, $p < 0.001$), making it the strongest predictor. Employees who actively reframe and redefine their tasks and roles in a meaningful way tend to exhibit higher resilience. In the demanding and competitive

financial services environment, employees face high stress because of sales targets, client expectations and regulatory compliance. Cognitive crafting, which involves rethinking and reframing perceptions of work, is a key strategy for coping with these pressures.

Cognitive crafting is more within the employee's control than task and relational crafting and can be employed in situations where the latter are restricted (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Zhang & Parker, 2019). This autonomy explains why cognitive crafting is the best predictor of resilience. By reinterpreting stressful situations, employees apply emotional regulation and derive positive meaning, fostering resilience (Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2021; Tugade & Fredrickson, 2004). Recent studies support this link between cognitive crafting and resilience (Nam et al., 2022; Stan & Ciobanu, 2022; Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2021), with Hu et al. (2020) and Vogt et al. (2016) finding cognitive crafting associated with better psychological outcomes.

Task crafting, with a beta value of 0.11 ($p < 0.001$), also predicted resilience. Employees who adjust their work tasks to better align with their strengths and preferences are more likely to develop resilience. By shaping tasks to suit personal strengths, employees create a more supportive work environment, helping them navigate challenges. Despite the regulated, structured nature of the financial services sector limiting autonomy, task crafting can still be effective in coping with stress (Melo et al., 2021; Parker et al., 2015). Although less frequent, recent studies suggest that resilience positively influences task crafting (Nam et al., 2022; Stan & Ciobanu, 2022; Sulistiyorini & Zahra, 2021).

Relational crafting was not a predictor of resilience. The organisation's geographically dispersed offices and the nature of the work environment may limit the extent of relational crafting. In high-pressure settings where communication and collaboration are crucial, focusing on relational crafting may increase stress and reduce resilience. Diverting energy towards relationships rather than tasks in a high-workload environment can overwhelm employees, reducing resilience (Hobfoll et al., 2018; Li et al., 2022). Similarly, a longitudinal study found no increase in resilience following a job crafting intervention, as participants were unable to reduce their workload (Van Wingerden et al., 2017).

Implications for practice

This study provided significant implications for employees, line managers, HR professionals and organisations, particularly in high-stress environments such as the financial services sector within South Africa's challenging economic landscape. By highlighting the relationship between job crafting and resilience, it emphasises the value of creating a supportive and adaptive work environment that empowers employees to take control of their roles, through job crafting behaviours.

Employees can benefit from engaging in job crafting to enhance their resilience. This study reinforces the importance of cognitive crafting, where employees reframe their tasks and roles to derive meaning and purpose. Despite employees not being formally aware of the theoretical concept of job crafting, employees in this study exhibited these behaviours on an occasional to frequent basis. This suggests that South African employees are naturally inclined to craft their jobs when they feel empowered, possibly as a coping mechanism within the country's challenging socioeconomic environment. Employees should be encouraged to intentionally engage in cognitive crafting, particularly in South Africa's high-pressure financial sector as this process can increase their resilience by fostering a sense of control and meaning, particularly relevant in South Africa's workplace where resource constraints and organisational restructuring are common.

Moreover, employees can enhance their resilience by actively engaging in task crafting, aligning their tasks with their strengths, interests and values. By making small adjustments to the scope, method or timing of their work, employees can create a more supportive and manageable work environment, considering the highly regulated financial sector.

Human Resource professionals should focus on integrating job crafting into well-being strategies (Harju et al., 2021), particularly in the South African context where employee wellness programmes increasingly need to address stress compounded by broader societal challenges. Human Resource professionals should consider implementing culturally sensitive job crafting interventions for South Africa's multicultural workforce, such as training sessions for employees and line managers, to educate them on the various dimensions of job crafting and how to use them effectively within the local context. These interventions could empower employees to take ownership of their roles and enhance their resilience within the demanding business landscape. Line managers play a critical role in facilitating job crafting behaviours (Niessen et al., 2016; Wang et al., 2016) and supporting employees in enhancing their resilience.

Organisations should recognise the value of job crafting as a strategic tool to enhance work engagement and resilience within the unique challenges of the country's business landscape. This study contributes to the literature by demonstrating that job crafting can positively affect resilience in South African financial institutions, which face pressure to transform workforce demographics while maintaining competitiveness. Policies and practices should be designed to create a work environment where employees feel empowered to engage in job crafting, ultimately increasing employee resilience.

Limitations and recommendations for future research

This study has several limitations. As a quantitative cross-sectional design, it cannot establish causality between variables (Spector, 2019). The data collection approach

limited in-depth exploration, restricting findings to linear relationships between variables. The study relied on participants' honest and accurate responses to ensure data quality. Another limitation was the use of Smith et al.'s (2008) unidimensional Brief Resilience Scale, which measures individual-level resilience but does not capture contextual and systemic factors. The financial services context also limits generalisability to other industries. Future research should employ longitudinal designs (e.g. weekly or daily diary studies) to capture fluctuating effects of job crafting on resilience. Given the scarcity of job crafting studies in South Africa (Dhanpat, 2022; Du Toit et al., 2022; Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Mkhwanazi & Dhanpat, 2023), there is need for further investigation into its implications on job outcomes in the Southern African context. Expanding research beyond financial services and employing multidimensional resilience measures would enhance the understanding of workplace dynamics.

Conclusion

This study contributes valuable insights into the relationship between job crafting and resilience, particularly within the Southern African context. By strengthening existing literature on the positive effects of job crafting, it highlights how cognitive crafting plays a pivotal role in shaping employee attitudes and behaviours. The findings affirm that job crafting enhances resilience. Given the infancy of research on job crafting in Southern Africa, this study enriches the empirical evidence by providing findings relevant to organisations in financial services and comparable industries. It offers practical implications for HR practitioners, enabling them to develop targeted interventions that support employees in remaining resilient in challenging work environments. Future research should continue to explore these dynamics across different industries and utilise longitudinal designs to deepen the understanding of their fluctuating effects.

Acknowledgements

This article is partially based on the author, N.M.'s dissertation entitled, 'The Relationship between Job Crafting, Work Engagement and Resilience' towards the degree of Master of Commerce in Strategic Human Resource Management in the Department of Industrial Psychology and People Management, School of Management, College of Business & Economics, University of Johannesburg, South Africa with supervisor Professor Nelesh Dhanpat.

Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article. The author, N.D., serves as an editorial board member of this journal. The peer review process for this submission was handled independently, and the author

had no involvement in the editorial decision-making process for this manuscript. The authors has no other competing interests to declare.

Authors' contributions

The study is part of N.M.'s Masters study. N.D. was the supervisor of the study and assisted with writing, data analysis and editing of the manuscript.

Funding information

This research received no specific grant from any funding agency in the public, commercial or not-for-profit sectors.

Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, N.D. upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

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