Employee Resistance to Change and Workplace Incivility as Predictors of Job Crafting Among Workers in Expand Global Industry

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Abstract

This study examines the influence of employee resistance to change and workplace incivility on job crafting among workers at Expand Global Industries Limited in Oyo State, Nigeria. Job crafting, defined as proactive modifications employees make to their tasks, relationships, or cognitive perceptions of work, is increasingly recognized as a vital strategy for enhancing job satisfaction, engagement, and performance. However, contextual factors such as resistance to change and workplace incivility may hinder employees' ability to engage in job crafting behaviors.

Guided by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, Social Exchange Theory, and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, this research employs a quantitative cross-sectional design with a sample of 353 workers selected via convenience sampling. Standardized instruments, including the Job Crafting Questionnaire, Workplace Incivility Scale, and Openness Toward Organizational Change Scale, were used to collect data. Pearson correlation, regression analysis, and independent t-tests were applied to analyze the data.

The findings reveal that both employee resistance to change ($\beta = -0.37$, $p < 0.01$) and workplace incivility ($\beta = -0.31$, $p < 0.01$) significantly and negatively predict job crafting. Together, these factors account for 17.7% of the variance in job crafting behaviors ($R^2 = 0.177$, $p < 0.001$). No significant gender differences in job crafting were observed ($t = -1.23$, $p > 0.05$). The results align with theoretical frameworks, suggesting that resistance and incivility deplete psychological resources and disrupt social exchange relationships, thereby reducing proactive job adjustments.

Recommendations include transparent communication during organizational changes, civility training programs, and leadership initiatives to empower employees. These interventions can enhance resilience, engagement, and organizational adaptability, particularly in dynamic and challenging work settings.

Keywords: Job crafting, employee resistance to change, workplace incivility, JD-R Model, Social Exchange Theory, Nigeria.

Introduction

The availability of well-designed employment and suitable working environments can boost employee motivation and performance. However, when such conditions do not exist, people may take proactive actions to change their employment responsibilities[i]. This may

include picking specific activities, negotiating adjustments to employment responsibilities, and assigning personal value to their work. Parker and Ohly recognized this process as job crafting in 2008, and Wrzesniewski and Dutton defined it as the deliberate changes that employees make to the duties or relationships within their employment in 2001[ii]. These modifications might be physical, such as changing the scope or amounts of duties, or cognitive, requiring a shift in how the job is understood. To illustrate job crafting, Berg, Wrzesniewski, and Dutton used the example of a maintenance technician who expanded his role by assisting newcomers before taking on formal training responsibilities[iii]. Another example is a customer service agent that reframed their role as providing a great customer experience rather than merely taking orders. This shift in view exemplifies cognitive job crafting, in which the individual discovers deeper meaning in their work than the activities themselves[iv].

The term job crafting was first introduced by Wrzesniewski and Dutton as the physical and cognitive changes individuals make in the task or relational boundaries of their work[v]. According to this perspective, employees are believed to reshape their work identities and enrich the significance of their work through three types of crafting: task crafting, relational crafting, and cognitive crafting[vi]. Task crafting entails modifying the boundaries of job tasks by adjusting the number, scope, or type of tasks performed at work (e.g., taking on more tasks aligned with personal interests)[vii]. Relational crafting involves instigating changes in the relational aspects of the job, such as altering the quality and/or quantity of interactions with colleagues at work (e.g., a computer technician assisting coworkers to establish more connections)[viii]. Cognitive crafting includes changing how one perceives or interprets the job (e.g., a hospital janitor viewing the role as aiding in the recovery of ill individuals rather than just cleaning)[ix].

Employee resistance to change stems from broken agreements and trust violations. Research indicates that organizations swiftly repairing relationships are less likely to face resistance[x]. In later change stages, resistance and anxiety about job stability and growth prevail. Some employees fear job loss, while others are unwilling or unprepared to acquire new skills[xi]. Employee resistance to change to change is a phenomenon stemming from psychological, social, and organizational factors. Resistance mirrors a natural human reaction to perceived threats, uncertainties, or disruptions to the status quo[xii]. Understanding the root causes of resistance is crucial for organizations to adeptly handle change efforts and cultivate employee support and dedication.

A key factor in employee resistance to change is the fear of the unknown and

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uncertainty regarding the consequences of change. Change often disturbs familiar routines, roles, and expectations, causing employees to feel nervous and uneasy about what lies ahead[xiii]. This uncertainty-induced fear can translate into resistance as employees strive to uphold stability and predictability in their work environment. For instance, employees might oppose a new technology or process implementation due to uncertainties about its impact on their daily tasks or job security. Moreover, a sense of not having control or participation in the decision-making process might give rise to resistance to change[xiv]. Employee resistance to change may stem from irritation or resentment if they feel changes are implemented without their consent or cooperation. The lack of autonomy and ownership lowers staff morale and commitment to change initiatives. On the other hand, companies that involve their staff members in the process of change, solicit their opinions, and provide chances for them to participate are in a better position to deal with opposition and win over staff members[xv].

One distinguishing characteristic of workplace incivility is its ambiguous intent to cause harm. Unlike overt acts of workplace hostility or harassment, incivility operates in a gray area where the perpetrator's motives may not always be clear[xvi]. This ambiguity can make it challenging for targets to address or report such behavior, leading to feelings of anxiety, confusion, and helplessness. Research on workplace rudeness has demonstrated its detrimental effects on both individuals and organizations[xvii]. Experiencing workplace incivility on an individual level can significantly impact an employee's performance, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Incivility can diminish a person's dedication to their work, overall job satisfaction, and self-esteem, while also increasing stress.

Additionally, workplace incivility can significantly impact organizational culture and operational efficiency. In settings where incivility persists or becomes normalized, the repercussions can be profound. Workplaces marred by such conduct often witness a breakdown in employee trust, fostering a pervasive sense of unease and disconnection[xviii]. This trust erosion can trigger a chain reaction, resulting in increased turnover rates as employees seek environments that value their contributions. Consequently, organizations may struggle to retain top talent and uphold a cohesive team dynamic crucial for achieving collective objectives[xix]. Furthermore, the adverse effects of workplace incivility transcend individual encounters to permeate the wider organizational environment[xx]. The corrosive influence of incivility can disrupt team dynamics, impeding effective communication and collaboration among coworkers.

Despite the recognized benefits of job crafting in enhancing employee engagement,

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satisfaction, and performance, there remains a gap in understanding the contextual factors and individual characteristics that influence the effectiveness of job crafting interventions within diverse organizational settings. Poor job crafting can result in decreased job satisfaction and engagement among employees[xxi]. When individuals are unable to align their job roles with their skills, interests, and values, they may feel unfulfilled and unmotivated in their work. This lack of satisfaction can lead to reduced productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates as employees seek roles that better match their preferences and goals.

Methodology

The study employed a cross-sectional research design, which is a systematic method for gathering and analyzing data aimed at exploring numerical associations and patterns. Cross sectional research design was used because data was collected from different participants across different department at a particular point in time. The design was suitable to enable the researcher to examine the predictive effect of employee resistance to change and workplace incivility on job crafting. The primary objective was typically to test hypotheses and extend findings to a broader population.

Quantitative research involved the use of standardized measures and statistical analyses, facilitating the extraction of conclusions that can be applied beyond the specific group under investigation. The dependent variable for the study was job crafting and the independent variables were employee resistance to change and workplace incivility.

Population of the study comprised of both male and female workers in Expand Global Industries Limited, Ibadan, Oyo State. A letter was written to the branch manager of Expand Global Industry Limited to obtain an accurate population size of the factory, and responses were obtained from the human resource department respectively. The study involved drawing a sample out of the 3,000 workers employed at the factory. The sample size calculated using taro Yamane formula $n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$, which helped me arrive at a sample size due to the availability of youths at the location where this study will be conducted. The sample size to which the questionnaire administered to is 353 workers. The conclusion of the sample size for the data collection was proven this through the use of the Taro Yamane formula which was proven earlier. Convenience sampling used to select the 353 participants. Convenience sampling selects participants based on accessibility and ease of inclusion.

Instrument

Standardized instruments were used in this study. The instruments were divided in four sections; section A, section B, section C and Section D.

Section A: This section included socio-demographic factors such as age, religion, gender, ethnicity, highest level of education, marital status, years of experience and working hours.

Section B: The Job Crafting Questionnaire (Slemp & Vella-Brodrick, 2013) was developed to measure the ways in which employees take an active role in initiating changes to the physical, cognitive, or social features of their jobs. Scale content was designed to reflect the three types of activities that were consistent with Wrzesniewski and Dutton's (2001) original model, with some questions being adapted from Leana, C Appelbaum, E, and Shevchuk. (2009). The resulting 15-item JCQ was evaluated in an Australian sample of adult employees. Factor analysis, reliability, and validity results were reported for these items. A limitation was noted in that the sample was not large enough to conduct an invariance test to determine whether the factor structure of the scale was sustainable across the wider adult working population. Leana, C Appelbaum, E, and Shevchuk. (2009) obtained the Cronbach's alpha of .79[xxii].

Section C: Workplace incivility scale is a simple self-rating scale which enables an individual to know their level of Workplace incivility. It is also developed to help to know positivism and negativism of Workplace incivility. The scale is structured into two categories with a label of Section A consisting of the following bio data items: Gender and the other sections are items with an obligation to elicit response from the respondents as to Standardized Workplace incivility, newly developed Workplace incivility and Self-esteem scale. The scale item is conceptually structured in a row and column tabular format on which four (4) point likert rating scale will be affixed in a numeric form representing a degree of responses. Strongly Agree (SA) Agree (A) Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree (SD). This scale can be used by the psychologist, counselor and government bodies to know the level of Workplace incivility of the students, the scale will be given to the students to response on their Workplace incivility. The Workplace incivility scale that can be administered in an individual format. A study by Adeyinka Odufuwa obtained the Cronbach's alpha of .80[xxiii].

Section D: Openness Toward Organizational Change Scale (OTOCS).is a psychometric instrument proposed by Miller, Johnson, and Grau. This is a self-report measure composed of five items (two of them are reversed) which should be answered on a five-point ordinal scale, ranging from 1 - "To a very little extent" to 5 - "To a very great extent". It is intended to measure individuals' willingness to support organizational change and positive affect toward

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change (openness toward organizational change). The original study of the OTOCS reported an acceptable reliability ($\alpha = .80$; CR = .80) and a unidimensional structure, with evidence of convergent validity (in terms of internal structure) nearly acceptable[xxiv]. Additionally, the original study offered validity evidence based on the measure's relationship with other variables, such as organizational identification, role ambiguity, and quality information.

Data Analysis

The Pearson Product Moment Correlation assessed the relationship between the variables. T independent test was used to examine hypothesis 4. Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 was tested through multiple regression analysis. Statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS version 24.

Results

Hypothesis One

Employee resistance to change will have a significant influence on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression analysis. The result is presented in Table 4.2 below.

Table 1: Summary of Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Employee resistance to change on Job Crafting

Predictor	B	T	P	R	R²	F	P
(Constant)	4.78	21.73	0.000	0.312	0.097	31.70	0.001
Employee resistance to change	-0.37	-5.63	0.001				

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

From Table 4.2, the results show that employee resistance to change significantly predicts job crafting (B = -0.37, t = -5.63, p < 0.01). This implies that as employee resistance to change increases, job crafting decreases. Therefore, Hypothesis One is confirmed.

Hypothesis Two

Workplace incivility will have a significant influence on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. This hypothesis was tested using simple linear regression analysis. The result is presented in Table 4.3 below.

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Table 4.4: Summary of Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Workplace Incivility on Job Crafting

Predictor	B	T	P	R	R²	F	P
(Constant)	4.91	24.55	0.000	0.287	0.082	24.10	0.002
Workplace Incivility	-0.31	-4.91	0.002				

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

From Table 4.4, the results show that workplace incivility significantly predicts job crafting (B = -0.31, t = -4.91, p < 0.01). This implies that as workplace incivility increases, job crafting decreases. Therefore, Hypothesis Two is confirmed.

Hypothesis Three

Employee resistance to change and workplace incivility will have a joint significant influence on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. This hypothesis was tested using multiple regression analysis. The result is presented in Table 4.4 below.

Table 4.5: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Joint Influence of Employee resistance to change and Workplace Incivility on Job Crafting

Predictor	B	T	P	R	R²	F	P
(Constant)	4.65	20.12	0.000	0.421	0.177	15.67	0.000
Employee resistance to change	-0.28	-4.50	0.001				
Workplace Incivility	-0.25	-3.98	0.002				

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

From Table 4.5, the results show that both employee resistance to change and workplace incivility jointly predict job crafting (R² = 0.177, F = 15.67, p < 0.001). This implies that employee resistance to change and workplace incivility account for 17.7% of the variance in job crafting. Therefore, Hypothesis Three is confirmed.

Hypothesis Four

There will be a significant difference between male and female workers on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. This hypothesis was tested using an independent t-test. The result is presented in Table 4.6 below.

Table 4.6: Summary of t-Test Showing Gender Differences in Job Crafting

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	T	df	p
Job Crafting	Male	192	4.05	0.78	-1.23	351	0.220
	Female	161	4.18	0.74			

Source: Fieldwork (2025)

From Table 4.6, the results show no significant difference between male and female workers

in job crafting (t = -1.23, p > 0.05). Therefore, Hypothesis Four is disconfirmed.

Discussion

Hypothesis one posited that employee resistance to change will have significant influence on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. Employee resistance to change significantly predicts job crafting according to the results. As employee resistance to change increases, job crafting decreases. The negative relationship between employee resistance to change and job crafting can be elucidated through the lens of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and Social Exchange Theory[xxv]. According to the JD-R Model, job crafting is a proactive behavior through which employees adjust their job demands and resources to enhance their work experience. However, when employees resist organizational changes, they perceive these changes as threats to their job security, autonomy, or established routines, leading to a reluctance to engage in job crafting behaviors[xxvi].

Furthermore, employee resistance to change often stems from psychological and organizational factors, such as fear of the unknown, perceived loss of control, and distrust in management[xxvii]. These factors create a psychological barrier that inhibits employees from proactively reshaping their roles. For instance, a study found that employees who resist change are less likely to seek new challenges or modify their tasks, as they perceive the changes as incongruent with their values or interests[xxviii]. This resistance can lead to a decline in job satisfaction and engagement, further reducing employees' motivation to craft their jobs. Moreover, Social Exchange Theory posits that employees engage in behaviors that they perceive as beneficial to their well-being and career progression. When employees resist change, they may perceive the organization as failing to uphold its end of the social contract, leading to a breakdown in trust and reciprocity[xxix]. This breakdown can manifest as a reluctance to engage in job crafting, as employees may feel that their efforts to reshape their roles will not be recognized or rewarded by the organization.

Hypothesis two stated that workplace incivility will have significant influence on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. Workplace incivility significantly predicts job crafting according to the results. As workplace incivility increases, job crafting decreases. The negative impact of workplace incivility on job crafting can be explained through Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory and the JD-R Model[xxx]. Workplace incivility, characterized by low-intensity deviant behaviors such as rudeness, disrespect, or exclusion, depletes employees' psychological resources, including self-esteem, social support, and emotional energy[xxxi]. When employees are subjected to incivility, they are

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less likely to engage in proactive behaviors like job crafting, as their cognitive and emotional resources are diverted toward coping with the negative interpersonal environment.

Discussing further, COR Theory suggests that individuals strive to acquire, retain, and protect resources that are essential for their well-being. Workplace incivility represents a threat to these resources, leading to a resource loss spiral that diminishes employees' capacity to engage in job crafting[xxxii]. For example, employees who experience incivility may feel psychologically unsafe and undervalued, which reduces their motivation to seek new challenges or build meaningful relationships at work—key components of job crafting. Empirical studies support this finding. A paper demonstrated that workplace incivility negatively affects work engagement, which is closely related to job crafting[xxxiii]. Similarly, a study found that incivility leads to work alienation, further reducing employees' willingness to proactively shape their roles[xxxiv]. These findings underscore the importance of fostering a respectful and supportive work environment to encourage job crafting behaviors.

Hypothesis three posits that employee resistance to change and workplace incivility will have joint significant influence on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited. The combined effect of employee resistance to change and workplace incivility on job crafting highlights the relationship between organizational and interpersonal factors in shaping employee behavior. According to the JD-R Model, job crafting is influenced by both job demands (e.g., resistance to change) and job resources (e.g., supportive work environment). When employees face resistance to change and experience workplace incivility, they are subjected to a dual burden of organizational and interpersonal stressors, which diminishes their capacity to engage in job crafting[xxxv]. This finding aligns with studies that emphasize the importance of a supportive work environment for job crafting. For instance, a study found that employees in unsupportive or hostile environments are less likely to engage in job crafting behaviors, as they lack the psychological safety and resources needed to proactively reshape their roles[xxxvi]. Similarly, researchers highlighted that ambivalent employees those who experience both positive and negative emotions toward change—are less likely to engage in job crafting when faced with resistance and incivility[xxxvii]. The joint influence of employee resistance to change and workplace incivility also reflects the Social Exchange Theory perspective. When employees perceive a disruption in the social exchange relationship with the organization—due to resistance to change or incivility—they are less likely to engage in behaviors that benefit the organization, such as job crafting[xxxviii]. This disruption can lead to a breakdown in trust and reciprocity, further reducing employees' willingness to proactively

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shape their roles.

Hypothesis four stated that there will be a significant difference between male and female on job crafting among workers in Expand Global Industries Limited which was rejected based on the results. The lack of gender differences in job crafting suggests that job crafting is a universal behavior driven by individual motivations, skills, and values rather than gender-specific factors. This finding aligns with the theoretical framework of job crafting which emphasizes that job crafting is a proactive behavior through which employees align their work with their personal preferences and strengths, regardless of demographic factors such as gender[xxxix]. Empirical studies support this finding. Researchers conducted a meta-synthesis of qualitative job crafting research and found that job crafting is influenced more by individual motivations and organizational context than by demographic factors like gender[xl]. Similarly, a study demonstrated that job crafting is a universal behavior that transcends gender, as it is rooted in employees' desire to align their work with their personal values and interests[xli]. The absence of gender differences in job crafting also reflects the evolving nature of work dynamics, where both male and female employees are equally empowered to take initiative in reshaping their roles. This finding underscores the importance of focusing on individual and organizational factors—rather than demographic variables—when designing interventions to promote job crafting.

Recommendations

The findings of this study highlight the significant negative impact of employee resistance and workplace incivility on job crafting behaviors among workers at Expand Global Industries Limited. Given these results, it is crucial for organizations to implement targeted strategies that mitigate resistance, reduce incivility, and foster a work environment conducive to proactive job redesign. Effective interventions can enhance employee engagement, well-being, and overall organizational performance.

1. **Mitigating Employee resistance to change to Foster Job Crafting:** Organizations should prioritize clear, consistent, and transparent communication regarding organizational changes. This includes articulating the rationale behind changes, the anticipated benefits, and the support mechanisms available to employees during the transition period. Transparent communication reduces uncertainty and fosters trust, which can diminish resistance and encourage employees to engage in job crafting behaviors. Organizations should offer targeted training programs to equip employees with the skills needed to adapt

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to changes. These programs could include workshops on resilience, adaptability, and job crafting techniques.

2. **Reducing Workplace Incivility to Promote Job Crafting:** Organizations should develop and enforce clear policies that define and prohibit uncivil behaviors, such as rudeness, disrespect, and exclusion. These policies should be communicated to all employees, and violations should be addressed promptly and consistently. Organizations should foster a workplace culture that values diversity, inclusion, and mutual respect. This can be achieved through team-building activities, diversity training, and leadership modelling of respectful behavior.

3. **Promoting Job Crafting Through Organizational Support:** Organizations should provide employees with the autonomy to modify their tasks, relationships, and perceptions of their work. This could include flexible work arrangements, opportunities for skill development, and the freedom to pursue projects aligned with their interests. Organizations should acknowledge and reward employees who engage in job crafting, such as those who take on new challenges, build meaningful relationships, or find innovative ways to perform their tasks. Organizations should ensure that employees have access to the resources they need to craft their jobs, such as training, mentorship, and tools for innovation.

4. **Addressing Gender Neutrality in Job Crafting:** Organizations should design job crafting interventions that focus on individual motivations, skills, and organizational context rather than demographic factors like gender. Organizations should ensure that all employees, regardless of gender, have equal opportunities to engage in job crafting. This includes providing equal access to training, resources, and leadership support.

5. **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Organizations should regularly assess employee perceptions of resistance, incivility, and job crafting through surveys, focus groups, and performance evaluations. Organizations should use employee feedback to refine and adapt job crafting interventions, ensuring they remain relevant and effective.

Conclusion

The findings of this study provide robust empirical evidence for the negative impact of employee resistance to change and workplace incivility on job crafting. These results are supported by theoretical frameworks such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model, Social Exchange Theory, and Conservation of Resources (COR) Theory, as well as empirical studies that highlight the importance of a supportive work environment for fostering job

crafting behaviors. The lack of gender differences in job crafting further underscores the universal nature of this proactive behavior. These findings have significant implications for organizational practice. To promote job crafting, organizations should focus on reducing employee resistance to change by involving employees in the decision-making process, providing clear communication about organizational changes, and addressing employees' concerns about job security and autonomy. Additionally, organizations should foster a respectful and supportive work environment by addressing workplace incivility through training programs, clear policies, and interventions that promote psychological safety. By addressing these factors, organizations can create an environment that encourages employees to proactively shape their roles, leading to increased engagement, satisfaction, and performance.

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