

Article

How Job Crafting Affects Hotel Employees' Turnover Intention during COVID-19: An Empirical Study from China

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Abstract: Based on self-regulation theory, this study examines the relationship between job crafting, career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention among hotel staff in China amid the COVID-19 pandemic. This research draws on the observations of 1453 hotel employees in China for its empirical data and analysis by SPSS and AMOS. Job crafting positively impacts career identity and job engagement but negatively impacts turnover intention. The turnover intentions of hotel employees are negatively impacted by their feelings of career identity and job engagement. Additionally, the mediating role of career identity and job engagement in the connection between job crafting and turnover intention is further discussed and illustrated. Research on the topic of job crafting in the hotel sector workplace is examined in this study, and its influence on job performance measures is evaluated. Both hotel employees and academics may benefit greatly from this study's conclusions.

Keywords: hotel employee; job crafting; career identity; job engagement; turnover intention



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1. Introduction

A hotel's most fundamental and priceless investment is its employees, or human capital [1]. For this reason, hiring and maintaining employees is essential to the hotel's long-term performance and sustainability [2,3]. However, hotel positions do not attract high-quality workers in many developing nations, such as China, India, and the Philippines. Low wages and high physical and emotional stress (e.g., standing or sitting for long periods, serving customers with a smile, and meeting diverse customer needs) are some of the limitations of this job [4–6]. As a result, many recent graduates looking for work may consider working in the hotel industry as a stopgap as they transition into their new profession. Hospitality jobs are not highly regarded in society, and hotel employees lack a feeling of craft and identity in their careers because of the short hours they put in [7–9]. Moreover, the situation is even more pronounced in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Tourism is booming throughout the world, but it is especially prevalent in developing countries [10]. According to China's Hospitality Industry Analysis Report (2020), the quantity of star-rated hotels has increased by 88.9%, from 81,000 in 2010 to 153,000 by 2020. However, many uncertainties during the COVID-19 pandemic have driven employees away from the hospitality industry [11]. Hotels must face competition from other industries (such as banking, the internet, and retail) for the limited number of students in the hotel and tourism industry [12]. Human capital competition winners are often thought to perform better than others. The hotel business faces a unique set of challenges when it comes to attracting and retaining a talented workforce [10].

Job crafting is the process through which individuals actively define task limits, work perceptions, and the quality of work relationships to find meaning in their jobs and develop their career identities [13]. For Tims and Bakker, job crafting is a term used to describe a

self-initiated modification in the job resources and the job expectations of an employee [14]. People who craft their work settings are more likely to rise to the occasion when confronted with difficulties and come up with novel solutions [15]. Because the concept of “job crafting” has not been fully defined, some researchers have explored it. For example, Bakker and Arnold defined job crafting as the measures performed by staff to attain their job goals in a highly demanding workplace [16]. It was considered an essential factor in determining employee motivation.

Despite earlier research showing that job crafting is linked to other employee metrics, the vast majority of empirical investigations have been carried out in the healthcare, financial, and retail industries. Roczniowska et al. evaluated 81 nurses in Poland and discovered a positive association between their job crafting and self-regulation levels and a negative correlation with burnout [17]. A study of surgeons by Domnguez and Dolmans also found that job crafting positively affected work performance [18]. Despite the fact that it has been acknowledged as an essential aspect in the success and long-term viability of hotels, for the purpose of filling a research need, this study investigates the impact of job crafting on job performance measures such as career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention for hotel employees in China.

The following features can explain the study’s importance. First, this study is an initial investigation into the understudied topic of job crafting for front-line hotel employees in China during the COVID-19 pandemic. Second, this research produces a scale to measure the quality of hotel employees’ job crafting and tests the scale’s accuracy using 1453 actual hotel employees as test subjects, providing more empirical evidence and helping to prepare the scale for future research. Third, this research examines the impact of job crafting on employees’ turnover intention and how it is influenced by factors such as career identity and job engagement in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. Thus, this research provides valuable theoretical implications in investigating key job indicators, i.e., career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention.

To achieve the study’s objectives, the structure of the paper is as follows. First, a critical literature review of job crafting, career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention is provided. Based on the literature review, the hypotheses and research model are proposed. Second, the methodology is introduced, followed by an analysis of the results. Third, the conclusions and the theoretical and practical implications are discussed based on the findings. Finally, the study’s limitations and future research directions are presented.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Background of the Development of COVID-19

The COVID-19 pandemic has forced almost all employees around the world to work in a completely different environment than before. COVID-19 has triggered interventions such as social distancing and travel restrictions that have changed the ways in which employees work, by limiting their mobility. This change is transitioning from temporary to long-term with multiple blockades. Managers, team leaders, and human resource professionals are very concerned about these behavioral changes because they can affect employees’ emotional, cognitive, and physical health, and ultimately their results and performance [19]. A survey of Chinese companies conducted by Shan and Tang showed that 68 percent of them suffered a decline in their performance during the COVID-19 pandemic, underlining the negative impact of COVID-19-related policies [20]. Pressure increases, inadequate infrastructure, a lack of work environment/colleagues, unrealistic expectations of performance, damaged manager–employee relations, and a difficulty in building trust with colleagues are the main shortcomings of virtual work and the outbreak of the pandemic, which a negative impact on employee performance. Moreover, the COVID-19 pandemic is expected to have a lasting impact on the hotel industry, so it is very meaningful to study the relationship between the job remodeling behavior of hotel employees and their professional identity, job engagement, and turnover intention during this period.

2.2. Job Crafting

Employees' adjustments to tasks, interpersonal relationships, and cognitive processes have been collectively termed "job crafting" by academics. Employees make their work more meaningful by redefining and redesigning it [21]. According to Leana et al., individual crafting and collaborative crafting are two distinct forms of job crafting. Individual crafting is an expression used to designate an employee's active participation in crafting their work environment and altering task boundaries. Collaborative crafting is when employees in an organization use the support, advice, or resources of others to accomplish a common goal [22].

Job crafting, as described by Berg, is the practice of adjusting employment to the individual's interests, aptitudes, and experiences. According to the job demands–resources model, staff welfare is influenced by a wide range of work attributes, including the demands of the position (physical, social, or organizational needs for continuous physical or mental effort) or work resources [23–25]. There are also four components to job crafting. "Increasing structural work resources" indicates that workers are more engaged with their growth at work. When we discuss "increasing social work resources", we refer to employees who seek out and obtain social assistance and feedback from others. "Increasing challenging work demands" refers to an employee's attempts to expand the scope of their work or adjust their work goals to increase the challenges of the job. Workers who take the initiative to minimize their responsibilities and create acceptable performance objectives are considered as "reducing obstructive work demands" [26,27].

Crafting a job requires employees to be proactive and take action before a specific issue arises. It is also necessary to attempt to simultaneously influence or control the unfolding circumstances [28]. Employees can sharpen their concentration on the job by redefining their professional responsibilities and personal relationships through the practice of "job crafting". Thus, job-related employee outcomes are influenced by job crafting activity [29–31]. Employees may craft their jobs, explain their work goals and relevance, and promote their career identities by modifying the work design and workplace social environment [10]. Job crafting has been linked to increased work excitement, job–person fit, organizational commitment, and employee attitudes. As a result, both the hotel and its workers benefit greatly from the job crafting performed by its staff.

2.3. Self-Regulation Theory

Job crafting and turnover intention are related to career identity and job engagement, which we analyze further using self-regulation theory. First, raising the skill level of employees via job crafting can boost their motivation and productivity on the job. A high level of self-regulation has been shown to boost employees' career identity and job engagement. Because of this, it is acceptable to assume that job crafting can help employees to cope with difficult working conditions and negative emotions by strengthening their sense of career identity and involvement through self-regulation. A dismal work atmosphere may be alleviated and personal growth can be achieved when people have a strong sense of career identity and are actively involved in their jobs. Employees that are proactive in their contact with consumers and avoid exit-intent behaviors are likewise more likely to achieve outstanding performance. As a result, this study provides a theoretical framework that explains the mediating function of career identity and job engagement in job crafting and turnover intention.

2.4. Job Crafting and Employee Metrics

In previous studies, job crafting has been linked to many other job metrics. To provide an example, teachers who have mastered the art of job crafting can better deal with the challenges of the classroom, maintain a greater degree of passion for their profession, and experience less burnout. Roczniowska et al. evaluated 81 nurses in Poland and discovered a positive association between their job crafting and self-regulation levels and a negative correlation with burnout [17]. Nurses were more likely to be able to self-regulate and

prevent chronic burnout if they had high levels of job crafting. Researchers have examined the relationship between job crafting and employee performance and how these two variables interact to affect other variables. A study of surgeons by Domnguez and Dolmans also found that job crafting positively affected work performance. Previous studies mainly discussed the relationship between job crafting and job satisfaction, job burnout, and other job indicators. The study of job crafting and other variables is mainly conducted in fixed industry settings, such as healthcare and finance [18]. There is little research on tourism and hospitality. An essential goal of this investigation is to study how hotel employees in developing countries construct their job crafting and the link between this and other factors.

On the one hand, career identity directly expresses the employee's identification and emotions with regard to their work, and job engagement has a direct impact on an individual's capacity to perform well at work. On the other hand, turnover intention can make a person feel tired at work, which can also cause employees to leave their industry. In the study of hotel staff, these three criteria are quite essential. In addition, job crafting has been found to have a strong connection with career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention by researchers in the financial, medical, and other industries. Despite this, the hotel and tourism industries have performed very little research on the subject. Therefore, this subject needs further discussion.

2.4.1. Career Identity

In psychology and management, the study of career identity is a significant focus. Some scholars have verified a significant positive correlation between job crafting and career identity, and improved job crafting can enhance career identity. At the same time, improving career identity is of great significance to job crafting [32,33]. According to Mattarelli and Tagliaventi, offshore professionals' job crafting significantly impacts their career identity. When individuals actively carry out job crafting, they will acquire a strong sense of belonging to their profession and eventually form a higher sense of career identity to promote the standard progression of both themselves and their colleagues [34]. Based on a relevant case study of the nursing profession in Saudi Arabia, against this specific background, the formation of job crafting among nurses will be affected by their educational experience. Nurses with high job crafting will actively cope with difficulties and find solutions, thus developing a career identity with a high degree.

Turnover intention behavior is influenced by both individual (such as personality and attitudes) and environmental elements (such as leadership style, rewards, or punishment), according to most studies. Because both of these research concepts focus on motivational factors, it is reasonable to assume that shifting motivation affects employees' desire to leave their current positions [35]. An employee's turnover intention behavior is influenced by an employee's sense of career identity. There are cognitive, emotional, and behavioral factors that influence whether employees have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of their work in an organization [36]. According to Roczniewska, career identity is an intermediary between job crafting and turnover intention. Job crafting can allow employees to adjust their negative emotions and face problems at work positively, thus improving their career identity and reducing turnover intention [17]. Hence, job crafting has a significant impact on employees' career identity. Therefore, we hypothesize that career identity is a mediator between job crafting and turnover intention behavior. Job crafting significantly impacts hotel staff's turnover intention, and we may learn more about this by considering the role of career identity as a mediating factor. As a result, the following hypotheses are offered:

Hypothesis (H1). *The job crafting of hotel employees is positively related to career identity.*

Hypothesis (H2). *Career identity acts as a mediator between job crafting and turnover intention.*

2.4.2. Job Engagement

A growing number of academics have committed themselves to researching job engagement and job crafting in recent years. Nevertheless, there is significant variance between these research works. While some researchers believe that job crafting affects job engagement, others believe that job engagement affects job crafting [37]. Thevanes and Baskar took 150 bank employees as research objects. They drew several conclusions: strengthening the job crafting of bank employees through leadership guidance and training can provide them with more robust autonomy in their work, thus leading to higher job engagement [38]. Gordon et al. took medical experts as the research object and concluded that enhancing the job engagement of medical professionals enables them to demonstrate higher levels of job crafting [24]. Highly educated medical professionals will have a positive attitude toward their jobs, resulting in higher job engagement and job crafting.

Job engagement is considered an essential characteristic of today's social enterprise employees. Previously accumulated evidence suggests that job engagement affects employee commitment, work performance, and other work-related outcomes [39]. According to self-regulation theory, employees with high levels of job crafting understand the value of their existence in the organization and can continuously adjust their work conditions to perform at their best [40]. Eventually, they will achieve a higher level of occupation identity and job engagement. Employees with a high level of job crafting avoid a decline in work enthusiasm, which further increases their professional identity and job engagement [41].

There is a strong correlation between job engagement and turnover intention. Low work efficiency and an unfriendly work environment increase the likelihood of an employee leaving their position. Based on the theory of self-regulation, we hypothesize that employees who are more engaged in their jobs are also more likely to report a lower turnover intention since they are more likely to constantly change their employment status. Job engagement may be an intermediate variable between turnover intention and job crafting. Therefore, the following assumptions are put forward:

Hypothesis (H3). *Hotel employees' job engagement is positively correlated with their job crafting.*

Hypothesis (H4). *Job engagement functions as a mediator between job crafting and turnover intention.*

2.4.3. Turnover Intention

Turnover intention is a hotly debated issue in the management community. At the same time, exploring the influencing factors is an essential part of the study of turnover intention. According to Labrague et al., it is possible to forecast an employee's turnover intention based on four different categories: the first includes individual factors such as gender, study experience, working hours, and degree of education; the second includes organizational factors, such as administrative fairness, organizational support, work nature, and the integration degree of executive members [42,43]; the third includes the degree of individual–organization fit, such as job satisfaction, job happiness, and organizational loyalty; the last category includes external environmental factors, including career prospects, governmental regulations, and the unemployment rate [44].

According to relevant studies, more research focuses on how employees are likely to leave their jobs as an outcome variable. Improved job crafting skills can successfully lower employees' turnover intentions. They will work harder, redefine their identities, and be more engaged in their job if they believe that they can make a difference in the world. Without proper job crafting, workers may contemplate quitting when the opportunity arises. As a result, individuals will be less likely to leave their jobs if they have a better sense of career identity at work. Thus, the following hypotheses are offered:

Hypothesis (H5). *Hotel employees' job crafting has a negative impact on their turnover intention.*

Hypothesis (H6). *Hotel employees' career identity has a negative impact on their turnover intention.*

Hypothesis (H7). *The job engagement of hotel employees is negatively related to turnover intention.*

3. Methodology

3.1. Measures' Development

There were two sections to the questionnaire: hotel employees' job crafting, career identity, job engagement, and turnover intentions constituted the first part of the study. The scale of Leana et al. was used to measure job crafting [22]. This scale had four components: increasing structural work resources, increasing social work resources, increasing challenging work demands, and reducing obstructive work demands. This allowed us to track how successfully respondents were able to make adjustments to reach their goals better. The career identity design scale proposed by Adams and Hean was used to measure the views of hotel industry employees on career identity [45]. The job engagement and turnover intention scales were developed by Schaufeli and Bakker to gauge the level of job engagement and the likelihood of job turnover among hotel employees [40]. Respondents rated their level of agreement on a scale of 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Secondly, demographic information about the respondents was collected.

After being first designed in English, the questionnaire was translated into Chinese. Six experts who were fluent in both Chinese and English were hired to assist with the translation and assure its accuracy, before the questions were revised based on their feedback. An initial assessment of 120 hotel employees in Anqing, China was used to administer the survey to ensure that the intended audience understood the questions. The hotel's 120 employees were asked to mark any content that they did not understand or had multiple interpretations. To improve the questionnaire's quality, a panel of experts from the tourism industry reviewed it. Table 1 depicts the final scale, which incorporated all feedback and revisions.

Table 1. Measurement items.

Construct	Items	Source
Job Crafting	Increasing structural work resources	Leana et al. [22]
	IS1. I concentrate on improving my study and professional skills.	
	IS2. I often try to become more professional in my hotel work.	
	IS3. I try to learn new things about job.	
	IS4. I will try my best to complete the tasks assigned by the hotel leaders.	
	IS5. At work, I will think independently to complete a thing.	
	Increasing social work resources	
	IR1. I asked my supervisor to guide me.	
	IR2. I asked my employer if he was pleased with my performance.	
	IR3. I turn to my mentor for inspiration.	
	IR4. I'm open to receiving input on my performance at work.	
	IR5. I consult with my coworkers for guidance.	
	Increasing challenging work demands	
	ID1. I will actively offer to join any activity I am interested in.	
	ID2. I'm usually one of the first to try something new.	
	ID3. The off-season of the hotel should actively prepare for the next peak season.	
ID4. I often take on extra tasks even if I don't get extra pay.		
ID5. I try to seek more challenges in my work.		
Reducing obstructive work demands		
RD1. I try to reduce the psychological stress of my job.		
RD2. I'm always looking for ways to lessen the stress I feel at work.		
RD3. I avoid interacting with folks who are prone to emotional outbursts.		
RD4. I try to avoid folks with unreasonable expectations.		
RD5. I try to avoid making difficult hotel decisions.		
RD6. I would avoid putting myself in a stressful state for a long time.		

Table 1. Cont.

Construct	Items	Source
Career Identity	CI1. I'm proud to say that I'm now officially a part of this industry.	Adams et al. [45]
	CI2. I have a close bond with those who work in the hotel industry.	
	CI3. I'm embarrassed to say I'm studying for a hotel job.	
	CI4. I find myself making excuses for being a hotel employee.	
	CI5. I try to hide that I am learning to be part of the profession.	
	CI6. I'm happy to be a hotel employee.	
	CI7. I feel a strong connection to those who work in the hospitality industry.	
	CI8. Being a hotel employee is very important to me.	
	CI9. I feel I have something in common with the rest of the hotel employee.	
Job Engagement	JE1. Whenever I'm at work, I'm bubbling with enthusiasm.	Schaufeli et al. [40]
	JE2. My work is one that I enjoy very much.	
	JE3. I'm motivated by my work.	
	JE4. I'm eager to get to work every morning when I wake up.	
	JE5. When I'm working hard, I'm in a good mood.	
	JE6. As a professional, I take great pride in my job.	
	JE7. I immersed myself in my work.	
Turnover Intention	TI1. I plan to get another career.	Bothma and Roodt [43]
	TI2. I'm always mulling about the idea of quitting my present employment.	
	TI3. I intend to resign from my position.	

3.2. Sample and Procedure

Seven hotels in Eastern China, ranging from mid-range to high-end (3-star and above), were chosen for the study. The researchers utilized a convenience sampling strategy since they had a strong working connection with the hotels participating in the research study. Recruitment of participants for the study was conducted before collecting cell phone data by contacting the managers of each hotel. The hotel's departmental meetings were used to distribute questionnaires to employees. Employees at the hotel were given incentives to encourage them to participate in the questionnaire activities. In order to ensure data confidentiality, participants were made aware that their responses would be processed by a research team that was not affiliated with the hotel. Hotel managers were not present during the completion of the questionnaires. Nine hundred survey responses were gathered in two months of data collection. After the original data were statistically filtered (e.g., for insufficient information and a lack of variation in all replies), 831 viable instances were selected to test the hypotheses.

Table 2 displays the demographics of the survey's participants. Female employees (61.7%) had a 23.4% higher percentage than male employees (38.3%). Moreover, 89% of those who took the poll were between the ages of 18 and 45, with more than half of them (54.5%) already married. Over half of the hotel employees (56.4%) possessed a 2-year college degree or possessed a 2-year college degree or below, while only 4.7% of the hotel employees had a master's degree or above. In addition, 71.5% of hotel workers polled stated that they earned between RMB 2000 and 6000 per month. A total of 44.4% of those who took the survey were classified as general employees. Meanwhile, 39.4% of respondents worked in the catering department, while 30.2% of respondents were employed in the front office. More than half of the participants (59.9%) had been working in the hotel industry for less than three years.

Table 2. Demographic and work background information of respondents in two rounds of research.

Categories	The First Questionnaire Stage (<i>n</i> = 831)		The Second Questionnaire Stage (<i>n</i> = 622)	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Gender				
Male	318	38.3	245	39.4
Female	513	61.7	377	60.6

Table 2. Cont.

Categories	The First Questionnaire Stage (n = 831)		The Second Questionnaire Stage (n = 622)	
	Number	Percentage (%)	Number	Percentage (%)
Age				
18–25 (inclusive) years old	253	30.4	154	24.8
25–35 (inclusive) years old	294	35.4	197	31.7
35–45 (inclusive) years old	200	24.1	160	25.7
45–55 (inclusive) years old	80	9.6	88	14.1
55–65 (inclusive) years old	4	0.5	23	3.7
Marriage				
Unmarried	361	43.5	222	35.7
Married	453	54.5	366	58.8
Other	17	2.0	34	5.5
Education				
High school and below	138	16.6	117	18.8
2-year college degree	331	39.8	239	38.4
Bachelor degree	323	38.9	226	36.3
Master degree or above	39	4.7	40	6.4
Department				
Front desk	251	30.2	174	28
Food and beverage department	327	39.4	221	35.5
Finance department	67	8.1	63	10.1
Sales department	60	7.2	56	9
Human resources department	49	5.9	40	6.4
Engineering department	34	4.1	28	4.5
Executive office	26	3.1	25	4
Other	17	2.0	15	2.4
Income				
<2000 CNY	90	10.8	71	11.4
2000–4000 (inclusive) CNY	372	44.8	273	43.9
4000–6000 (inclusive) CNY	222	26.7	133	21.4
6000–8000 (inclusive) CNY	71	8.5	62	10
8000–10,000 (inclusive) CNY	44	5.3	53	8.5
>10,000 CNY	32	3.9	30	4.8
Position				
Intern	118	14.2	88	14.1
Ordinary employee	369	44.4	243	39.1
Foreman, supervisor	155	18.7	121	19.5
Department manager	81	9.7	70	11.3
Director, general Manager	67	8.1	67	10.8
Other	41	4.9	33	5.3
Years of work in the industry				
≤1 year	223	26.8	166	26.7
1–3 (included) years	275	33.1	175	28.1
3–6 (included) years	178	21.4	136	21.9
6–10 (included) years	96	11.6	91	14.6
>10 years	59	7.1	54	8.7

3.3. Data Analysis

First, descriptive statistics and analysis using SPSS version 24.0 were performed to detect issues with multicollinearity and normalcy. Second, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) was conducted on job crafting questions prior to evaluating the measurement model, because the current research context in hospitality was very different from that of the financial and healthcare industries, which necessitated an EFA analysis of the scale used in the study (i.e., financial and healthcare industries). Orthogonal variable axis rotation

and principal component analysis were the primary tools employed in the EFA analysis. Eigenvalues larger than 1, interpretability, and reliability were used to determine the number of factors. In this case, the factor load was set at 0.5 cut-off points. For sample sizes greater than 150 observations, previous relevant literature studies have found that this level is well suited to demographic patterns. For further verification, a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed on the measurement models. Lastly, the AMOS24.0 software for structural equation modeling was used to test the suggested conceptual model, as illustrated in Figure 1.

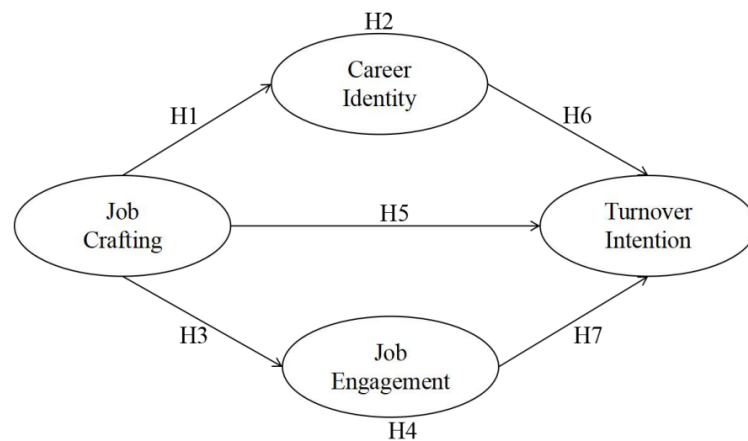


Figure 1. Proposed research model.

4. Results

4.1. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA)

The SPSS 24.0 random case selection method was used to choose 300 cases from a pool of 831 for our EFA study on the job crafting of hotel workers. The rationality of the factor structure was examined using the KMO value (0.89) and Bartlett's sphericity test ($\chi^2 = 13,941.777$, $p = 0.000$). According to the Kaiser criterion of retaining an eigenvalue greater than 1, the extracted data were 71.57% different. Since the 0.50 cut-off level was not met, two items (IS5 and DH6) were omitted due to collinearity [44]. Overcoming the recommended standard of 0.70 and demonstrating its dependability, the Cronbach's alpha values for the structure's size were 0.918, 0.889, 0.884, and 0.906. Table 3 shows the results of EFA, including the results of the orthogonal varimax rotation and the composite reliability measures.

Table 3. EFA results for job crafting items ($n = 300$), with means and standard deviations ($n = 531$).

Dimension and Item Description	Factor Loading	Cronbach's α	% of Variance	Mean	SD
Reducing obstructive work demands (RD)		0.918	21.352%		
RD4	0.862			3.44	1.026
RD5	0.851			3.46	1.058
RD3	0.848			3.44	1.058
RD2	0.831			3.55	1.043
RD1	0.806			3.49	1.074
Increasing challenging work demands (ID)		0.889	38.714%		
ID2	0.853			3.45	0.999
ID4	0.848			3.44	0.995
ID3	0.833			3.49	0.978
ID5	0.773			3.52	0.976
ID1	0.730			3.54	0.963

Table 3. Cont.

Dimension and Item Description	Factor Loading	Cronbach's α	% of Variance	Mean	SD
Increasing social work resources (IR)		0.884	55.938%		
IR2	0.860			3.65	1.057
IR3	0.855			3.67	1.100
IR1	0.834			3.72	1.058
IR4	0.746			3.44	0.910
IR5	0.718			3.40	0.948
Increasing structural job resources (IS)		0.906	71.570%		
IS2	0.874			3.45	0.940
IS1	0.871			3.57	0.910
IS4	0.860			3.55	0.936
IS3	0.850			3.42	0.947
Career identity (CI)					
CI1	0.913			3.48	1.034
CI2	0.908			3.50	1.022
CI3	0.917			3.43	1.05
CI4	0.814			3.55	0.997
CI5	0.608			3.55	1.027
CI6	0.624			3.53	0.957
CI7	0.801			3.37	0.938
CI8	0.713			3.42	0.963
CI9	0.624			3.41	0.975
Job engagement (JE)		0.938			
JE1	0.834			3.54	0.914
JE2	0.816			3.60	0.929
JE3	0.786			3.61	0.913
JE4	0.771			3.54	0.919
JE5	0.826			3.53	0.929
JE6	0.795			3.53	0.915
JE7	0.798			3.54	0.935
Turnover intention (TI)		0.912			
TI1	0.851			3.47	0.936
TI2	0.862			3.51	0.913
TI3	0.832			3.44	0.907

This study's findings revealed four dimensions to be important in assessing the construct of job crafting. Specifically, increasing structural work resources had four items (IS1, IS2, IS3, and IS4), increasing social work resources contained five items (IR1, IR2, IR3, IR4, and IR5), increasing challenging work demands comprised five items (ID1, ID2, ID3, ID4, and ID5), and reducing obstructive work demands had five items (RD1, RD2, RD3, RD4, and RD5).

Overall, 71.57% of the total variance was accounted for by the removed measurement items. When errors between the two measurement items were uncorrelated and the correlation between them was significantly positive, as Marsh and Asparouhov pointed out, "for any latent construct, two measurements of the unobservable variable may be adequate" ([46], p. 17). As a result, the second stage of data analysis made use of these constructs.

4.2. Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)

The second step of data analysis used CFA to find potential links between measured variables and the fundamental constructs. Career identity, job crafting, job engagement, and turnover intention were all intertwined in this research. The following values were deemed to be good fits for the measurement model's parameters: $\chi^2/df = 2.905$, GFI = 0.925, NFI = 0.895, CFI = 0.951, IFI = 0.951, RMAEA = 0.062, PNFI = 0.811, and a standard RMR of 0.40.

CR values of 0.85 to 0.92, which were above the minimum requirement of 0.60, indicated that the measurement model had an adequate degree of internal consistency. The average variance retrieved from the four components varied from 0.59 to 0.71, above the stipulated cut-off value of 0.50, indicating adequate convergence validity. Because of this, the research's measurement model was found to be both valid and reliable. Using the results, we concluded that the model could be used for structural estimation in the future. The CFA results are shown in Tables 3 and 4 for each of the study's four major constructs, as well as the mean, standard deviation, and correlation coefficient.

Table 4. CFA results ($n = 531$).

	CR	AVE	CI	JC	TI
Career identity (PI)	0.918	0.651	0.896		
Job crafting (JC)	0.890	0.619	0.847	0.801	
Job engagement (JE)	0.875	0.593	0.760	0.672	
Turnover intention (TI)	0.907	0.708	−0.734	−0.664	0.905

Note: CR indicates composite reliability; AVE indicates average variance extracted. Square root of variance between the two constructions is represented by the boldface diagonal components. Structures are connected by off-diagonal components.

As a result of the EFA results, the four dimensions (RD, ID, IR, IS) of job crafting were categorized into two groups: primary and secondary structures. Two models, one for each of the dimensions, were used to compare the second-order structure of the four-dimensional model with the single-factor model. The CFA of job crafting yielded a good result: GFI = 0.887, CFI = 0.928, IFI = 0.929, RMSEA = 0.061, standardized RMR = 0.040, and $\chi^2/df = 1.740$. The single-factor model's fitting effect was better than the four-dimensional model's according to the fitting index.

4.3. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)

We gathered a new dataset of 622 valid responses to test our conceptual model (see Table 3). A similar process was used to collect data as described earlier in this article. Women comprised 60.6% of the participants, and most respondents (82.2%) were between 18 and 45 years old. A total of 58.8% of those polled reported being married. Moreover, 57.2% of those who participated in the survey held a two-year college degree or below, implying that hotel staff usually have a low educational level. There were 63.5% from the front desk department. Earning between RMB 0 and 4000 per month, 55.3% of participants were in line with the average income of hotel workers in China. More than a third of those (39.1%) polled were ordinary staff members. Finally, 54.8% of respondents had been working in the hotel industry for less than three years.

The authors used maximum likelihood parameter estimation and normally distributed data for the SEM analysis, completed in the third stage of the research process. There was a strong correlation between job crafting, career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention among hotel employees, and this was confirmed using SEM. Fitting ranges of $\chi^2/df = 1.740$, GFI = 0.901, CFI = 0.963, RFI = 0.910, AGFI = 0.905, RMSEA = 0.038, and standardized RMR = 0.045 were found to be acceptable. Using the positive and negative route coefficients, as well as the absolute values of the normalized coefficients, SEM path diagrams depicted the amount and direction of direct impacts. H1, H3, H5, H6, and H7 were all supported by the data, as shown in Figure 2.

To be more specific, the results showed a positive $p < 0.05$ relationship ($\beta = 0.32$) between job crafting (JC) and career identity (CI), supporting H1. There was a positive relationship ($\beta = 0.46$) between job crafting (JC) and job engagement (JE), indicating that H3 was significant at the $p < 0.01$ level. A direct correlation ($\beta = -0.67$) was found between job crafting (JC) and turnover intention (TI) at the $p < 0.001$ level, thereby verifying H5. An adverse effect ($\beta = -0.89$) on turnover intention (TI) was found, which indicated that H6 was significant at the $p < 0.001$ level. According to H7, job engagement (JE) and turnover

intention (TI) had a negative direct relationship ($\beta = -0.51, p < 0.05$), which supported this hypothesis.

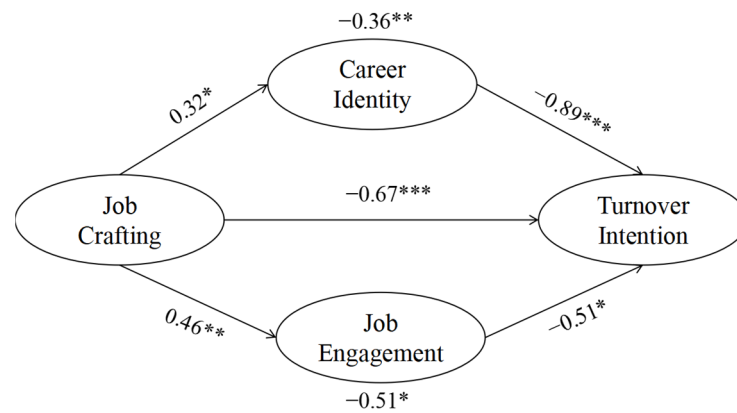


Figure 2. Structural model. Note: * $p < 0.05$, ** $p < 0.01$, *** $p < 0.001$.

Mediating roles for career identity and job engagement were examined using a mediation analysis. The bootstrap methods through AMOS24.0 produced bootstrap percentages and bias-corrected confidence intervals (B-CCI) to evaluate the significance of the indirect effects. For indirect effects in mediated models, bootstrapping was essential. A bootstrap sample of 5000 with 95% confidence intervals was used to estimate the indirect effects.

Career identity (CI) was investigated as a potential mediator between job crafting (JC) and turnover intention (TI). To support H2, we found significant outcomes with a B-CCI between -0.47 and -0.15 that supported the hypothesis ($\beta = -0.36, p < 0.01$). The second bootstrap analysis found that job engagement (JE) served as a mediator between job crafting (JC) and turnover intention (TI) ($\beta = -0.51$, B-CCI [$-0.67; -0.23$], $p < 0.05$), confirming H4. The percentile bootstrap method produced similar results when comparing the mediated significance.

5. Discussion and Conclusions

This paper investigates the job crafting practices of hotel staff in China, to fill the research gap considering its effects on individuals' career identity, job engagement, and turnover intention. The SEM research of 622 hotel workers in China yielded several exciting discoveries. The results of the EFA demonstrate that hotel employees' job crafting has four distinct dimensions (increasing structural work resources, increasing social work resources, increasing challenging work demands, and reducing obstructive work demands). Job crafting positively influences job engagement and career identity, whereas the likelihood of turnover intention is negatively affected. Studying hotel employees' job crafting behavior and fostering their development are significant implications of these findings.

5.1. Theoretical Implications

Firstly, an empirical investigation of the relationship between job crafting and other job performance indicators of hotel employees working in China was conducted in this study, based on self-regulation theory. Previous research on the topic of job creation has been relatively limited and has primarily focused on the careers of those in the financial and educational industries. According to Leana and Appelbaum, the level of job crafting of 232 preschool teachers was influenced by factors such as gender and experience [22]. Studying 530 elderly and nursing home workers, Montserrat and Romeo made recommendations for their own, their managers, and their culture's development [47]. The nature of the labor in the hospitality industry sets it apart from other types of traditional jobs in a variety of ways, such as monotonous working styles, irregular and prolonged hours, and a high standard required to achieve the expectations of clients [3]. Different from previous studies, we used a quantitative method to assess how well hotel employees craft their

jobs. Psychological as well as environmental factors affect the development of job crafting among hotel employees, according to the current research.

Secondly, this research examined how hotel staff in China, a developing nation instead of a developed economy, are crafting their jobs. Job crafting takes on different forms in nations at varying levels of economic development. Studies on job crafting measures have traditionally been concentrated in developed countries [48,49]. Those who work in the fields of healthcare, education, and hospitality in developed countries are viewed as more critical. It is possible for them to rise in social standing, earn more money, and feel better about themselves, all of which can help to speed up the process of job crafting. However, these findings may not be applicable to nations in different stages of economic growth or with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds. In our research, we initially explored Chinese employees' job crafting. We redefined the four dimensions of job crafting for hotel employees: increasing structural work resources, increasing social work resources, increasing challenging work demands, and reducing obstructive work demands. In the past, researchers have focused more on aspects such as society and the workplace. Tims and Twemlow et al. studied the influence of factors such as the social environment, wages, and benefits of enterprises on employee job crafting [50]. Philip took the teacher group as the research object and investigated the influence of multiple factors, such as organizational support, the social environment, and managers, on the job crafting of teachers [51]. This paper examined the job crafting process from the perspective of hotel employees and managers. In developing countries, the formation of employee job crafting is of great theoretical importance.

Thirdly, this research examined the multiple direct and indirect impacts of job crafting on job engagement, career identity, and turnover intention during the COVID-19 pandemic. Earlier studies have focused on the correlation among job crafting and one or two variables; the groups investigated are generally steady and homogenous. Bakker et al. found that job crafting significantly impacts healthcare professionals' career identity [14]. For primary school teachers in Indian private schools, Dash and Vohra examined the correlation between job crafting, empowering leadership, and work engagement in the classroom. Chinese hotel employees' job crafting was further investigated in this paper, supporting the conclusion that job crafting and other employee indicators are linked [44]. Career identity and job engagement are positively affected by job crafting, but turnover intention is negatively affected. Unlike other studies, we found that job crafting negatively impacts turnover intention through career identity and job engagement.

Finally, a vital contribution of this research is that it examines how job crafting and turnover intention behavior are linked through a mediator. This paper uses a new theoretical framework based on self-regulation theory to investigate the mediating role of career identity and job engagement in the relationship between job crafting and turnover intention. Although past research has found that career identity and job engagement are essential variables in job crafting, the mediating function of these factors has not been investigated experimentally by previous researchers [52]. According to our findings, job crafting is closely linked to turnover intention regarding factors such as career identity and job engagement. This study also introduces self-regulation theory to the literature on job crafting and turnover intention. By studying the mediation mechanism of job engagement and career identity, this study confirms self-regulation theory: when employees are stressed, they will self-regulate to seek the right resources, so the level of job crafting will also increase. Furthermore, the higher the level of career identity and job engagement, the less likely employees are to consider leaving their current position.

5.2. Practical Implications

For hotel managers and policymakers, the findings of this study have practical applications. First, we define four dimensions of job crafting. Employees in the hotel industry should constantly improve their skills, keep up with industry trends, and learn more about hotel services. As a result of regular training and wrap-up meetings, hotel managers can

help their employees to solve problems at work and establish a more favorable professional outlook [53]. As well as setting up a fair promotion system, hotel managers should also offer bonuses to staff who perform well. As a final point, it is also crucial to seek solutions to problems that may arise at work. Managers and hotel workers should frequently communicate to understand each other's needs better. In the hotel industry, for example, managers need to ensure that their employees have the power and benefits that they need to keep their jobs.

Second, career identity and job engagement are essential to the hotel industry. Staff who experience problems at work and actively craft their jobs are more likely to identify their careers and show higher levels of commitment to their work. The hotel management industry and hotel owners can benefit from these findings. Managers should pay greater attention to the psycho-emotional development of hotel staff while focusing on the hotel's effectiveness. Employees in the hospitality industry can benefit greatly from training in interpersonal skills such as active listening, interactive communication, and trust building [54]. Hotel managers can set goals for their staff and keep track of their progress through performance reviews, newsletters, and personal letters of recommendation. It is also recommended that hotel managers regularly conduct job crafting surveys to learn about any problems experienced by the hotel and any improvements that the staff would like to see implemented. Employees at hotels will be better able to develop their career identity and feel more connected to their jobs as a result of this initiative.

Third, China's hotels have been experiencing a high staff turnover rate, especially during the COVID-19 pandemic, which is a severe issue. A high staff turnover rate can lead to a rise in hotel operating expenses, a fall in staff motivation, and a decrease in overall hospitality performance. Hotel managers need to recognize job crafting to cope with hotel employees' high turnover and reduce the likelihood that employees will leave the company [55]. Candidates should be asked about their previous work experience before being hired by human resources managers, to determine whether they are a good fit for a hotel position. A supportive work environment that promotes job crafting behaviors and offers employees more freedom and discretion in their jobs is essential once new hires have been integrated into the hotel's workforce. Finally, managers should determine which organizational and individual factors influence employees' intentions to leave, in order to address employee concerns, improve their career identity and dedication, and ultimately reduce their turnover intention.

Fourth, in developing and developed countries, the issue of job crafting differs. Due to better pay and social standing in the developed world, hotel employees are better equipped to craft their jobs and deal with issues that arise on the job. Meanwhile, hotel employees in developing countries tend to be viewed as low-skilled workers with few career advancement opportunities. As a result of these factors, hotel workers in developing countries have a low level of job crafting and high turnover. In comparison to other service industries (e.g., healthcare and education), the hospitality industry has historically paid lower salaries. A higher income level and a better working environment in hotels may be necessary to promote employee motivation and passion and improve job crafting in the hospitality sector. It is imperative that the government step up its support of the hotel sector and work with it to develop industry standards, build a talent pipeline, and raise the educational standard for hotel staff [56]. All parties must work together to ensure that hotel employees' job crafting continues to improve.

6. Limitations and Directions for Future Studies

First, a sample of star-rated hotels in Eastern China was chosen for convenience for the data survey. The findings may not apply to other service settings, such as theme parks. For future research, we recommend looking at these relationships from various perspectives. Second, this study examines how job crafting influences employees' intention to leave their jobs through their career identity and job engagement, without taking into account the relevant context. Scholars can investigate whether employees' job crafting, career identity,

job engagement, and turnover intention are influenced by moderating variables in future studies. Third, because the data were gathered after the COVID-19 pandemic, the results may be skewed and may not accurately reflect shifts in the hotel industry's demographics. In view of the worldwide labor shortage created by the COVID-19 epidemic, the findings of this study will aid hospitality industry managers in their attempts to retain talent. In a follow-up study, we aim to further assess the impact of hotel staff's job crafting on other job indicators against the background of COVID-19, and to compare and analyze the job crafting of hotel employees under normal circumstances to determine whether there is a difference in the impact of hotel employees on other job indicators in the two different situations. Fourth, employees' work attitudes and behaviors in international hotels may be influenced by cultural differences. Contrasting results may emerge when the model is applied in different cultures. If researchers wish to improve the generalizability of the study, they may need to adopt cross-cultural research methods.

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