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Gender and Job Crafting: Understanding the role of gendered behaviours in the abilities and motivations to proactively craft work

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Job crafting, the proactive redesign of individual work, is an important managerial tool enabling increased engagement, well-being and individual performance. Despite increased academic understanding of antecedents and results, the important role of gender is yet to be integrated. Employing mixed-method research, this paper aims to contribute to job crafting literature to recognise gender as an important force within an individual's ability and motivations to proactively craft their job. Through quantitative methods, it was observed that gendered behaviours can predict job crafting at a significant level. When further explored through qualitative enquiry, it was found that motivations to craft work and the role of an individual's social network within those behaviours differed based upon gender. Thus, important managerial considerations must be made regarding engagement, enforced gender stereotypes and social networks within organisations.

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1. Introduction

Job crafting explains a bottom-up approach to job design in which individuals proactively alter their work from intrinsic motivations (Tims et al., 2012; Tims et al., 2016). Conceptualised by Wrzeniewski & Dutton (2001), job crafting is recognised as an important managerial tool to enable individuals the ability to manipulate job demands and resources to their own abilities, preferences and values. Thus, jobs of better fit are constructed for individuals resulting in diverse personal and organisational benefits. Whilst empirical understanding of key antecedents such as proactive personalities (Bakker et al., 2012) has provided a greater understanding of job crafting within contemporary organisations, there are few discourses into key social factors that may influence the abilities and motivations to craft work. Gender, the socially constructed differences between men and women, is an ever-present force within organisations (Eagley & Karau, 2002; Gilmore, 1990). Gender discourses within organisational sciences describe the differential experiences between men and women based upon socialisation, stereotypes and occupational segregation (Diekmann & Eagley; Kanter, 1977). Socially constructed differences establish disparities within contemporary organisations observable within the Gender Pay Gap and female underrepresentation within boardrooms. Despite this, gender is yet to be recognised within job crafting discourses. The gendered experiences of individuals provides potential meaningful understandings in the abilities to and motivations for engaging in job crafting whilst also understanding the role of social resources within this. The paper aims to extend existing job crafting literature to recognise gender as a significant force in the proactive redesign of work. It will begin with an exploration of current literature within the job crafting and gender literature to provide a theoretical foundation. Following this, a mixed-methods study will be presented utilising the Job Crafting Scale (Tims et al., 2012) and an adapted CMNI-46 Scale (Mahalik et al., 2003; Parent & Moradi, 2009) in which any empirical relationships are further explored through semi-structured interviews. To conclude, theoretical contributions, practical implications and limitations will be discussed.

2. Theoretical Background

2.1 Job Crafting

Job crafting can be defined as the physical and cognitive changes individuals make at work including relational boundary changes, the manipulation of workplace relationships and the psychological reinterpretation of job characteristics (Wrzeniewski & Dutton, 2001; Rudolph et al., 2017). Through such manipulation, existing research has explored the diverse benefits afforded to individuals from job crafting such as improved work engagement, individuals well-being and job performance (Bakker et al., 2006; 2012; Tims et al., 2015). When framed around the Job Demands-Resource (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), job crafting is recognised as the attempted balancing of demands and resources available to individuals based upon values, skills and resources. The JD-R model positions job crafting as an important mechanism in balancing motivation enhancing variables against stress enhancing processes (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2017; Rudolph et al., 2017). Within such framing, four conceptually different dimensions of job crafting can be identified: increasing structural job resources, decreasing hindering job demands, increasing social job resources and increasing challenging job demands (Tims et al., 2012).

Increasing structural resources refers to the developmental opportunities and autonomy that increases knowledge within jobs; it is through these means that individual outcomes including increased work satisfaction and engagement are expected (Tims et al., 2012). *Decreasing hindering demands* describes the decrease in work characteristics which overwhelm individuals risking burnout and are therefore avoided due to perceived stress and obstructed personal development (LePine et al., 2005). *Increasing social resources* refers to support, feedback and coaching available to individuals within work (Tims et al., 2012), positioning job crafting within a social context of an organisation where human relationships are emphasised. Finally, *increasing challenging demands* describes the intrinsically motivating job demands that are perceived to increase professional development (Tims et al., 2012); time pressures and increased work load, for example, have been positively correlated with work engagement (Bakker et al., 2006).

One important theoretical underpinning of job crafting is the role of individual differences. Proactive individuals, those with the “relatively stable tendency to affect environmental change” (Bateman & Crant, 1993, pp.103), are understood to have higher engagement with job crafting behaviours to enhance personal performance (Bakker et al., 2012). Roczniowska & Bakker (2016) further explored how dark personality traits influenced an individual’s engagement in job crafting. Here, individuals demonstrating narcissistic traits were positively linked with seeking increased social resources whilst neuroticism was negatively related with increasing structural resources. Whilst the effects of such intrinsic characteristics on job crafting are understood, more basic demographical variables often lack attention. Harju et al. (2016) found older demographics to be less likely to increase challenging demands due to perceived stress and a shift in goal attainment to alternative factors (Baltes, 1977; Fried et al., 2007). Furthermore, there is little recognition for national culture within job crafting abilities due to a Euro-American centric view, with samples predominantly within the Netherlands. Thus, views upon hierarchy, socialisation and autonomy are not considered (Hofstede, 2001). Finally, gender is often controlled within job crafting research despite being a predominant issue within organisational sciences. The lack of gender theories limits knowledge on how and why individuals engage in job crafting, impeding externalised potential to further understand gendered disparities in work where job crafting affords individual benefits.

2.2 Gender

Gender, differential from biological sex, can be defined as the socially constructed differences between men and women based upon culturally expected behaviours (Eagley & Karau, 2002; Gilmore, 1990). Gender is an ever-present force in organisations, influencing the ways individuals evaluate and interact with each other, how work is conducted and the inherent design of organisations (Dubbelt et al., 2015; Heilman, 2001). Within contemporary organisations, gender influences job roles, behavioural norms and career trajectories constructing disparities between individuals. Acker (1990) argues the inherent design of work favours males, in which gendered ideals are imprinted into organisational practises where jobs and hierarchies are stereotyped based upon this. Furthermore, Kanter (1977) describes the ways in which organisations further stereotype male and female careers, often at which men’s success is supported by the subordination of women. Finally, Cockburn (1991) argues that where inequalities are recognised in organisations, active opposition from internal men undermines any attempt to improve female representation in promotion or recruitment due to the assumed negative implications on profits and efficiency.

Gender norms can be defined as the consensual perceived attributes of men and women that prescribe roles and behaviours based upon identified gender (Eagley & Karau, 2002). Individuals infer behaviours to develop perceived traits, thus developing stereotypes (Eagley & Wood, 2012; Gilbert & Malone, 1995). Individual behaviours are therefore regulated through frameworks based upon prescribed norms and form the basis of differential evaluations and treatment of men and women within organisations. Originating from the traditional role division of sexes, which perceives men as breadwinners and women as caretakers (Diekmann & Eagley, 2000; Heilman, 2001), gender stereotypes shape assumed attributes assigned to individuals (Bakan, 1966). Thus, gender norms can be categorised into two typologies: communal and agentic. *Communal norms* are assumed of females, describing affectionate, helpful, nurturing and submissive behaviours. *Agentic traits* are assumed of males, describing assertive, controlling, aggressive and self-sufficient behaviours (Eagle & Karau, 2002). Utilising contemporary studies into masculinities, male behaviours can further be extended to include emotional detachment, competitive tendencies, financial motivation and risk taking (Hofstede, 2001; Mahalik et al., 2003; Parent & Moradi, 2009). It must be recognised that such typologies of gender norms attempt to reconcile the fluidity of gender into static typologies that place a false dichotomy on gender which fails to recognise individuals external of heteronormativity (Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Connell & Messerschmidt, 2005). Furthermore, this views gendered norms as fixed entity mutually inclusive of biological sex in which women cannot exhibit masculinities or vice versa (Halberstam, 1998; Messerschmidt, 2004). However, despite the inherent non-gendered nature of behaviours such as assertion and competitiveness, women often experience a ‘double bind’ where stereotyped feminine

traits are undervalued whilst exhibited masculinity is discredited as illegitimate (Eagley & Karau, 1991; Joshi et al., 2015; Kanter, 1977; Rudman et al., 2012). Similarly, where men deviate from assumed masculinities or demonstrate assumed female traits, there is often a threat of isolation or declining social capital (Bielby & Barron, 1986; Collinson & Hearn, 1994; Connell, 2005).

Therefore, where job crafting literature accepts the role of proactivity and autonomy as a pivotal feature whilst self-reliance and control are expected as a masculine norm, the following research question is proposed:

R1: To what extent can constructed gender explain job crafting?

Individuals inherently find themselves embedded within networks of relationships based upon social interactions which provide support, opportunities and influence (Loury, 2005). Deconstructing these networks however enables an understanding of the power held by certain groups (Hudson et al., 2017). Homophily and similarity-attraction theory (Blau, 1977; Chatman & O'Reilly, 2004) explain individual preference for same-gendered interaction within organisations. Thus, social networks can be built around homogenous groups of individuals who share similar beliefs, behaviours and social outlooks. Whilst social networks are a natural part of organisational life, the distribution of opportunities and resources within these means proves problematic. Cockburn's (1983) inquiry into male-dominated print workers highlighted how the redefinition of workplace competencies, construction of barrier to entry and the control of work allocation and job resources restricted opportunities for females. Similarly, Coe (1992) describes how female senior managers within the UK Institute of Management described their largest barriers within work to be the lack of training opportunities afforded to them due to their exclusion from male social networks. Even where women hold the same job role as male counterparts, McGuire (2002) observes females receiving significantly reduced levels of workplace assistance due to devaluation of their skills when excluding from male social networks. Finally, Sang et al. (2014) discusses how women within the UK architecture industry lacked access to social events with key clients thus hindering promotion opportunities, whilst exhibited skills were often devalued or credited to male superiors. Thus, tendency of male networks to predominantly retain information, opportunities and resources within social networks of trusted, generally male, relationships is observable (Liff & Cameron, 1997). These differentials can be summarised as male social networks providing career progression opportunities compared to female social networks providing support, advice and mentorship (Gorman, 2005; Ibarra, 1992). Whilst research shows that women engage in such behaviours at similar rates, the reinforced legitimacy of male dominance in organisations enables a male privilege to benefit from such behaviours (Elliot & Smith, 2004). Where men hold higher power positions in organisations, the distribution of job characteristics and work load becomes men's responsibly (Dubblelt, 2016).

Therefore, where job crafting can be utilised to increase an individual's social resources, where social networks provide further job demands and resources, the following research question is proposed:

R2: Does the role of social networks differ within abilities to job craft dependant on gender?

Finally, framing gendered organisational experiences around the JD-R model may reveal further disparities. With regards to hindering job demands, females perceive work to be more demanding whilst males often cite less workplace stress (Eaton & Bradley, 2008; Fila et al., 2017). Furthermore, females perceive less autonomy within their occupations, citing lower work engagement compared to male counterparts (Banhani et al., 2013). Such studies perhaps reveal surface level realities, however. Where men may cite less workplace stress, it shouldn't be assumed they experience lower levels; rather, where hegemonic ideals of masculinity celebrate long-working hours and competitiveness, males may be less inclined to cite experiences counterintuitive to this (Connell & Wood, 2005). Furthermore, reduced

female engagement may be based upon many assumptions that require consideration. Women disproportionately are underemployed within overcrowded occupations with little promotion or training opportunities, low-paid part time work and restricted from the most senior roles within organisations (Anker, 1997; Grimshaw & Rubery, 2001). Furthermore, perceptions of female performance and skills are routinely undervalued compared to male skills on assumptions of perceived meritocratic conditions favouring males (Castilla, 2008; Castilla & Bernard, 2010). Finally, despite men who become fathers receiving benefits in work due to the perceived increased responsibilities (Grimshaw & Rubery, 2015), women who choose to raise children are disadvantaged in a number of ways. Correll et al (2007) describe how mothers were perceived as less competent than non-mothers and thus discriminated against within recruitment decisions. Furthermore, Blau & Kahn (2017) describe how motherhood deters organisations from investing in training and development opportunities due to perceptions of reduced effort and productivity within work based upon disproportionate non-paid work being attributed to women. Thus, where women perceive work to be more demanding than men whilst citing less engagement, whilst external forces and perceptions of women's work influences their opportunities and working experiences, the following research question is proposed:

R3: Do motivations to job craft differ between genders?

3. Methodology

Predominant methodologies within gender studies and job crafting differ greatly: where job crafting relies upon quantitative enquiry (e.g. Tims et al., 2012), gender studies often employs qualitative techniques (e.g. Cockburn, 1991; Connell & Wood, 2005; Kanter, 1977). Thus, a mixed-methods approach was adopted, undertaking a pragmatic philosophical stance, to address the disparity between available methods. Furthermore, Sequential Explanatory Design was applied, adopting a two-stage approach to data collection and analysis. Leaning upon inductive thinking, this enables initial qualitative studies to identify relationships between gender and job crafting to be further explored within qualitative means (Ivankova et al., 2006). Thus, further ontological observations of job crafting engagement can be understood (Green et al., 1989; Johnson et al., 2007). Weighting towards sequential stages, as well as time and resource allocations present potential problems within mixed methods research (Cresswell et al., 2003). Furthermore, isolation of data sets may negatively affect validity of analysis where both data sets are not meaningfully integrated (Tashakkori & Cresswell, 2007). However, where common research methods within disciplines present opposing paradigms, using quantitative results to inform qualitative inquiry deemed a mixed-methods approach necessary.

The quantitative methodology primarily aimed to observe empirical relationships between job crafting and gender to satisfy *R1*. Tims et al.'s (2012) Job Crafting scale was adopted, comprising of 21 items related to four prescribes factors increasing structural resources, decreasing hindering demands, increasing social resources and increasing challenging demands. Scale reliability was demonstrated through Cronbach's *a* ranging from .60 to .90. Participants indicated the extent of which they agreed to items based upon a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1, *not accurately at all*, to 5, *extremely accurately*. Measuring gendered behaviours presented difficulties due to the lack of a validated scale within an organisational context. However, an adapted version of the Conformity to Masculine Norms Inventory 46 was adopted (CMNI-46) (Mahalik et al., 2003; Parent & Moradi, 2009). The limitations to using a sociologically based scale in this mean will be discussed later, however factors were adapted to best represent the discussed gendered behaviours outlined in *Section 2.2*. The adapted scale comprised of 5 factors: emotional control, competitive tendencies, self-reliance, risk-taking and primacy of work. Internal validity was demonstrated through Cronbach's *a* ranging from .89 to .98 (Parent & Moradi, 2009). Data was subject to bivariate correlations to determine relationships, with any significant relationships subject to Independent Sample T-Tests to understand differential group effects. Following this, computed scales were analysed through a multiple linear regression to measure the predictability of gender and gendered behaviour on job crafting.

Following quantitative analysis, semi-structured interviews were conducted through Skype where possible to explore the role of social networks and motivations, satisfying both R2 and R3. The semi-structured discipline enabled a level of standardisation within data whilst allowing the exploration of interesting subjects and approach adaptation depending on interviewee behaviours (Bryman, 2001; Jancowicz, 2005). Furthermore, elements of the Critical Incident Technique (Flanagan, 1954) were adopted to access storytelling, opinions and personal beliefs (Rowley, 2015). Whilst this relies upon an individual's storytelling abilities and cognitive memory, potentially enabling false narratives and memory lapses (Bott & Tourish, 2016; Hardt et al., 2013), this most suitably allowed further exploration between empirical relationships. Furthermore, technological limitations of video-based interviews demanded consideration where faulty equipment required rescheduled interviews. The relative anonymity of video-based interviews potentially causing negative effects on presentation and authenticity of self also required consideration (Bargh et al., 2002; Janghorban et al., 2014). Despite these considerations, the removal of any geographical restrictions whilst enabling access to social cues and participation, body language provided strong benefits to both interview technique and analysis requirements (Mann & Stewart, 2000). Finally, completed transcripts were analysed using conventional context analysis, generating theories through emerging themes within collective interview data (Kondracki & Wellman, 2002). Whilst subjective perceptions of information may influence theory generation within this manner, its positioning within the theoretical positioning undertaken through the lack of preconceived categorisation and imposed perspectives deemed this necessary (Hsieh & Shannon, 2005).

4. Sampling

Differential sampling strategies were employed dependent upon research stage. Quantitative research utilised random sampling from a general population, whilst qualitative research utilised stratified sampling from identified individuals from the initial research stage. Stratified sampling was based upon gender, age and job role to create equal representation of participants. Sample selection bias demanded consideration here where specific populations may be more receptive to communicated research aims. However, where job roles and industry were controlled within qualitative research, this sampling technique was deemed suitable.

An initial sample size of 98 was reduced to 82 due to incomplete data of participants. Participants with no organisational tenure were also removed due to the potential to skew data away from its work-based context. Whilst the sample size may prove problematic within the contested nature of ideal sample volumes (Delice, 2010; Muthen & Muthen, 2002), this allowed for an empirical relationship to be observed before conducting further qualitative enquiry. From this sample, 62.2% were female, 36.6 were male and 1.2% non-binary; mean age was 30 years old, ranging from 19 to 60. Further invalid data was discarded through pairwise exclusion, enabling any further valid participant data to be considered (Peugh & Enders, 2004). The resulting stratified sample consisted of 10 participants of an equal gender split selected based on age and job title: ages ranged from 23 to 55, whilst job titles included administrative assistant, quality control officer, sales person and programme manager.

5. Results

The presented data is derived from a Master's thesis submitted to the University of Leeds. Initially, quantitative analysis will be discussed, including regression modelling of variables. The subsequent qualitative analysis will then be discussed, exploring the key themes derived from interviews and how these contrast between individuals.

5.1 Quantitative Study

5.1.1 Preliminary Analysis

All tests were subject to preliminary analysis to ensure no violation of assumptions; any further invalid data was excluded through pairwise exclusion. Several items demanded reverse coding due to any potential acquiescence bias associated with negatively worded items (Baumgartner & Steenkamp, 2001; Swain et al., 2008). Whilst the effectiveness of reverse coding is contested, relevant items were reversed to reduce any potential unexpected factor structures (Babakus & Boller, 1992; Krosnick & Presser, 2010). Furthermore, initial reliability testing was conducted to ensure suitability of scales. Cronbach α was measured against a minimum value .6 due to the nature of small subscales regularly reporting smaller values than expected (Churchill & Peter, 1984; Greco et al., 2018). *Increasing structural job demands* presented problems where $\alpha = .532$ due to the item '*I try to develop my capabilities*'. Thus, the item was removed and the scale reported $\alpha = .719$. Full reliability of scales can be found in *Table 3*.

5.1.2 Bivariate Correlation Analysis

Through analysis of the Pearson product-moment correlation, the only significant relationship revealed was a weak-negative relationship between identified gender and increasing challenging job demands where $r = .28$, $n = 75$, $p < .01$. Investigating this relationship further through an independent sample t-test revealed women were more likely to increase challenging job demands. Subsequently, bivariate correlations were analysed between the CMNI-46 and the Job Crafting scale. Full results can be found in *Table 3*, however the most notable results were as follows. Increasing structural resources reported a weak positive relationship with primacy of work and risk-taking, suggesting the more risk-tolerant and career-centric an individual is, the more they increase structural resources. A weak negative relationship was observed between hindering demands and competitive tendencies, suggesting that as an individual becomes more competitive they are more likely to avoid stressful and hindering job demands. Furthermore, a weak positive relationship was observed with self-reliance, in which the more intrinsically-reliant an individual, the less they avoid stressful demands. Increasing social resources reported a weak negative relationship with self-reliant behaviours and a weak positive relationship with risk taking tendencies. Perhaps intuitively, this suggests that as an individual becomes more self-reliant, the more they will seek strengthened social relationship; this may also suggest that the more comfortable an individual is with risk taking, the more they will seek stronger social relationships. Finally, a weak positive relationship was observed between increasing challenging demand and primacy of work, suggesting that as an individual becomes more career-centric, the more they undertake challenging roles and tasks.

5.1.3 Multiple Linear Regression

Subsequently, the variables identified gender, gendered behaviours and job crafting were entered into a multiple linear regression to understand the predictability of the model. Correlations between variables were measured, revealing weak significance ranging from -1.86 to 2.54 suggesting no issues with multicollinearity (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007). The resulting model revealed weak significance, explaining 9.3% of all job crafting behaviours. To observe individual effects of predictor variables, standardised beta coefficients were analysed. Whilst both contributed unique significance, gendered behaviours affected job crafting at a greater level than identified gendered, where $b = .314$ and $-.245$ respectively.

Thus, to satisfy *RI*, identified gender and gendered behaviours were observed to have a significant, yet weak, effect upon individual job crafting behaviours. Where an individual demonstrated increased masculine behaviours, they were more likely to engage within proactive redesigning of work. Furthermore, through bivariate correlations, the differential ways individuals engage in jobs crafting were observed to be further explored within qualitative enquiry. Most significantly: whether individuals

exhibiting masculinities would avoid stressful demands at higher rates; whether individuals exhibiting masculinities will attempt to increase structural demands to improve personal development; and whether masculinity has an effect on an individual's attempts to strengthen social relationships.

5.2 Qualitative Study

Upon analysis of qualitative data, two key themes were derived relative to the outlined research questions: *the motivations to job craft* and *the role of social resources within job crafting*. Subsequent themes within these provided important discourse regarding comparisons and contrasts in how constructed and identified gender influence proactive job redesign.

5.2.1 Motivations to Job Craft

Two key motivations for job crafting were observed through interviews: career progression and engagement. Career progression was most commonly cited, in which 60% of participants discussed this; differentiation existed however between financial and personal growth. Financial growth was predominantly a male experience, where personal growth was female. For example, one female participant, *aged 22 working as a legal claims assistant*, discussed how increasing her structural demands demonstrated skills external from her role:

"I want to show the people around me and my bosses that I have skills that are untapped if the task I'm given isn't challenging. It's a way of me showing 'I have this knowledge to offer' and trying to show them that."

An alternative female participant discussed how she manipulated work to assist in increasing knowledge within specialised career interests. Similarly, another female describes how she increased challenging resources within work to further personal development, but to gain additional resources for her team to develop also. In comparison, one male participant working in sales described his motivations to strengthen social relationships and structural relationships came from a purely financial view:

"One thing I find myself doing quite a lot is focussing on account management, so less speaking to new people constantly. When we have sold to someone, at the end of that six months I'll always call them up, see what they are doing next; it's bumping up the revenue figures. Ultimately, the more meetings you sit, the more sites you visit, the higher your revenue is going to be, the higher your commission is going to be."

Another male participant cited how they would increase their structural demands to demonstrate their capabilities to increase their financial remunerations within work. They discussed how they would take on responsibilities of a higher status on the perception that this would enable more opportunities to roles with higher pay. Engagement motivations were predominantly a female experience. One female participant discussed how they increased challenging resources to ensure that her role still intellectually stimulated her; another female stated how job crafting allowed her to explore new working methods that she usually did not have access to. Alternatively, one male participant discussed how he would craft work to remain engaged in work; however this was negatively framed, citing the avoidance of boredom at work as his motivation.

5.2.2 The Role of Social Relationships

Interview data reflected previously discussed quantitative data strongly which suggested increasing social resources held a negative relationship with exhibited masculinity. Women discussed at length how strong social relationships with colleagues and managers enabled delegation and distribution of shared work easier, whilst receiving beneficial resources. For example, one female participant described how strengthened relationships with her manager enabled access to more challenging demands they

found engaging. Furthermore, when asked if their social surroundings encourage jobs crafting, one female participant responded:

“It does, yes. But it has taken me time to build up those relationships and trust. For everyone to know what is being passed on, what everyone’s abilities are, and just to like each other and therefore want to work with each other.”

Furthermore, on the topic of trusting colleagues, a female participant described how this enabled confidence to job craft:

“You don’t constantly have that niggling feeling at the back of your mind like ‘oh, someone has to be taking care of this... When you know you have periods of time when you don’t have that responsibility it gives you more freedom to do what you prefer”.

An alternative female discussed how strengthened relationships with management increased trust enabling further autonomy and responsibilities whilst further decreasing any hindering demands. They discussed how communication within social relationships regarding career goals resulted in structural demands being encourage by management to develop skills to achieve those goals.

Two females, however, did cite negative experiences in which social relationships negatively affected job crafting abilities. One, for example, cited how target-centric management stifled attempts to craft work on the basis of certain tasks not being completed. Male participants discussed negative experiences within social relationships at greater length. One participant discussed how he believed a strained relationship with management meant that he could not undertake preferred tasks due to his own high performance potentially influencing their managers own targets. Similarly, a male participant discussed how he would only increase structural resources through formal procedures due to negative perceptions of social relationships. Finally, one male participant discussed at length how there seemed to be a lack of trust with close colleagues. He perceived a lack of social resources to those around him which didn’t enable the ability to craft work, stating that *“the people around me aren’t that important”* in completing workloads.

Despite discussing how strained relationships effected job crafting abilities, two males did cite positive experiences in which strengthened social resources did enable proactive crafting. One male described how displaying their abilities strengthened trust with management, gaining autonomy to craft work approaches:

“If I don’t think something is working, I can try my own way, and if that doesn’t work then she’ll ask me to go back to hers... If it works, she’s happy with me to keep doing it my way. But because I think she’s definitely open, I can do my own thing much more.”

Finally, another male described how upon strengthening a relationship with their manager enable personal growth external to what they perceived to be a restrictive job: management sponsored studying towards a management degree, increasing their structural resources and resulting in them moving into a more autonomous role within the organisations.

6. Discussion

This paper aimed to address the current gap between job crafting discourses and the role of gender. Job Crafting behaviours enable diverse results for individuals such as improved engagement, well-being and performance (Bakker et al., 2006; 2012; Tims et al., 2015). Gender within organisations however recognises differential individual experiences not currently integrated within job crafting knowledge. Thus, the presented mixed-methods study aims to address the ways in which gender affects engagement and motivations to craft work as well as any inherent roles of social relationships.

To address *RI*, it is suggested that gender and gendered behaviours may explain a small level of job crafting behaviours. Through multiple linear regression modelling, 9.3% of all job crafting behaviours can be explained by identified gender and gendered behaviours. Additionally, bivariate correlations

found exhibited masculinity held significant relationship with select job crafting behaviours. For example, as an individual exhibits more self-reliant behaviours they are less likely to seek strengthened social resources reflecting assumed agentic traits of autonomy and self-sufficiency attributed to men (Batemen & Crant, 1994; Eagley & Karau, 2002). Contrasting this, increasing structural resources was positively correlated with risk-taking behaviours and primacy of work, perhaps reflecting homophily within social networks affording males further opportunities and resources within organisations (Blau, 1977; Kanter, 1977; Merluzzi, 2017). Before any interpretation of results, it must be noted that these relationships were weakly significant; generalising results to all job crafting behaviours presents inherent limitations and thus should be used as a foundation for further enquiry. However, this does suggest that where gender stereotypes are enforced within an individual it affects the ways in which they engage in work. Job crafting behaviours were more visible in those expressing masculinities, perhaps due to the inherent relationships between proactivity and assumed autonomy (Bakker et al., 2012). Thus, where gender norms are reinforced within organisations, it is intuitive that men may be afforded job crafting opportunities more regularly. This may explain where females were more likely to increase social resources in attempt to access such opportunities. How organisations construct gender within work deserves consideration here. Where job crafting engagement affords individual benefits, affording further opportunities to men based upon assumptions of masculinity may further drive inequalities at work and where a double bind for women exhibiting agentic behaviours exists, it is too simplistic to suggest that women change their workplace behaviours.

Observed in both quantitative and qualitative means, females undertook job crafting behaviours for social purposes at higher rates than males. Addressing *R2*, this again reflects communal traits assumed of females in placing emphasis upon social resources (Hielman, 2001). Research into gendered social networks as discussed in *section 2.2* highlights the differential gains individuals receive from socialisation based upon identified gender and gendered behaviours. Men often receive disproportionate work resources and job opportunities through socialisation with colleagues whilst females may seek advice, mentorship and support from peers (Gorman, 2005; Ibarra, 1992). Through semi-structured interviews, it was evident that women seek to enhance social resources for two reasons reflective of such research. First, they enhanced their social resources as a means to seek mentorship from superiors to further abilities and to communicate and achieve personal goals. Second, they strengthened social relationships as a means to accessed immediate and sustained job crafting abilities and autonomy within their work. Inherently, this further describes the differential and disproportionate benefits individuals gain from social networks within work based upon their identified gender. As discussed above, these discussions can be inferred as females engaging strengthen their social resources as a means to access the same job crafting abilities that are afforded *naturally* to men. Contrasts within semi-structured interviews described this further. Where one male participant discussed his autonomous abilities to experiment with new ways of work, an alternative male participant discussed the effort expended to increase trust with colleagues to achieve such autonomy. Two considerations must be made from this. First, organisations must again be reflective of constructed and enforced gender expectations upon individuals. Where autonomy is assumed as agentic within males, they may inherently have greater access to job crafting abilities. Secondly, considerations of how social relationships between colleagues affords differential job crafting abilities. Where females have to expend effort to build the trust required to work autonomously this may impact upon improved performance expected from increase job crafting behaviours (Bakker et al., 2006; 2012; Tims et al., 2015). The double-bind placed upon women expressing agentic traits may be further considered here; it may be too simplistic to assume females can assert further autonomy upon their work in which these behaviours may be perceived as illegitimate. A consideration must be made here however to the role of same-sex social network ties. There was little exploration as to the gender identity of individuals social networks of which afforded individuals such experiences. Further research into the role same-sex social relationships support or block job crafting behaviours may prove beneficial.

Finally, the presented study contributed to the theoretical understanding of differential motivations to engage in job crafting behaviours, addressing *R3*. Existing literature discusses how men are less likely to cite stressful factors at work, where women perceive less autonomy and less engagement within work (Banhani et al., 2013; Eaton & Bradley, 2008; Fila et al., 2017) . However, integrating hegemonic ideals

of masculinity and the further challenges faced by females from motherhood, recruitment and disproportionate unpaid work provides a more holistic foundation to understand differential motivations to engage in job crafting. Females predominantly cited professional development and engagement as motivations to proactively craft work where males primarily cited financial incentives. Again, reinforced gender norms are observable within motivations to job craft. Competitiveness and primacy of work derived of agentic traits assumed in men were observable through the commonality of financial motivations within observed men. Contradiction immediately exists here that is worth consideration for organisations; the primacy of work and competitiveness enforced upon males can be assumed to have negative impact upon perceptions of female non-work responsibilities. Where expectations of disproportionate unpaid work falls upon women in order to support the notion of work primacy in men, this may influence work engagement and professional development within women. Furthermore, where women may make the choice to child-bear, this inherently requires a period of time out of work. Existing evidence describes the routine underemployment and devaluation of female skills which constructs difficulties faced by women returning to work at the same level of employment. Thus, if job crafting engagement enables access to professional development, this may reflect the motivations to overcome such barriers constructed within work that are not presented to men. With regards to engagement motives, this can be inferred for several means. First, the disproportionate expectations of unpaid work afforded to women may impact workplace engagement. Where women cite disproportionate amount of unpaid work completed compared to males, this may impact on workplace engagement. However, the consistent underemployment, devaluation of skills and observed restricted autonomy may further influence the motivations to improve engagement within work. Factors presented by disproportionate unpaid work and the effects of child-bearing perhaps represent more socio-political factors to be addressed within policy or collective bargaining. However, where job crafting may increase an individual's motivation and engagement at work, organisations must again be reflective of opportunities and abilities afforded to individuals. Opportunities to proactively craft work to an individual's values, goals and skills within job design at the point of recruitment and then sustained throughout the job cycle must be afforded to females in order to achieve the increased performance and development characteristics within the observed men.

6.1 Limitations

Naturally, inherent limitations exist within the study. Initially, consideration to the sample must be made. The random sampling from a general population primarily employed removed the ability for more nuanced data collection and analysis within singular organisation and job role. Thus, the abilities, or lack of, to job craft could be derived from organisational culture, job roles or industrial regulation rather than constructed or identified gender. Inability to therefore control for such factors reduced generalisability of findings, but may also be reflective within quantitative results showing only weakly significant results. Therefore, further research localised within a singular organisation would be beneficial to further understand how gender is constructed and any subsequent effects upon job crafting abilities.

Furthermore, methodological limitations in applying the CMNI-46 are existent. The scale, designed for sociological and psychological application is naturally reliant upon elements from these disciplines. Thus, whilst recognising certain elements of gender within organisations, the scale does not consider nuances such as social networks and stereotyped job roles. Thus, integration problems between research stages may exist, for example where quantitative stages observed professional development motivates related to masculinity of which was a female experience within interviews. Existing scales to measure gendered behaviours within organisations do exist but at collective levels rather than the individuals (see Hofstede, 2001). Future research may consider the development of a validated scale to measure gendered behaviours within organisations to enable effective quantitative gendered enquiries.

Extrapolating further upon gender, potential problems utilising typologies of gendered behaviours is worth consideration. The inherent problems with attempting to reconcile behaviours into gendered typologies based upon stereotypes was previously discussed in Section 2.2., where the prevalence and effects of such frameworks within organisations was highlighted. However, two considerations can be

made as to the effects of applying these typologies to research. Participant response bias needs to be considered, in which participants may be influenced by any perceived desirability of masculinities within organisations, thus inflating perceived internal masculinities (Furnham, 1986). Additionally, the effects of such terminologies within organisations is worth consideration. By gendering desired behaviours, cognitive bias may naturally favour the individuals of such gender. However, further research is required to understand the effects of non-gendered terminologies on behavioural bias.

Further to the development of an organisational contextualised gendered behaviour scale and the effects of gender behavioural terminology upon cognitive bias, further research potential exists. Social relationships play a large part in female job crafting, however there was a lack of consideration to the opposing gender within these ties. Further research should recognise implications of same-sex gender ties within social resources and afforded autonomy for individuals to job craft. Furthermore, there is scope for further exploration within the role of gender and team level job crafting. The importance of social relationships within job crafting was a predominantly female experience, however team level job crafting was not considered within this paper. The exploration of how gender and gender norms influence the effectiveness of team level job crafting may prove beneficial.

Consideration to the methods of job crafting employed in this study is also required. Job crafting takes many forms. Contextualised to this study, job crafting exists as the individual manipulation of demands and resources available (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2017). Alternative means of job crafting exists however: Wrzeniewski & Dutton (2001) describe this as the cognitive changes individuals make to relational boundaries, whilst Tims et al., (2013) has explored the notion of team-level job crafting. Thus, the applicability to cognitive job crafting is limited; whilst references are made to team-level job crafting, this is limited also as this study focuses upon individual social resources.

Finally, the cross-sectional data applied limited cause-and-effect conclusions making inferences between job crafting and gendered behaviours limited. As previously discussed, job crafting traits and gendered behaviours share overlap within proactivity and autonomy. However, it is difficult to state if job crafting is a result of exhibited gendered behaviours, the existence of reverse causality or if reciprocal relationships are present. The aim of this paper, however, was to understand any underlying relationships between gender and job crafting, rather than any empirical causality.

7. Conclusion

This paper sought to understand the role of gender within job crafting. Whilst individual and organisational benefits of job crafting have been vastly explored, there is an apparent lack of recognition of gender as a significant variable. This has confined the development of job crafting literature into wider organisational contexts, restricting its applicability to alternative subjects such as the gender pay gap, inclusion and glass ceilings. This paper argues that socially constructed ideals of gender influences the ways people engage with job crafting. Most importantly, the opportunities afforded to individuals, their motivations to engage in job craft and how social resources effect job crafting are all affected by constructed and identified gender. Whilst there are limitations to the generalisability of the presented study, it highlights a relationship of which further enquiry may prove beneficial. At its core, this paper suggests that despite its autonomous nature, job crafting must be managed to an extent to ensure further disparities are not creating an individual's ability to proactively alter work.

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Table 1
Gender identification and job crafting correlations

		Gender identification	Increasing structural resources	Decreasing hindering demands	Increasing social resources	Increasing challenging demands
Gender identification	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	-				
	N	82				
Increasing structural resources	Pearson Correlation	-0.025	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.821	-			
	N	81	81			
Decreasing hindering demands	Pearson Correlation	-0.053	-0.055	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.646	0.637	-		
	N	77	76	77		
Increasing social resources	Pearson Correlation	0.021	0.118	-0.110	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.855	0.302	0.347	-	
	N	79	78	75	79	
Increasing challenging demands	Pearson Correlation	-.280*	.394**	-0.119	.288*	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.015	0.001	0.324	0.013	-
	N	75	74	71	73	75

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**.. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 2
Independent Sample T-Test & Equality of Means

Gender identification		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Increasing challenging demands	Female	46	3.7130	0.78955	0.11641
	Male	28	3.1786	0.94491	0.17857

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
Increasing challenging demands	Equal variances assumed	2.05	0.16	2.62	72	0.011	0.53	0.20	0.128	0.941
	Equal variances not assumed			2.51	49	0.015	0.53	0.21	0.106	0.963

Table 3
Bivariate Correlations

		Scale reliability (Cronbach's <i>a</i>)	Increasing structural resources	Decreasing hindering demands	Increasing social resources	Increasing challenging demands	Emotional control	Competitive tendencies	Self- reliance	Risk-taking	Primacy of work
Increasing structural resources	Pearson Correlation		1								
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.719	-								
	N		81								
Decreasing hindering demands	Pearson Correlation		-0.055	1							
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.677	0.637	-							
	N		76	77							
Increasing social resources	Pearson Correlation		0.118	-0.110	1						
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.777	0.302	0.347	-						
	N		78	75	79						
Increasing challenging demands	Pearson Correlation		.394**	-0.119	.288*	1					
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.775	0.001	0.324	0.013	-					
	N		74	71	73	75					
Emotional control	Pearson Correlation		0.037	0.137	0.116	0.202	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.915	0.743	0.240	0.315	0.085	-				
	N		79	75	77	74	80				
Competitive tendencies	Pearson Correlation		0.010	-.229*	0.052	-0.050	0.101	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.840	0.927	0.048	0.651	0.674	0.372	-			
	N		79	75	77	74	80	80			
Self-reliance	Pearson Correlation		0.104	.268*	-.234*	-0.088	-0.140	-0.010	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.899	0.365	0.021	0.042	0.459	0.218	0.933	-		
	N		78	74	76	73	79	79	79		
Risk-taking	Pearson Correlation		.253*	0.110	.311**	0.194	0.084	.367**	-0.058	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.867	0.024	0.348	0.006	0.098	0.458	0.001	0.614	-	
	N		79	75	77	74	80	80	79	80	
Primacy of work	Pearson Correlation		.319**	0.005	0.000	.272*	0.204	0.085	0.037	0.139	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.729	0.004	0.968	1.000	0.020	0.071	0.457	0.748	0.220	-
	N		78	74	76	73	79	79	78	79	79

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Table 4

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	Change Statistics			Sig. F Change
						F Change	df1	df2	
1	.348 ^a	0.121	0.093	0.46008	0.121	4.268	2	62	0.018

a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender identification, Masculinity level

b. Dependent Variable: Job crafting behaviours

Table 5

ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1.807	2	0.903	4.268	.018 ^b
	Residual	13.124	62	0.212		
	Total	14.931	64			

a. Dependent Variable: Job crafting behaviours

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender identification, Masculinity level

