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Moderating Effect of Job Crafting in the Nexus between Organisational Politics and Employee Performance among Public Tertiary Institutions in Adamawa State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated the moderating effect of job crafting in the nexus between organisational politics and employee performance in selected public tertiary institution in Adamawa State. The study is anchored on The Just World theories. Descriptive and cross-sectional research design was employed and the population of the study include both academic and non-academic staff of selected public tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. The construct organisational politics was measured using a scale adapted from Kacmar and Ferris (1991). Job crafting on the other hand, was measured using an adapted scale from Slemp and Vella-brodrick (2013), while employee performance scale was adapted from Koopmans et al., (2013). The sample size was calculated using Krejcie and Morgan table of sample determination from the total population of 4230 employees from Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Modibbo Adama University Yola and College of Agriculture Ganye. A Likert scale questionnaire was used for data collection as recommended by Revilla et al., (2014). The instruments reliability was tested using Cronbach Alpha statistical tool. Data analysis was performed via IBM SPSS version 27. The findings of the study revealed that organisational politics significantly influences Employees' performance (B = .28, p <. 001). In the same way, job crafting also influences employees' performance. Most importantly, the nexus between organisational politics and employee performance was significantly moderated by job crafting (B = .02, p = .031). the study recommends that management should play healthy politics that will support job crafting among its employees in order to promote enhanced performance and greater organisational success.

Keywords: Organisational Politics, Job Crafting, Employee Performance, Task Crafting, relational crafting and cognitive Crafting

Introduction

Complex organizations consist of individuals and coalitions which maintain separate interests while holding different values and beliefs as well as preferences and perceptions. The coalitions in continuous competition for organizational resources utilize influence, power and political activities as their main tools to achieve and sustain their advantages. The workforce interaction with land capital and entrepreneurship elements in every organization naturally creates friendships which develop into formal and informal groups (Sule et al., 2015). Organizational tasks and structures link to formal groups whereas informal groups emerge from relationships built through social connections among employees. The combination of formal and informal groups creates organizational politics as a natural element of workplace dynamics because organizations function as social systems where individuals or groups pursue desired resources together with power and recognition and

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influence. Healthy competition and innovation might result from organizational politics but destructive outcomes occur when people or teams choose individual advancement above organizational targets (Attah, 2016). Destructive political activities within organizations can damage organizational relationships, decrease workforce dedication and performance until the system becomes ineffective. Employees who feel exploited by organisational politics commonly generate negative practices towards work and the whole organisation, influencing their performances (Jain & Ansari 2018).

Job crafting represents 'the process through which employees redefine their work designs to align with their personal belief (Berg et al., 2013). Job crafting represents a proactive workplace behavior according to Tims and Bakker (2010) which allows employees to modify their job characteristics particularly their job demands and job resources. Two major approaches describe job crafting: The role-based model developed by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2020) examines employee work task modification and relational changes and work perception shifts; Tims et al., (2012) proposed the resources-based model which builds on Demerouti et al., (2001) Job Demands and Resources framework to focus on structural and social resource expansion together with challenging demand elevation and hindering demand reduction. The role-based model emphasizes cognitive aspects as qualitative changes while the resources-based model focuses on measurable changes to jobs. Modern organizations demand that their workers take initiative to transform their tasks to preserve peak operational performance (Cera et al., 2019; Demerouti et al., 2020). Job crafting which uses personal skills and interests and evolving abilities helps workers enhance employee performance according to Mondo et al., (2023) and Lu et al., (2023). Job crafting represents a critical workforce strategy which enables staff members to connect their assignments to their individual identity thus maintaining productive results regardless of complex political dynamics (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2020).

Nigeria's public tertiary institutions face widespread organizational political issues that appear through discriminatory practices and biased promotions and resource distribution— These political behaviors typically create employee perceptions of unfairness which decreases morale and satisfaction and weakens organizational commitment. An environment like this affects both employee performance and the total effectiveness of institutions. The application of job crafting as a response to organizational politics has received attention yet its specific role in reducing these effects remains understudied. Research on job crafting buffering mechanisms against organizational politics effects on employee performance guides the development of productivity-enhancing institutional interventions. This study therefore attempts to examine the moderating effect of job crafting in the relationship between organizational politics and employee performance in selected tertiary institutions in Adamawa State in Nigeria.

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study is to determine the moderating effect of job crafting in the relationship between organisational politics and employee performance among public tertiary institutions in Adamawa State. Specific objectives are to:

i.   Investigate the effect of organisational politics on employee performance among selected public tertiary institutions in Adamawa State
ii. Determine effect of job crafting on employee performance in selected public tertiary Institutions in Adamawa State
iii. Investigate how job crafting moderate the relationship between organisational politics and employees' performance in selected public tertiary institutions in Adamawa State

Conceptual Clarification
Organisational politics

Organisational politics is defined as actions that allow individuals in organisations to achieve objectives without following appropriate channels (Olorunleke 2015). Swartz and Potgieter (2017) describe organisational politics as actions involved inside organisations to gain, expand and utilise authority and other resources to acquire an individual's ideal results in a state in which there is doubt or inconsistency about preferences. Organisational politics has been considered as a strategic action made by a person inside an organisation that will prompt long term or short-term individual outcome to the detriment of others (Hassan, Vina & Ithnin 2017). An attempt to conceptualize the perceptions of organizational politics identified three factors which are labeled as: general political, that includes individuals who act in a self-serving manner to obtain valued outcomes; go along to get ahead, which consists of a lack of action by individuals for example remaining silent in order to secure valued outcomes; and pay and promotion policies which involves the organization behaving politically through the policies it enacts (Kacmar & Carlson, 1998).

Organizational politics is the use of one's individual or assigned power within an employing organization for the purpose of obtaining advantages beyond one's legitimate authority; those advantages may include access to tangible assets, or intangible benefits such as status or pseudo-authority that influences the behavior of others (Muiruri, 2023). He further posits that positive organizational politics delivers health benefits to organizational systems even though this point is not popular among scholars. Organizations experience enhanced work outcomes when positive organizational politics is employed to drive organizational change. A positive perception of organizational politics helps organizations solve internal conflicts while empowering staff members and managing workforce differences in their organizations. Leaders need to participate in political activities to accomplish their objectives but the litmus test should be why they use politics.

Job Crafting

Job crafting represents proactive behavior that employees undertake to change the physical, social, and/or cognitive aspects of their job (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2014). It is a self-initiated, informal process used to align jobs with individuals' personal preferences, passions, and motives (Tims et al., 2012). Because employees initiate job crafting, it is regarded as a bottom-up, individualized, proactive approach to job redesign (Rudolph et al., 2017). Hence, job crafting is distinct from the "one-size-fits- all" and top-down approaches of job redesign initiated by the organization; furthermore, researchers have considered job

crafting a promising alternative to the traditional approach of job redesign, where all changes to work tasks came from management. Rudolph et al., 2017 defined job crafting as the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work.

Job crafting consists of three types according to which include task modifications and adjustments to work relationships and cognitive work perspectives. Job crafting exists in three forms. Task crafting changes the activities' scope or quantity or type (Tims et al., 2012) while relational crafting focuses on modifying workplace interaction quality and cognitive crafting involves rethinking work approaches. (Rudolph et al., 2017). Job crafting was first conceptualized by Wrzesniewski and Dutton in 2001 while Tims and Bakker (2010) developed the Job Demand-Resource model for understanding work outcomes from job crafting. The authors Tims et al., (2012) established four job crafting dimensions that include rising challenging job demands and lowering hindering job demands with increased structural job resources and social job resources. Nielsen and Abildgaard (2012) extended the initial concepts to include rising challenging demands and lowering social demands alongside growing social resources and enhancing qualitative demands and reducing hindering demands. The research of Petrou et al., (2012) condensed job crafting into three fundamental elements which included resource seeking and challenge seeking together with demand reduction. Lichtenthaler and Fischbach (2019) divided job crafting into promotion-focused and prevention-focused categories. Bruning together with Campion (2018) developed the approach-avoidance model which includes six dimensions of job crafting such as work-role and social expansion, work-role reduction, work organization, adoption, meta-cognition and withdrawal.

Employee Performance

Employee performance is a multi-layered concept which combines observable results together with the behavioral actions that workers demonstrate while performing their assigned duties. According to Prasetyo and Harsono (2023) employee performance evaluation represents a systematic assessment of workforce members' ability to execute tasks toward organizational goal achievement. Research by Viswesvaran and Ones (2000) shows that performance contains essential behavioral dimensions and measurable achievements.

Employee performance incorporates task-related behaviors along with resulting outcomes such as productivity and quality. Kasmir (2016) shows that employee performance includes the outcomes which emerge from work duties performed within deadline parameters according to Bernardin and Russel (1993) who outline six performance evaluation criteria: Employee performance evaluation includes assessments of work quality and quantity as well as timing and cost-efficiency and supervision needs and interpersonal effects; quality, quantity, timeliness, cost-effectiveness, need for supervision, and interpersonal impact. Colquitt et al., (2019) stress that performance represents behaviors which support organizational goal attainment while also encompassing actions that preserve institutional values. Various perspectives show that employee performance extends beyond output metrics to include aspects which define how work gets done including ethical conduct and

initiative along with adaptability. Organizational assessment becomes more precise through this complete performance understanding particularly in dynamic workplaces where internal and external elements impact employee effectiveness.

Theoretical Framework
The Just World Theory

According to Lerner (1980) the Just World Theory shows that people believe actions always produce fair and predictable results while their behavior influences these outcomes. In human nature people expect the world follows fair principles which match virtuous conduct with deserved rewards. The belief in a just world among employees starts to break down when they experience workplace injustices including favoritism and bias as well as lobbying practices and lack of transparency and rigid organizational structures.

The theory is a helpful tool in the comprehension of the way in which employees view fairness in organizations. Within the organizational politics environment where favoritism, bias, and lack of transparency are the norm, the belief that the world is just is undermined among employees, which results in poor performance. Nonetheless, the nexus can be moderated by job crafting, which allows employees to reframe and recalibrate their jobs, and thus reestablishes a sense of control and fairness that maintains performance even in the face of political demands.

Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of this study is presented in figure I below in a pictorial form to clarify the direction of the study at a glance.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework
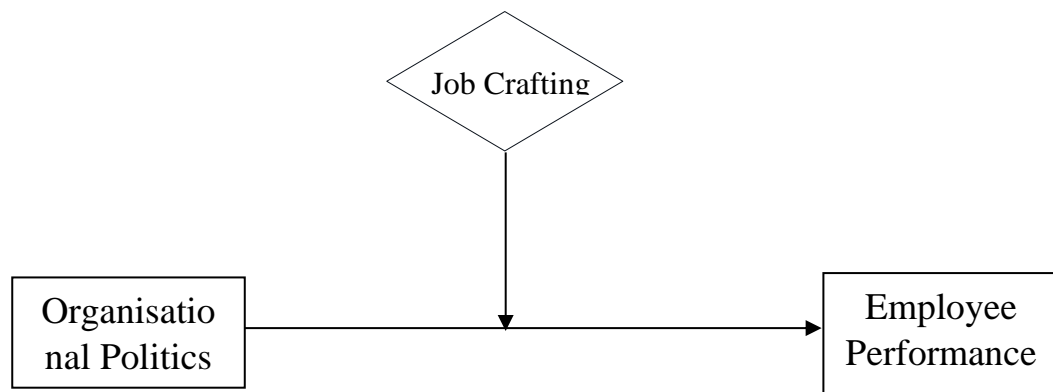
Source: Researcher's Design

Empirical Evidence

Ajaham and Hamid (2023) examined how human resource management practices affect performance levels of employees in a public sector organization based in Oman. As part of the research the authors examined how organizational politics affected the relationship. The researchers employed multiple regression analysis on a 350-response valid

questionnaire with a structured format. Research showed that human resource management practices create positive effects on how employees perform their duties. Organizational politics created an impact on the relationship between these variables.

Albloush et al., (2020) conducted research to analyze organizational politics effects on workplace performance at Greater Amman Municipality in Jordan. The study conducted face-to-face interviews with 11 administrative heads from 22 regional directorates which revealed that organizational politics created negative effects that led to unsatisfactory employee performance levels. Staff members described how upper-level personnel used their positions to acquire benefits and maintain good relations with superior management specifically when it came to obtaining training opportunities.

Demerouti et al., (2021) performed a quasi-experimental research to investigate the effects of their job crafting intervention on blue-collar workers' response to organizational transformation. The job crafting intervention consisted of three sequential phases: a workshop followed by four weeks of implementation and closing with an evaluative session. The research outcomes demonstrated that participants boosted their job crafting activities especially through challenge seeking and demand optimization after receiving the intervention. The participants showed lower exhaustion levels together with better cognitive and behavioral changes in their attitudes toward organizational transformation and improved safety protocols.

Ariani (2025) conducted research on job crafting effects toward work-life balance and procrastination and in-role performance within 1,032 employees working for Indonesian micro, small and medium enterprises. The research performed a structural equation modeling analysis which showed that the proactive line of job crafting led to better work-life balance and performance with lower procrastination outcomes. The research established that procrastination created a negative impact on work-life balance and performance ratings.

The Lagos State Civil Service Commission employee performance was studied by Ibironke et al., (2020) regarding perceived organizational political impact. The study used Pearson correlation on 90 staff member responses from a cross-sectional survey to show organizational politics creates significant performance effects. The research demonstrates that political behaviors emerging from individual and organizational elements exist commonly in public sector institutions yet they produce detrimental effects on performance.

Etim et al., (2023) studied how organizational politics relates to employee diversity at the Akwa Ibom State Local Government Service Commission. A survey of 118 employees revealed that scarce resources and individual personality characteristics both create positive significant relationships toward employee diversity. The research determined that organizational politics shows substantial effects from resource availability together with personal characteristics.

Genty et al., (2020) studied the association between job crafting practices and employee performance effectiveness at MTN Nigeria Plc. The research evaluated two job crafting aspects through survey-based data collection from 187 staff members to determine

their influence on task crafting and relational crafting. Research data indicated that employees who performed task crafting showed better task performance outcomes yet relational crafting resulted in positive effects on organizational citizenship behavior. The research analysis established that work independence with flexible work arrangements leads employees to perform better at their tasks while demonstrating more voluntary workplace actions.

Gupta et al., (2023) studied how organizational politics affects employee turnover and performance specifically in the Indian private sector banking sector. A structured questionnaire served as the quantitative research design. The research discovered that organizational politics creates a direct positive association with employee turnover rates. Research results indicated that organizational politics failed to impact employee performance levels significantly. The authors established that employee dissatisfaction caused by organizational politics results in turnover but the influence on job performance remains unknown.

Job crafting served as a mediator to explain how empowering leadership influences employee job performance according to Peral and Davidovitz (2024). The researchers employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey that yielded data from 261 employees. Job crafting behaviors served as a mediator that explained how empowering leadership affects job performance according to the study. Empowering leadership created positive effects on job crafting activities which led to better performance measures in both tasks and context. The reduction of hindrance demands maintained an unmediated relationship between the variables.

Wijewantha et al., (2020) conducted research to determine how organizational political perceptions affect employee well-being within Sri Lankan emerging multinational organizations. The research measured middle-level managers through self-administered questionnaires within a cross-sectional survey design. The analysis through SPSS 23.0 demonstrated that organizational politics perceptions lead to negative impacts on whole employee well-being particularly affecting their workplace well-being.

Methodology

The study adopted descriptive and cross-sectional research design. The population consist of both teaching and non-teaching staff of Federal Polytechnic Mubi (2,281), Modibbo Adama University (1693) and College of Agriculture Ganye (256) as shown in the table below. These institutions were chosen considering their geographical spread in the State and their years of establishment. Sample size was determined using Krejcie and Morgan table for sample size determination. A Likert scale questionnaire of one (1) to five (5) was adopted. Data analysis was performed using Hayes Process Macro version 4.2 via IBM SPSS version 27. Organisational politics was measured using a scale adapted from Kacmar and Ferris (1991). Job crafting on the other hand, was measured using an adapted scale from Slemp and Vella-brodrick (2013), while employee performance scale was adapted from Koopman et al., (2013).

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Table 1: Population and Sample Size

Institutions	Population Size	Expected Sample	Actual Sample
Federal Polytechnic Mubi	2,281	191	54% = 130
Modibbo Adama University Yola	1693	142	40% = 96
College of Agriculture Gany	256	21	6% = 15
Total	**4,230**	**354**	**241**

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Demography of Respondents

Based on the table below, 182 (75.5 %) of the respondents were male and 59 (24.5 %) were female. In terms of age, most of the respondents were aged 31 to 40 years, that is, 140 (58.1%) respondents, followed by 41 to 50, 71 (29.5%) respondents and 20 (8.3%) aged between 20 to 30 years with only 12 (5%) more aged 51 years and above. About the marital status, 204 (84.7%), 30 (12.5%), and 7 (2.9%) of the respondents were respectively married, single, and in the other categories like divorced, widowed. Among cadres, 135 (56 percent) were administrative staff and 106 (44 percent) were academic staff.

Table 2: Demographic Analysis

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	182	75.5
	Female	59	24.5
Age			
	20-30	20	8.3
	31-40	140	58.1
	41-50	71	29.5
	51 & above	12	5
Marital Status			
	Single	30	12.5
	Married	204	84.7
	Others	7	2..9
Cadre			
	Academic Staff	106	44
	Admin Staff	135	56

Source: Field Survey, 2025

Result

To investigate the influence of organizational politics on the performance of the employee, the moderated multiple regression analysis was performed after with PROCESS macro (Model 1) to investigate whether this effect is moderated by the use of job crafting. The overall model was found to be significant, $F_{(3, 237)} = 68.73$, $p < .001$, and had a R^2 of. 4653, that was, 46.53 percent of the variance in employee performance was explained by the combination of impact of all three concepts (organizational politics, job crafting, and the interaction of the two).

The findings indicated that the organizational politics impacted positively and significantly on employee performance (B = .2828, SE = .0337, t = 8.40, p < .001, 95% CI

[.2165, .3492]). On the same note, job crafting too played a big role as a good predictor of employee performance (B = .2531, SE = .0578, t = 4.38, p < .001, 95% CI [.1393, .3669]). Most importantly, the interaction term between organizational politics and job crafting proved to be significant (B = .0163, SE = .0075, t = 2.17, p = .031, 95% CI [.0015, .0311]).

Model Summary

R	R²	MSE	F	p
.68	.47	4.31	68.73	.0001

Model

	Coeff.	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Org. Politics	.28	.03	8.39	.0001	.2165	.3492
J C	.25	.06	4.38	.0001	.1393	.3669
Int_1	.02	.01	2.17	.0311	.0015	.0311

Source: SPSS output, 2025

Graphical Representation of Result

The figure below shows the moderation effect of Job Crafting on the connection between Organizational Politics and Employee Performance. As Job Crafting increases, there is an increase in employee performance. In particular, the sharpest inclination is noted when job crafting is high (JC = 3.06), thus workers who actively reform the structure of their jobs are in a position to work with political processes in their favour in a manner that boosts their performance. On the contrary, at low level of job crafting (JC = -3.06), the effect of organizational politics is weaker, which suggest that employee with lower degree of job crafting are not likely to perform under politically tensed environment.
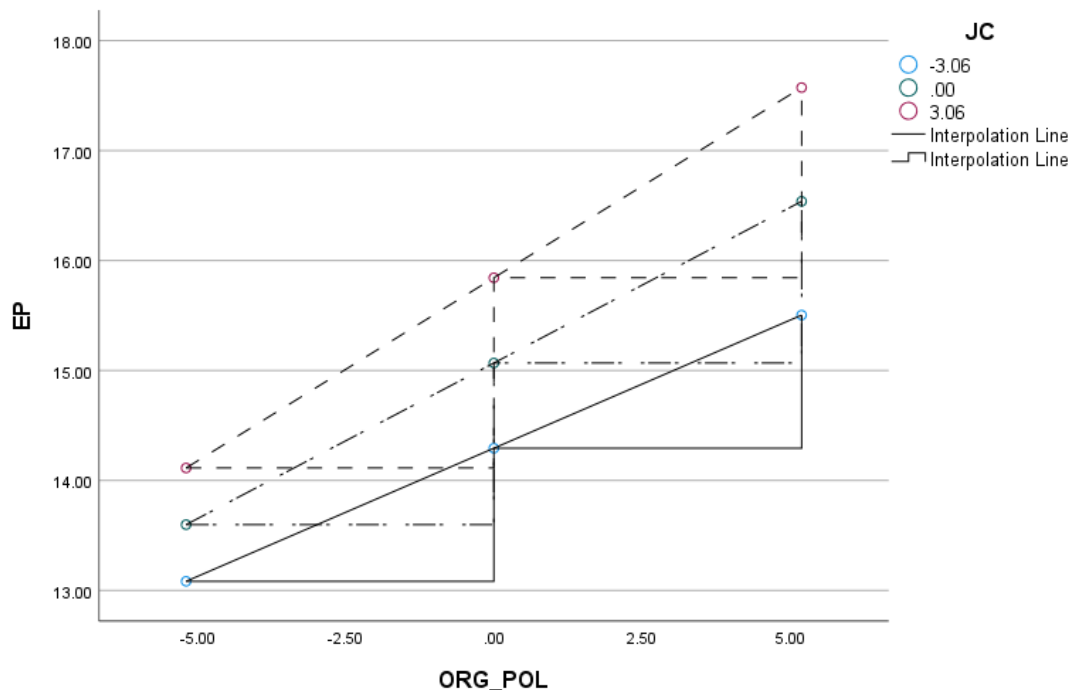
Discussion of Findings

Organizational politics was found according to the current study as an effective predictor of employee performance and the correlation is mediated by job crafting. The findings show that job crafting increases the positive effect of organizational politics on

employee performance. This means that active job crafting behavior on the side of the employees enables them to better manage political situations and convert them into better performance results. These findings align with those of Ajaham and Hamid (2023), who established that the human resource management practices affect the performance of employees positively and that organizational politics is part of the relationship in this situation. The present research builds upon their work by demonstrating that job crafting may refine this association even more by moderating the possible adverse effects or influencing positive features of politics in the workplace.

However, a study by Albloush et al. (2020) established a negative impact of organizational politics on employee performance. The variations between their findings and that of the present studies can be attributed to the variations in context e.g., organizational culture, political system, and adaptive skills of employees. The results is consistent with those of the previous researchers that job crafting increases employee performance. It was shown to enhance engagement and decrease exhaustion by Demerouti et al. (2021) and to lead to improved work-life balance, performance, and decreased procrastination by Ariani (2025). On the same note, Genty et al. (2020) found positive results of task and relational crafting on performance and citizenship behavior. According to Gupta et al. (2023), although organizational politics was a potent turnover driver, it did not significantly affect performance, implying that politics negatively affects satisfaction and loyalty more than production. To add to this, Peral and Davidovitz (2024) demonstrated that job crafting mediates the connection between organizational politics and performance, showing the importance of job crafting in influencing positive employee outcomes as a reaction to organizational aspects.

Recommendations

This study recommends that the management of the selected tertiary institutions in Adamawa State must be ethical and just in their political behaviours to avoid the adverse effect of organisational politics. Additionally, employees ought to internalize the attributes of job crafting since it enables them to take the initiative and redefine their work, relationships and perceptions and hence maintain effectiveness and performance in a hostile organizational environment

Suggestion for Future Study

Future researchers should consider a longitudinal research design. Moreover, to achieve some comparative knowledge and further generalization of the findings, it would be interesting to widen the scope beyond Adamawa State and tertiary institutions to other regions and industries. Also, other moderating variables like psychological resilience, emotional intelligence, perceived organizational support, or leadership style can also be researched by their mileage in order to gain more insight on how organizational politics affects performance. Lastly, interviews or focus groups might provide qualitative research that would reveal more detailed accounts on how employees develop their perception about

organizational politics as well as how they maneuver organizational politics and perform job crafting behaviours across different contexts.

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