

From Theory to Trends: A Bibliometric Review of Job Crafting and Subjective Well-Being in the Context of Sustainable Work

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Abstract

The literature review of the paper on job crafting and subjective well-being relies on bibliometric analysis. The key conclusions are that such categories like Commerce, Management, Human Resources and Industry, Tourism and Services, and Human Society and Psychology prevail. There are evident conceptual clusters, e.g. work engagement and job resources-demands and emerging themes such as well-being in digital and educational environment. The review shows the fast field development and identifies the future research directions that would include digital work settings, cross-cultural research, and long-term research. The existing knowledge can assist the researchers and practitioners in enhancing the employee welfare and attaining sustainable organizational performance. Although there is literature on narrative and empirical research, there has been a dearth of systematic mapping, yet this review identifies the growth of job crafting and well-being research into fields of education, health sciences and information systems. The future research directions are multi-region studies, the significance of digital transformation, and sustainable work design. On the whole, it is possible to note that the given review presents the current knowledge and focuses on digital work environments, cross-cultural viewpoints, and longitudinal approaches to the issue. Its results are relevant to management practice in addressing the contemporary workplace issues.

Keywords: Job Crafting; Subjective Well-being; JD-R Model; Sustainable work practices; Bibliometric analysis.

1. Introduction

In the transforming working environment, studies are becoming more and more concerned with work and the wellbeing of employees. Organizations are seeking solutions on how to maintain long term performance through designing jobs that would address psychological and emotional needs.

The key notions are job crafting whereby people adjust the work properties (Tims et al., 2013) and subjective well-being, which is a positive work-related attitude related to feelings and contentment (Kahn, 1990; Keyes, 2005).

These outcomes are also framed by psychological capital (Hobfoll and Shirom, 2000, and Wright, 2001).

The structure of the work has changed, as the world has become globalized, technologically advanced, and knowledge-driven economies, and it now demands the employees to be more active.

Job crafting is the alteration of tasks, social interaction, as well as perceptions towards work and it is an essential aspect in an organization.

Subjective well-being (SWB) refers to how individuals feel and feel satisfaction and is associated with proactive job crafting behaviour with more motivation, engagement and satisfaction.

Such a connection is reinforced by theories such as Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and positive psychology.

The body of research is however scattered with mixed definitions, measures, and contexts.

These issues provide information on how to adjust to workplace change with the JD-R model and other theories, including self-determination offering explanations on the significance of autonomy, purpose and growth.

Job crafting and well-being are currently studied not only in the context of organizational psychology but also in education, health, and leadership, however, the literature is still very sparsely, so it is challenging to track general tendencies.

A bibliometric study also allows one to step back and view the field as a whole, identifying the major authors and what is trending in research.

This map integrates the literature and could be used to help researchers, practitioners, and policy-makers better consider areas in which they can intervene to enhance employee well-being and contribute to sustainable organisational outcomes.

Quantitative and visual methodologies, such as bibliometric analysis, can characterize trends in publications, collaboration networks, thematic clustering, and relationships among entities in the literature, thereby providing a systemic view of the literature.

Although some reviews and empirical studies have discussed the relationship between job crafting and SWB, to our knowledge, no systematic review that covers the intellectual structure of this literature exists.

The increasing rate of publications is also indicative that the concentration of knowledge, which allows for overviews about highly productive researchers, development and stagnation in journals or institutions, should be considered.

This is a quantitative and visual method to analyze publication dynamics, coauthorship, as well as thematic clusters, demonstrating the development pattern and future tendency of this field.

This review analyzes publications retrieved from the Dimensions database. Publications spanning 2021 to 2025 were collected, and patterns in authorship, citations, and research themes were visualized using VOS viewer. The review aims to answer three key questions: What is the most prominent content in job crafting and SWB research?

- What are the core nodes that glue different clusters?
- Which key research clusters have been constructed in the wake of influential papers?
- What are some of the temporal patterns that seem to emerge in an evolution of research clusters, and any suggestions on this recent work (2022–2024), as shown in the overlay visualization?
- Highlight research needs and suggest future directions, focusing on digital workspace, cross-cultural views, and longitudinal studies.

This study aims to provide researchers, managers, and policymakers with a current snapshot of the field of job crafting and subjective well-being, along with insights into future directions.

Addressing several key questions, it not only overviews current knowledge but also guides future job design and well-being research to keep pace with evolving work environments.

2. Review Of Literature

According to recent literature reviews of job crafting, the behavior enables one to organize their job and work relationships in order to increase engagement and well-being in different settings.

(Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2019; Rudolph et al., 2017) Challenge-seeking as well as strengths-focused job-crafting interventions promote the flexible reaction to the changing requirements, thus enhancing the work outcomes.

(Tims et al., 2013; Bakker et al., 2012). Other job crafting facilitators that have been frequently mentioned in the literature are the processes of empowerment, autonomy, and organizational support. (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017; Slomp et al., 2015).

Other intersections in the emerging reviews relate to work-life balance and the digitalization of creating opportunities. (Petrone et al., 2012).

Nevertheless, other studies observe that job crafting may be maladaptive and may interfere with boundaries or negatively affect performance.

A detailed discussion reveals that workers are most advantaged when they make jobs and relationships match their strengths to facilitate creativity, enhanced work identification, and stress reduction.

(Kooij et al., 2017). The original conceptualization of task, relational, and cognitive crafting by Wrzesniewski and Dutton has spawned more general concepts like the Job Demands-Resources model by Tims and Bakker, where crafting is viewed as adding resources, reducing demands, or challenging. (Wrzesniewski and Jane E. Dutton 2001; Tims and Bakker 2010; Bakker and Demerouti 2007).

In spite of the job or region, employees state better wellness when the work allows the creation and enhancement of their roles in terms of relevance, which correlates job transitions with better performance. (Bakker & Oerlemans, 2019). It is highly proven that job crafting is positively correlated to SWB and the recent studies indicate the same.

SWB indicates the way people rate their quality of life with factors being emotional, where crafting is viewed as adding resources, reducing demands, response to events in their lives and thoughts about satisfaction at work. (Diener 1984; Diener et al., 1999).

Giving work related to employee's values, strengths, and needs through redesigning job tasks, relationships and job description can result to increasing the degree of meaningfulness, autonomy and motivation, and decreasing stress and enhancing well-being.

The people who participate in crafting also report positively affected as well as satisfied with life and the burnout and negative affect are lower. Job crafting has a direct and indirect effect on SWB via better engagement and resilience. (Bakker et al. 2012).

In order to achieve the success in job crafting, the organizational support and employee autonomy are the most essential conditions, which assist in preserving the well-being.

Nevertheless, longitudinal research is demanded in the future, particularly when working with a wide population and in changing work environments like remote or hybrid work.

(Rudolph et al. 2017) Overall, job crafting enables workers to design their work to give them psychological fulfillment and well-being and is therefore important in job engagement and satisfaction in life.

3. Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study adopts a bibliometric research design, a quantitative approach to analyzing extensive scientific literature on publication patterns, trends, and intellectual structures in the field. (Cobo et al. 2011).

A methodological and comprehensive workflow is needed to ensure bibliometric analysis is transparent, reproducible, and valid. (Zupic, I., & Čater, T. 2015). The explanation of data collected and administered is used in the body of knowledge on job crafting and subjective well-being. The analysis was carried out in three key stages: data collection, data preparation, and bibliometric visualization. (Donthu et al. 2021).

3.2 Data Source

Data for this analysis were extracted from Dimensions. ai, an open-access and free-to-use research database indexing articles from journals, book chapters, collection items (museum objects), conference papers, and monographs.

(Thelwall, M. 2018). Dimensions was selected for two reasons. First, it includes various management, psychology, and social science journals, and it is necessary to include this diverse literature to provide a meticulous representation of the overall research on job crafting, work engagement, and well-being. (Hakkaraki, V. P. 2024).

Second, it helps to export bibliometric data in a structured format that can be directly analysed in visualization software (e.g., VOS viewer). Publications were considered, regardless of origin or field, if they included at least one of the 3 most important keywords.

3.3 Search Strategy

Inclusion and Exclusion Criteria- Data Source, Search Strategy, and Screening

The search focused on two main keywords:

- *job crafting*
- *Subjective well-being*

They searched for these terms in article titles, abstracts, and keywords. The terms were combined by Boolean operators (e.g., “job crafting” AND “Subjective well-being”) to ensure the search was as extensive as possible.

The screening was conducted in six stages to construct a broad yet concise bibliography of the most relevant works.

Four journals were located as the potential sources of the relevant articles. The first stage followed, where the search of Dimensions was conducted on the basis of the following keywords: job crafting and Subjective well-being.

The minimum limit plus AI was not established with regard to the publication year or type of document. This broad search produced 111,331 articles and has given a first impression of the sheer magnitude and diversity of work in fields.

The second stage of searching was refined with additional filters, which brought the latest years of publication (in a world where work has become transformed in online environments and responsive setting, 2021-2025).

This choice was informed by the fact that there is a substantial rise in the academic interest during this time, which is indicative of how the well-being and engagement of employees have been put in the centre of focus during digital transformation, hybrid working, and organisational resilience.

The restriction on the search time to this period reduced the search results to 46372. In another step, the criteria were filtered by Field of Research to indicate disciplinary relevance to only search results of Business, Management, Psychology, and Social Science, Decision Sciences, and Multidisciplinary studies (13.672).

Afterwards the scope was reduced to some types of documents: Articles, Reviews, Conference Papers, and Conference Reviews, in which they are viewed as primary sources of scientific knowledge. The database has been narrowed down to 8,373 publications. At this point, there were only limited results.

It made it possible to base the analysis on peer-reviewed and academic contributions only (without reports and theses). To attain accessibility and wide visibility in the second step of progressive focusing, only Open Access publications were to be analyzed, which made 4,095 documents be processed.

This step aims at confirming the existence and size of the database to be used in the research hence an advantage to the young and new researchers.

This is then followed by another search filter which will search in journals and conferences on job crafting and wellbeing. Following this clean-up, the rest of the set contained 584 publications. which served as the foundation of the bibliometric analysis.

There was a rigorous process of screening the original list of articles to make sure that this material was limited to the most representative and high-quality studies.

The attention to detail in this evolution process creates a complete and very relevant dataset of bibliometric analysis, to investigate the patterns of publications, collaborative patterns, and new trends in the field.

This ultimate selection offered both breadth (by encompassing global contributions from a variety of disciplines) and depth (in that strong emphasis was placed on managerial and organizational viewpoints).

These articles were the subject of a bibliometric analysis in the VOS viewer. A systemized search was conducted to gather necessary documents using the Boolean logic string “job crafting” AND “subjective well-being” in a full-text search of Dimensions AI, yielding an initial return of 111,331 papers.

A series of steps was used to reduce the dataset and concentrate on the most relevant studies:

1. **Publication Year (2021–2025):** Shown the results for 46,372 publications.
2. **Field of Research** (Business, Management, Psychology, Social Science, Decision Science, Multidisciplinary): reduced the dataset to 13,672.
3. **Document Type** (Articles, Reviews, Conference Papers, Conference Reviews): further restricted to 8,373.
4. **Access Type** (Open Access): refined the pool to 4,095 publications.
5. **Source Title Filter (journals and conferences directly relevant to job crafting and well-being)** yielded 584 final documents.

Illustrating the stepwise process followed in the bibliometric research methodology

Research Design
Bibliometric Study
Select Database
Dimensions Ai
Formulate Search Strategy
'Job Crafting' and 'Subjective Well-being'
Data Extraction & Cleaning
Remove duplicates, irrelevant records- Multiple stages of Search
Apply Bibliometric Tools
VOS viewer
Analyze Indicators
Impact and Relational
Present Results & Framework
Network maps

The step-by-step screening and refinement process applied to arrive at the final dataset for the bibliometric analysis.

Initial Keyword Search – JOB CRAFTING & SUBJECTIVE WELL-BEING
Publication Year Filter Applied:
2021,2022,2023,2024,2025→
Field of Research →
Management, Psychology, Social Science, Decision Science, and Multidisciplinary studies
Document Type Filter:
Articles, Conference Papers, Reviews, Conference Reviews →
Publication Access Filter:
Open Access→
Source Type Filter:
Journals + Conference Proceedings →
Final Stage Database→
584 curated documents
Analysis Conducted:
Trends, patterns, future directions

3.4 Data Extraction and Cleaning

The data obtained according to the Dimensions were bibliographic (title of the publication, name and addresses of the author; the year of publication, the type of the document, the topic categories), as well as the number of citations. Analysis was done after first pre-filtering the data in order to attain even greater quality and reliability.

The initial step was to remove duplicates and studies that were not completed. Duplicates are common when the same article is listed in different formats and incomplete records, such as ones with no author name or dates of publication, can give biased citation figures and trend plots. Then, the names of authors were normalized.

This measure was taken to make sure that all co-authors and citations were accurately merged in the co-authorship and citation networks as the same researcher could be entered using different names (e.g., "Bakker, AB" and "Bakker Arnold B"). Lastly, the harmonization of keywords was performed.

The derivatives of words are normally used by authors when describing comparable constructions (e.g., subjective well-being and psychological well-being).

These contradictions are unresolved and fragment the analysis and concentrate the themes. The dataset provided more coherent, narrower view of the key issues of the area, but it demanded a combination of similar words.

These cumulation processes assisted in ensuring the dataset was consistent and reliable and therefore offered a solid base in bibliometric mapping using VOS viewer. Exported bibliographic information, such as authors, title, key words, abstracts, affiliation, sources and references. CSV format for analysis.

The prepared data have been in turn imported into VOS viewer which is a computer program that assists users in build and visualize bibliometric maps.

The reason why VOS viewer was chosen is based on its capability to deal with large volumes of data and generate clear visualization of complex relationships, including author collaboration, citation pattern, and cluster of keywords.

Using this tool has enabled us to move beyond the numbers and exposed the intellectual organization of the field of specialty and identified research communities and the emerging trends related to job crafting and well-being.

3.5 Bibliometric Tools and Analysis.

Visualization of the clean data was performed with the help of VOS viewer (Bukar et al. 2023), which is one of the most popular programs of bibliometric analysis and visualization.

The choice of VOS viewer was due to the fact that it is highly suitable to large data sets and produces clear network maps that can be used to depict the relationship between authors, keywords, and references.

The filtration process was extremely documented and any duplicates were eliminated to make sure that the study was comprehensive. Clusters and density maps were also shown.

The cross-check of the results was made on a large-scale due to the combination of bibliometric methods, performance analysis, as well as science mapping, which allowed us to get a clear vision of the structure and development of the field.

The current analysis was performed by three analyses:

The information given by the bibliometric analysis of the chronology and citation trends of publications helped to create a broader picture of the way the research in this topic was developed through time.

Co-authorship visualization has revealed trends of cooperation among authors, organizations, countries, and significant contributors to research cooperation.

Science mapping (keywords co-occurrence, citation, and co-citation analysis) was conducted to determine the big themes, intellectual underpinnings, and future directions in the field of job crafting, work engagement, and well-being.

The software presented the visualization of (co-)overexpression as network diagrams and density plots. To gain clarity, thresholds could be specified, such as a minimum number of publications per author or a minimum number of occurrences of keywords.

The use of these thresholds diminished noise in the maps and highlighted the most significant connections.

Clusters extracted from the maps were subsequently interpreted in relation to thematic affinity and referred back to theory and existing debates that dominate management theorising.

Altogether, this process broadens views of the productivity and impact of research, as well as the field's intellectual structure and future trajectories.

RESULT ANALYSIS

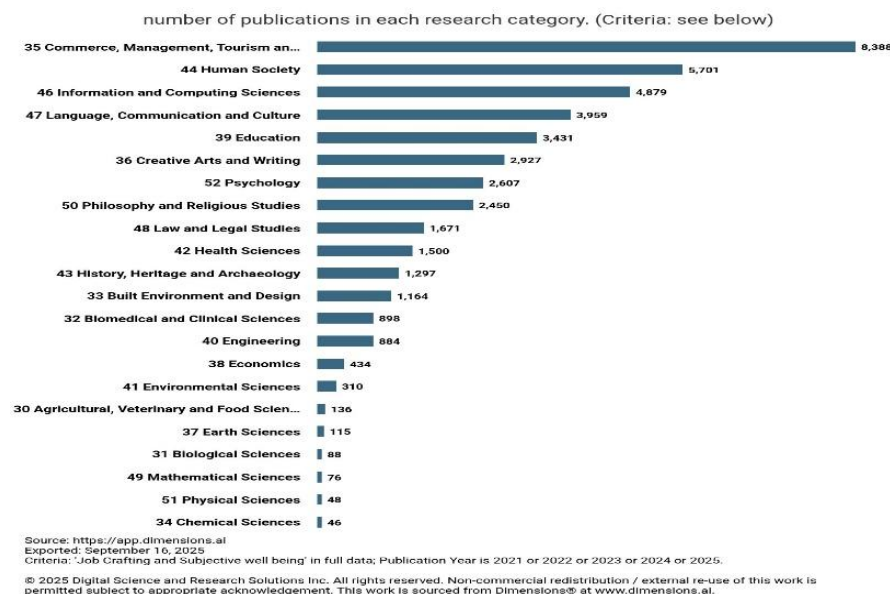


Figure: Bar Chart (Source: Authors' analysis based on data retrieved from Dimensions)

Research categories of publications on "Job Crafting and Subjective Well-being" according to Dimensions. The bar chart below shows the research areas in which this publication was cited.

AI data as of 2025-09-16 for the year range 2021–2025. The top 1 domain is Commerce, Management, Tourism, and Services, with 8,388 articles on organizational behavior, human resource management, and workplace psychology.

It is then followed by Human Society (5,701) and Information and Computing Sciences (4,879), reflecting viewpoints from the social sciences as well as the expanding attention to technology-facilitated job crafting.

Other fields of note are Language, Communication and Culture (3,959), Education (3,431), Creative Arts and Writing (2,927), Psychology (2,607), and Philosophy and Religious Studies (2,450), reflecting cross-disciplinary interest and a theoretical plumb of well-being.

Disciplines like Chemical Sciences (46), Physical Sciences (48), and Mathematical Sciences (76) exhibit relatively little representation, underscoring the human-centered, socio-behavioral research focus of this area. On the whole, our findings point to a focus in the social sciences and humanities on JC's contribution to psychological and emotional well-being in today's working contexts.

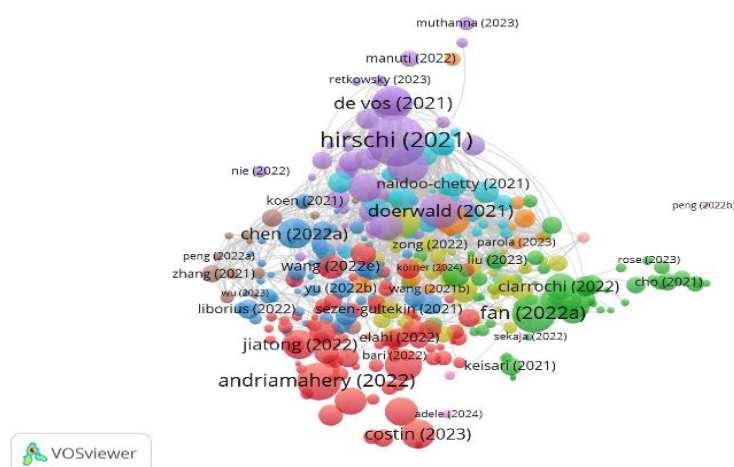


Figure: Network visualization (Source: Authors' analysis using VOS viewer based on data retrieved from Dimensions.)

The VOS viewer network visualization shown in the figure provides a bibliometric overview of 385 scholarly publications, grouped into 10 thematic categories based on citation relations and conceptual closeness.

The central graph shows nodes representing authors or publications, and their size encodes citations, and color-code the publication year to reflect research trends over time. Important nodes are larger, indicating stronger impact and presence in the network, and closely connected clusters imply active research areas or common theoretical backgrounds.

The network has 30,993 links with a total link strength of 34,977."This is indicative of strong interconnections and knowledge collaboration within the discipline.

Features such as color-enhanced lines, curved links, and varying node sizes aid clarity, as researchers track the paths of thoughts and identify new areas of development.

Altogether, the visualization presents a fine-grained picture of the field, identifying key contributors, defining topics, and making visible emerging increases in scholarly productivity.

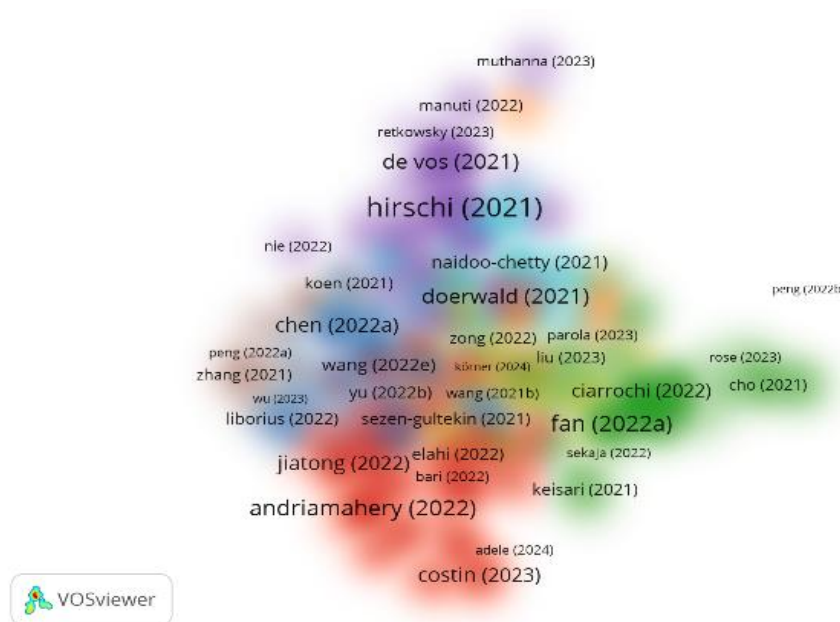


Figure: Density visualization (Source: Authors' analysis using Vos viewer based on data retrieved from Dimensions)

VOS viewer-produced network map. The VOS viewer-generated network map provides a specific view of scholarly activity between 2021 and 2024, showing how authors are connected by citations, thematic similarity, and collaboration.

Each node is a researcher and his/her publications (the authors are identified by their surname followed by the year, e.g., Hirschi and Koen, 2021, Peng 2022a), with multiple nodes if an author has published more than one work in that year.

The layout of the nodes reveals their relative strength: authors close to one another tend to be cited together or work on similar topics, while isolated points represent more specialized or less connected contributions.

Nodes such as Hirschi, A., & Koen, J. (2021). and Doerwald (2021) are central and hold core status, while authors such as Chen (2022a), Wang (2022e), and Fan (2022a) are placed at the intersection of clusters, indicating interdisciplinary contributions or burgeoning leadership like Andriamahery, A., & Qamruzzaman, M. (2022).

The time distribution (2021–2024) shows a dynamic research environment, with a higher density in 2022–23, and some initial signs of new trends appear in early 2024 (e.g., Koerner (2024), Adele (2024)).

Some authors (e.g., Peng, Wang, Zhang) appear multiple times, indicating they are productive or have broad research interests.

Tight clusters indicate that members of some groups have close relationships, and gaps between clusters may point to relatively underexplored areas within research disciplines or to differences across disciplines.

The key does not label nodesize or edge weight, but one can infer that larger or central nodes have higher citation counts and more connections.

On the whole, this VOSviewer map offers a vivid view of major contributors, research foci, and intellectual structure in the area, which can be effectively used to monitor new research trends, orient literature reviews, and identify collaboration prospects.

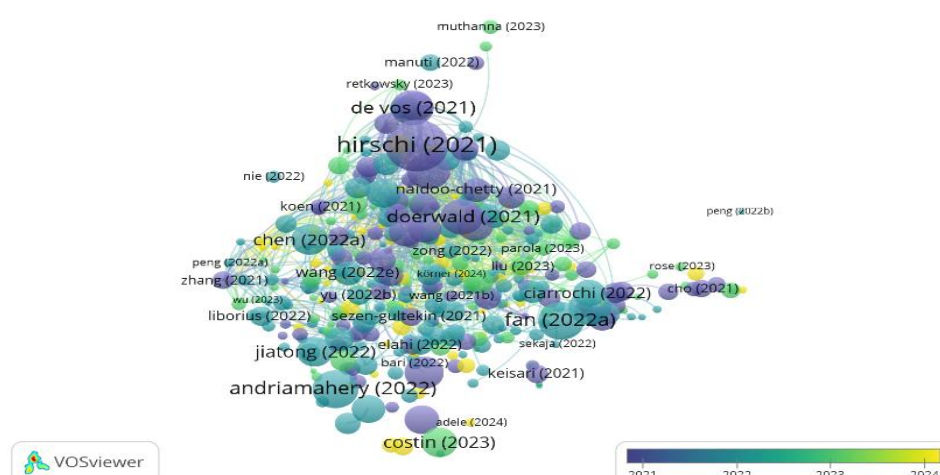


Figure: Overlay visualization (Source: Authors' analysis using Vos viewer based on data retrieved from Dimensions.)

The VOS viewer network map was a network version of co-citation and collaboration analysis (2021–2024). The intellectual structure was shown through nodes representing authors or their documents, links indicating co-citation/relation, and node sizes indicating citation impact.

Densely clustered nodes correspond to thematic or collaborative communities in the fields of digital learning, psychological well-being, and technology-enhanced education (e.g., large circles in various colors). Solid lines between nodes: existences of co-citations. Dash lines among groups represent intermediate levels of relationship strength.

A grey line and arrow at the back of the label represent a citation relationship. The figure shows Important nodes like Hirschi, A., & Koen, J. (2021), Doerwald (2021), and Fan (2022a) are highly cited items, which means they have a higher effect on other documents.

The overlay visualization provides additional insights by coloring the nodes of our network according to attributes such as year of publication and citation count, which reveals trends over time, emerging research directions, and bridging authors.

The more loosely connected nodes to the center (e.g., side effects) represent relatively newer or niche additions to the network, joining the main body of research, reflecting a dynamic R&D landscape.

In this sense, it can be seen as a complete aid for monitoring development, a key contribution to the development of concepts, and a means to understand both the intellectual and collaborative structures today.

Cluster Analysis of the VOS viewer Network Map: "Job Crafting and Subjective Well-being."

Network Visualization of Co-Citation and Co-Authorship. The network visualization depicts the co-citation and co-authorship patterns within 385 publications on "Job Crafting and Subjective Well-being" for 2021-2024.

Ten clusters covering important research communities are identified based on content similarity.

Cluster 1: Core Foundational Research (90 items) This cluster, including researchers such as (Hirschi and Koen, 2021), Doerwald (2021), and De Vos, A., Jacobs, S., & Verbruggen, M. (2021), comprises the core of foundational research that laid the theoretical groundwork for job crafting, proactive workplace behavior, and Subjective Well-being.

This cluster represents the highest density of citations and is the core knowledge.

Cluster 2: Educational and Organizational Uses Chen (2022 Summary), Wang (2022 Conference & summary), and Zhang (2021) in focus, this cluster focuses on Job Crafting in the education sector and organizations, highlighting teacher autonomy and workplace well-being. Strong links to Cluster 1 indicate the application of core theories, with publications peaking in 2022–2023.

Cluster 3: Digital Work and Technology-Mediated Job Crafting Fan (2022a), Ciarrochi (2022), and Parola (2023) illustrate the modern world of job crafting in a digital workspace where remote, hybrid, or digital work is dominant, focusing on self-regulation, digital tools, and mindfulness, exemplifying the post-pandemic emergence of technology-mediated work.

Cluster 4: Health and Clinical Psychology This cluster, led by Keisari (2021) and Bari (2022), addresses job crafting in healthcare systems and the mental health nursing profession, with a focus on resilience, burnout reduction, and emotional labour.

Cluster 5: Cultural and Cross-Cultural Perspectives Job crafting and cultural differences in job crafting are examined by authors Jiatong (2022), with the latter drawing attention to a 'culture fit' approach.

Cluster 6: Interventions in leadership and management. Muthanna (2023) and Manuti (2022) identified how leadership style, organizational policies, and HR practices facilitate or hinder job crafting.

Cluster 7: Work-Life Balance and Burnout Prevention Rose (2023), Cho (2021), and Liu (2023) connect job crafting to stress management, work-life balance, and burnout prevention, increasing research focus in 2023--2024.

Cluster 8: Future-Tech/AI in Job Design Costin (2023), Adele (2024), and Korner (2024). Cluster 8 is looking to the future, examining AI-dependent job crafting, algorithmic work design, and the consequences of automation for employees' jobs.

Cluster 9: Psychological Mechanisms and Theory Development Zong (2022), Yu (2022b), and Wang (2021b) developed underlying theories, such as Self-Determination Theory and the JD-R model, to offer conceptual support for cross-cluster studies.

Cluster 10: Policy and Societal Implications Peng (2022b) and Parola (2023) investigate the macro-level impact, including labor rights, gig-economy challenges, and societal changes in work structures, which is an emerging research area.

Implications: The clusters have a strong social science orientation, especially in management, psychology, particular education, and health. New clusters in AI and digital work map to changing research priorities driven by technological advances.

Inter-cluster connections indicate cross-disciplinary knowledge sharing; however, the scant literature in environmental and physical sciences suggests these fields warrant further exploration.

On the whole, the field is mature and growing by adapting old theories of job crafting to new organizational, cultural, and technological environments without losing its original purpose: objective improvement in SWB through proactive/innovative work crafting.

Cluster No.	Cluster Name	Key Authors	Publication Years	Main Themes / Focus
1	Foundational Theories	Hirschi and Koen, J. (2021). De Vos, A., Jacobs, S., & Verbruggen, M. (2021).	2021	Core theoretical frameworks, psychological mechanisms of job crafting, Importance of proactive behavior in work life transitions, subjective well-being outcomes
2	Education & Academia	Chen, Wang, Zhang	2021–2023	Application of job crafting in educational and academic contexts, teacher autonomy, workplace well-being
3	Digital Work & Tech	Fan, Ciarrochi, Parola	2022–2023	Remote/hybrid work, digital tools, mindfulness, psychological flexibility, technology-mediated job crafting
4	Health & Clinical	Keisari, Bari, Elahi	2021–2022	Healthcare professionals, burnout reduction, resilience, emotional labor, occupational health
5	Cultural Differences	Jiatong	2021–2022	Cross-cultural variations, collectivism vs. individualism, culturally sensitive approaches to job crafting
6	Leadership & HR	Muthanna, Manuti	2022–2023	Managerial support, leadership styles, organizational policies, HR practices facilitating job crafting
7	Burnout & Work-Life	Rose, Cho, Liu	2021–2023	Work-life balance, stress reduction, burnout prevention, mental health in high-pressure professions
8	AI & Future of Work	Costin, Adele, Korner	2023–2024	AI-driven job design, algorithmic work, automation's impact on employee agency, future-oriented job crafting
9	Psychological Theory	Zong, Yu, Wang	2021–2022	Theoretical models such as Self-Determination Theory and Job Demands-Resources framework, conceptual foundations
10	Policy & Society	Peng, Parola	2022–2023	Macro-level implications, labor rights, gig economy, societal shifts in work, policy-related considerations

4. Discussion

This bibliometric study shows rapid growth in publications on job crafting and well-being from 2021 to 2025, both in the volume of research and the topics studied.

In the year between 2024-2026, citing a few studies by Marsh et al. (2024) stating the importance that in the entire digital- intensive work environment, job crafting is a key factor in improving employee well-being and can lead to strengthening psychological capital and can create a positive outcome.

The bibliometric studies by Bhopal et al. (2025) and Yun et al. (2024) indicated the importance of job crafting practices for improving employee well-being as a sustainable human resource management practice in today's workplace.

Further continuation of research contributions by Apenbrink et al. (2025) and Zeshan et al. (2025), highlighting the effectiveness of job crafting practices in the hybrid work environment and in the age of digitalization. Some of the recent contributions by Tenzer et al. (2026), Deng et al. (2026) and Zhang, et al. (2026).

Highlighted the importance of job crafting in today's independent work environment and promoting job crafting in the age of digitalization, and indicate that in today's organization, as a sustainable human resource management practices employers must provide, opportunities for job crafting practices to organically promote well-being.

The expansion underscores a broader acknowledgment of how workers can intentionally mold their work environments to make them healthier, especially amid an ever-changing, sometimes nebulous organizational climate.

This echoes broader societal worries around mental health, resilience, and sustainable ways of working, now accentuated in the post-COVID world, where work patterns continue to evolve at a pace. The review supports the idea that studies on job crafting draw heavily on existing theories, such as the job demands-resources (JD-R) model and constructs from positive psychology.

Key founding authors, such as Wrzesniewski, Bakker, Tims, and Demerouti, remain relevant in the field, as indicated by co-citation and bibliographic coupling analyses. But the research field is expanding beyond more well-established issues, such as work engagement and burnout, towards other topics, such as digital working environments, hybrid work characteristics, and cross-national differences.

This progression has shown that, while these classical models remain a strong foundation, the field is broadening to address more specific, context- and interdisciplinary-related questions in contemporary work settings.

As such, the current findings reveal an important arrow in the quiver for organizations seeking to improve their employees' well-being and performance at large, namely job crafting. A commonality is that, together with positive constructs of resilience or psychological capital (e.g., Recalled institutions; Maertz & Boyar, 2011) and descriptive concepts such as sustainability (Bruning & Campion, 2018), terms created from job crafting have begun to increasingly move beyond the scope of individual innovation but instead towards a strategic initiative in serving larger organizational aims.

In practical terms, encouraging employees to be more proactive in shaping their jobs, whether through training interventions that enable them to do so (e.g., Bowen et al., 2016), leadership practice (Berg et al.), or digital resources, can result in higher engagement and health among employees, as well as workers' capacity to adapt through career life-cycles and organizational needs.

Nevertheless, key gaps remain in the literature on job crafting. Most studies are conducted in Western contexts, specifically Europe and North America, making it difficult to generalize findings globally.

There is limited cross-cultural research on how cultural values affect job crafting behaviors and their associated well-being consequences. Furthermore, although digital and hybrid work modes are in the spotlight, research on how job crafting unfolds in these contexts is fragmented, and few longitudinal studies examine changes over time.

From a methodological perspective, the literature relies heavily on self-report surveys and cross-sectional designs, leaving room for more experimental, longitudinal, and mixed-methods research, which can yield richer, stronger findings.

These spaces highlight important lines of future research for understanding job crafting across different and evolving labour contexts. Based on a sample of 584 studies, this bibliometric review provides an extensive overview of job crafting and subjective well-being research for the period 2021–2025, mapping emerging trends, major contributors, and collaborative networks.

Based on foundational theories such as the JD-R theory and positive psychology, this field is growing to encompass contexts of digital work, hybrid jobs, and resilient functioning. Most contributions are from psychology and management journals, though there is a substantial contribution from institutions throughout the Netherlands, the US, China, and emerging economies like India.

There is a strong sense of community, especially in Europe, as internationalization increases. Major themes include the relationships among job crafting, work engagement, well-being, and organizational sustainability; recent studies have examined digitalization, cultural differences in job crafting, and psychological resources.

The limitations of searching a single database and specific search terms, the narrowness of recent publication windows, and the quantitative one-sidedness of bibliometrics have implications for the need for broader, longitudinal research on this theme.

5. Future Research Directions

Based on these gaps, several key future research directions emerge. We encourage researchers to examine how job crafting operates in digital, remote, and hybrid work arrangements, which influence employee autonomy and the boundaries of the job.

Cross-cultural research is important for exploring how cultural values influence the relationships between job crafting behaviors and well-being across countries. Longitudinal studies are required to follow the natural trajectory of job crafting over time, particularly in the face of organizational change or crises.

Likewise, there is a need for intervention-type studies that determine the effectiveness of practical programmes (e.g., training and leadership development) in promoting sustainable crafting behaviours. Third, connecting job crafting with top organizational priorities such as sustainability, diversity, and inclusion, and with the introduction of artificial intelligence into work design, provides opportunities to grow relevance and impact in this area.

These suggestions are intended to enhance comprehension and the positive impact of job crafting in contemporary workplaces.

In advancing future research on job crafting in digital and hybrid work, it is important to consider how workers navigate this increasingly dynamic yet complex constellation of phenomena.

Digital and hybrid settings also tend to loosen traditional constraints on time and place, providing employees with new challenges and opportunities for job crafting.

For instance, time-spatial job crafting, in which workers shape their work time and the spatial dimensions of work to fit with personal or professional requirements, has been developed as a relevant construct in these settings.

It will also be useful to conduct research exploring how technology-facilitated resources, such as ICT tools, facilitate or impede job crafting behavior, and how social processes, such as virtual collaboration, influence employees' ability to craft their roles. Furthermore, resilience and flexibility are key as employees continue to adapt to new working environments.

It would be a future research endeavour to investigate the development of these dynamic processes over time using longitudinal and qualitative approaches, and to conduct more fine-grained investigations of how personal motivation, environmental circumstances, and leadership interrelate in job crafting within digitized jobs.

Finally, integrating an interdisciplinary perspective that links organizational psychology, information systems, and human-computer interaction research can be important for furthering knowledge of job crafting in the type of contemporary work undergoing technological mediation and involving hybrid configurations.

The expansion of this research will provide interventions that promote sustainable job crafting and health and performance among employees in the digital era.

6. Conclusion

This bibliometric study provides a comprehensive snapshot of job crafting and subjective well-being from 2021 to 2025 by analyzing 584 core documents retrieved from the Dimensions AI database to reveal publication trends, key authors, collaboration networks, and emerging themes.

The results are further validated by the field we observe, which continues to build on well-established models such as the job demands-resources model and positive psychology, while venturing into newer fields in digital work, hybrid role performance, and resilience.

The study provides added value by integrating scattered literature, identifying key authors and institutions, displaying the intellectual structure through co-citation and keyword analyses, and identifying research lacunas, with suggestions for future studies that should explore cross-cultural environments, digital platforms, longitudinal designs, and interventions.

From a practical perspective, the findings emphasize job crafting's growing relevance in improving employee well-being and fostering organizational sustainability. In turn, organizations and policymakers could use these findings to develop interventions that enable employees to change their work (rather than be changed by it) to become more engaged, resilient, and healthy.

In sum, this review presents job crafting and subjective well-being as an area of dynamic growth, with an underlying foundational theory and practical applications that contribute to sustainable work.

7. Limitations

This study's limitation is that it relies solely on the Dimensions AI database, which may not include important studies indexed elsewhere (e.g., Scopus or Web of Science).

The keyword search was restricted to "jobcrafting" and "subjective well-being," so studies using other, but related, terms could have been excluded. The date range was 2021 through 2025, which includes recent trends but excludes foundational earlier work. Also, the review was limited to open-access articles, conference papers, and reviews, and potentially relevant grey literature or subscribed sources were not included.

Finally, although bibliometric analysis provides an excellent mapping of general trends and networks, it is less suited to a deeper evaluation of the quality or theoretical depth of single studies. These constraints indicate that results should be viewed with caution and highlight the desirability of further work utilising wider search terms, databases, and qualitative methods.

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