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The Mediating Role of Person–Job Fit in the Relationship Between Job Crafting and Innovative Work Behavior: A Study on Five-Star Hotels

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ABSTRACT

Increasingly intense competitive conditions in today's world have made innovative work behavior (IWB) a strategic necessity and a behavior expected by organizations. Within this context, the present study examines whether person–job fit (PJF) operates as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between job crafting and innovative work behavior (IWB). The study population comprises employees working in five-star hotel establishments in Muğla, Türkiye, and the empirical analysis is based on data collected from 353 employees. Structural equation modeling (AMOS-SEM) was employed to test the relationships among the study variables. The findings indicate that the task, cognitive, and relational dimensions of job crafting are all positively and significantly associated with IWB. The mediation analysis results reveal that PJF plays a mediating role in the effects of the cognitive and relational dimensions of job crafting on IWB, whereas no significant mediation effect was detected for the task dimension. These findings suggest that promoting innovative behavior in hotel establishments may depend not only on employees' task-related activities but also on how they interpret their work and manage their workplace relationships.

Keywords: Job Crafting, Innovative Work Behavior, Person-Job Fit
JEL Classifications: D23, O31, Z3

1. INTRODUCTION

Contemporary organizations operate under conditions shaped by uncertainty, rapid environmental shifts, and stronger competitive dynamics, all of which heighten the imperative for innovation. Innovation within organizations helps reinforce competitive strength and supports the attainment of a more sustainable market position. Consequently, organizations continuously seek to refine their processes and activities, with employee contributions constituting an essential part of these efforts. One important form of such contribution is employees' active engagement in innovative work behavior (IWB) (Ramamoorthy et al., 2005; Reuvers, 2008; Hornsby et al., 2002). Nevertheless, the effectiveness of innovation-oriented strategies is contingent upon aligning employee behaviors with such strategies. In this context, it is essential for organizations to consider both individual and organizational factors that foster innovation and to provide appropriate conditions accordingly (Bos-Nehles et al., 2017; Agarwal, 2014).

Huhtala and Parzefall (2007) argue that, when compared to routine tasks, non-routine tasks and jobs are more challenging and offer opportunities for learning and personal development, thereby fostering innovation. Employees who adhere strictly to routines and only perform tasks assigned, often struggle to adapt to changing job demands. These employees, who resist change, also display reluctance toward self-development and innovation,

ultimately limiting their ability to cope with challenges and achieve success. Consequently, organizations are increasingly in need of employees who are capable of generating innovative ideas and possess a high degree of adaptability (Gisella et al., 2025).

From a theoretical perspective, job crafting may be understood as a key behavioral mechanism through which IWB emerges and is sustained over time. By redefining task structures, shaping social interactions, and reframing their perception of their work, employees cultivate a more supportive and resource-rich work setting. These self-initiated modifications enhance their ability to test novel ideas, challenge established routines, and employ alternative problem-solving strategies. In this way, job translates individual creativity into observable innovative actions. Furthermore, by embedding continuous adjustments into daily work, job crafting not only facilitates the initial development of innovation but also its long term continuity. Hence, organizations actively support the emergence and sustainability of IWB (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Petrou et al., 2015).

In addition, another concept thought to influence IWB is person–job fit (PJF). It captures the alignment between employees' characteristics and job requirements, as well as the alignment between employees' resources and the opportunities provided by the job (Jiang et al., 2025). Higher perceived fit tends to support idea generation and encourages employees to adapt how they perform their work (Huang et al., 2019; Afsar, 2015; Ulu and Demirel, 2023).

The tourism sector stands out as one of the fields in which global competition has intensified, and accordingly, IWB carries strategic importance for the sector (Kaur and Rahmadani, 2023). Demonstrating creative and innovative behaviors is considered vital for tourism enterprises to achieve sustainable competitive advantage, enhance customer satisfaction, and improve service quality. Within the tourism sector, employees' innovative behaviors related to products, processes, methods, and ways of working are also critical for customer loyalty and sustainability (Hon, 2011; Noerchoidah and Harjanti, 2019). Hotels, in particular, require creative approaches to increase visitor numbers. Innovations attract visitors' attention and can contribute to extending the duration of stay (Kaur and Rahmadani, 2023).

2. THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Grounded in the Job Demands–Resources (JD–R) model and Holland's PJF perspective, this study examines the relationships among job crafting, PJF, and IWB. Within the JD–R framework, job crafting is conceptualized as employees' intentional modifications to job demands and resources in order to shape their work in ways that better reflect their motivations, capabilities, and interests (Tims et al., 2012). Rather than merely adhering to predefined role expectations, employees undertake job crafting as a proactive and self-directed activity, modifying aspects of their work to achieve a better fit with their psychological needs. Consistent with this perspective, the present study adopts a JD–R-based understanding of job crafting. This approach provides a solid theoretical basis for explaining how employees attempt to create a better allignment between job demands and their personal characteristics, competencies, and motives, a process conceptually aligned with PJF (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti, 2014; Ingusci et al., 2016).

From the JD–R standpoint, job characteristics are typically classified as job demands and resources (Tims et al., 2016). Job demands refer to aspects of work that require sustained physical or psychological effort and may therefore entail cognitive, emotional, or physical strain. In contrast, job resources denote supportive elements of the work environment, such as, organizational and social support that facilitate task accomplishment, buffer the impact of demands, and promote learning and development (Demerouti et al., 2001; Tims and Bakker, 2010). The JD–R model further suggests that richer job resources can stimulate job crafting by providing employees with the support and autonomy necessary to proactively redesign aspects of their work in line with their needs and capabilities. Through this mechanism, job crafting facilitates the reorganization of work processes and encourages the adoption of novel task execution methods, thereby promoting adaptive and change-oriented work behaviors (Mansour et al., 2023).

Another theoretical foundation of the study is Holland's (1959) theory of vocational choice, which underpins much of the research on PJF. The theory posits that individuals tend to gravitate toward occupations that align with their interests and dispositions, fostering a stable congruence between the individual and the work environment over time. Accordingly, Holland (1959) emphasizes that individuals tend to select careers that correspond to their interests and predispositions and conceptualizes this process as an "expression of personality" (Spokane et al., 2000).

Holland's (1997) perspective suggests that higher levels of PJF are associated with more positive job attitudes and more effective work behavior. In high-fit conditions, employees may feel more secure in their roles, which can support the generation and implementation of innovative ideas. Moreover, strong fit aligns employees' competencies with job requirements and can encourage IWB (Huang et al., 2019). Therefore, PJF is expected to function as an important mechanism underlying the relationship between job crafting and IWB (Wang et al., 2025).

2.1. Person–Job Fit

PJF reflects the compatibility between employees' qualifications, including their knowledge, skills, and experience, and the requirements of the job they perform. This compatibility has been associated with beneficial outcomes for both employees and organizations (Huang et al., 2019). More broadly, PJF captures the degree of alignment between personal characteristics and the specific tasks and demands of their roles (Tang et al., 2021). PJF occurs when the opportunities and resources provided by the job meet employees' needs and preferences, or when employees' abilities and skills are well suited to fulfilling job demands (Sekiguchi, 2004). Moreover, as employees develop and update their job-related knowledge and skills in response to environmental changes, the resulting increase in their personal resources can further enhance PJF (Li et al., 2023).

The literature generally conceptualizes PJF as comprising two complementary dimensions: needs-supplies fit and demands-abilities fit (Edwards, 1991). Needs-supplies fit concerns whether a job provides outcomes such as rewards, benefits, and opportunities for development that correspond to employees' expectations or desires from their work (Cable and DeRue, 2002). Demands-abilities fit, on the other hand, refers to the extent to which job requirements align with employees' competencies and capacities. More specifically, it reflects whether individuals possess the knowledge, energy, time, and skills necessary to respond to the quantitative and qualitative demands of their positions. When these two forms of fit function together, the congruence between employee attributes and job requirements becomes stronger, ultimately leading to higher levels of PJF (Edwards, 1991, 1996; Sekiguchi, 2004).

2.2. Job Crafting

Job crafting is widely defined as employees' self-initiated actions aimed at reshaping aspects of their jobs so that work becomes more aligned with their personal attributes and expectations (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). In contrast to traditional job design, which typically focuses on changes implemented by managers, job crafting highlights the proactive involvement of employees in modifying their own work experience. In this regard, it represents a bottom-up and individualized process driven by employee initiative rather than formal organizational directives (Grant and Parker, 2009; Parker, 2014; Tims et al., 2016).

From another viewpoint, job crafting involves deliberate efforts to modify job demands and job resources in ways that enhance the alignment between the job and the individual (Demerouti, 2014). Through such initiatives, employees may enlarge, reduce, or restructure elements of their task domain, cultivate more supportive workplace relationships, or reinterpret the meaning they attribute to their work. Rather than remaining passive recipients of predetermined work structures, employees actively regulate their jobs in line with their needs and capabilities (Grant and Ashford, 2008; Tims and Bakker, 2010; Hornung et al., 2010; Tims et al., 2012).

Job crafting is typically conceptualized as a multidimensional construct comprising task, relational, and cognitive dimensions. Among these dimensions, task crafting refers to employees' proactive attempts to modify their job tasks by altering the scope, nature, or boundaries of the activities they perform. This may include incorporating new elements into the job, eliminating certain tasks, or modifying existing ones. Relational crafting reflects employees' efforts to reshape their social interactions at work, including the type and intensity of the relationships they establish while performing their roles. Cognitive crafting, in contrast, occurs when employees mentally reinterpret their work, thereby changing the perceived meaning and understanding of the job. Through cognitive job crafting, the significance attributed to work and the way work-related relationships are perceived are transformed, leading to a redefinition of cognitive boundaries (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Zhang and Parker, 2019; Berg et al., 2013).

2.3. Innovative Work Behavior

The scientific foundations of the concept of innovation were first articulated by the economist and political theorist Schumpeter. He conceptualized innovation as the introduction of a new product or the improvement and subsequent market introduction of an existing product (Schumpeter, 1934). IWB is typically defined as a behavioral process through which employees generate, advocate for, and apply new ideas within their job roles, work groups or organizations (Janssen, 2000). In a similar manner, De Jong and Den Hartog (2007) describe it as a set of behaviors aimed at developing and applying useful ideas that can enhance both individual and organizational outcomes.

Innovation within organizations may manifest in different forms. Organizational change often depends on the generation of new ideas, the development of creative processes, and the implementation of innovative practices. In this context, activities such as creating new services or products, introducing new technologies, redesigning workflows, simplifying work processes, and strengthening collaboration within and across organizational boundaries can all be regarded as reflections of innovative practice (Siregar et al., 2019). Within this framework, employee-generated ideas may contribute to higher productivity and improved organizational performance. Previous research also indicates that when employees perceive autonomy in their work environment, they are more likely to take initiative over work processes, which in turn may enhance innovativeness. For this reason, the ways in which organizations encourage employee innovation and cultivate a climate supportive of such behavior are critically important (Tang et al., 2021; Shanker et al., 2017; Kleysen and Street, 2001). The literature identifies several antecedents of IWB, including perceived organizational support, organizational climate, and supervisory support (Baig et al., 2022). IWB generally extends beyond employees' formal role requirements and is not typically specified in employment contracts. Accordingly, it is often described in the literature as an extra-role behavior. Employees who engage in such initiatives contribute to organizational effectiveness and performance; therefore, IWB is generally viewed as a desirable and constructive form of work behavior (Ramamoorthy et al., 2005).

2.4. Job Crafting and Innovative Work Behavior

Job crafting is widely regarded as a proactive and creative process through which employees restructure and redefine various aspects of their work, improve workplace relationships, refine work processes, and increase efficiency. From this standpoint, job crafting can be viewed as a concept that inherently encourages innovative behavior (Adikara and Soetjipto, 2021). Employees who actively modify their jobs through job crafting are more likely to exhibit innovative behavior and achieve higher levels of performance, as the experiences acquired through this process may enforce their capacity for innovation (Yim and Park, 2025; Kaur and Rahmandani, 2023; Tims et al., 2013). In addition, employees who adjust their jobs through job crafting tend to demonstrate greater openness to change, personal development, and alternative approaches to work-related situations, which may facilitate the generation and implementation of new ideas (Petrou et al., 2012; Ok and

Lim, 2022). In this regard, Mattarelli and Tagliaventi (2015) demonstrated that job crafting enables employees to discover innovative ways of carrying out their tasks.

Tims et al. (2013) argued that job crafting contributes to the satisfaction of employees' autonomy needs by allowing them to proactively modify the scope, boundaries, and nature of their tasks. In addition, by fostering a more positive self-concept, job crafting may heighten employees' perceptions of the significance and value of their work, which can ultimately enhance self-efficacy. Through these psychological mechanisms, job crafting may provide motivational support for the emergence of IWB (De Gennaro, 2019; Afsar et al., 2019). Rafiq et al. (2023) also found that job crafting is associated with innovation performance both directly and indirectly. Based on these theoretical and empirical considirations, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H_1: There is a positive relationship between the task (H_{1a}), cognitive (H_{1b}), and relational (H_{1c}) dimensions of job crafting and IWB.

2.5. Job Crafting and Person–Job Fit

Employees who adjust their tasks, relationships, and job resources to their own needs and competencies through job crafting are more likely to experience a stronger sense of PJF (Walsh and Gordon, 2008; Alvesson, 2010; Lu et al., 2014). Chen et al. (2014) suggested that individual initiatives to reorganize the work environment and collaborate with colleagues to achieve shared goals can enhance perceptions of job meaningfulness and reinforce employees' sense of control over their work. This process, in turn, increases the likelihood that individuals' preferences, work styles, and abilities more closely correspond with job requirements.

PJF tends to be higher when job characteristics correspond with employees' needs and competencies. In other words, PJF improves as the alignment between employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities and job requirements becomes stronger (Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Tims et al., 2016). In this respect, Lu et al. (2014) argued that job crafting may operate as a mechanism that enables employees to adjust job characteristics in line with their personal needs and capabilities, thereby enhancing PJF. This argument is further supported by empirical evidence demonstrating that job crafting is positively and significantly associated with PJF (Chen et al., 2014; Tims et al., 2016; Kooij et al., 2017). Accordingly, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H_2: There is a positive relationship between the task (H_{2a}), cognitive (H_{2b}), and relational (H_{2c}) dimensions of job crafting and PJF.

2.6. Person–Job Fit and Innovative Work Behavior

PJF refers to the degree to which employees' individual characteristics are compatible with the demands and requirements of their jobs. In the fit literature, it is widely conceptualized as a micro-level form of person–environment fit (Edwards, 1991, 1996). Such alignment can have important implications for innovative behavior because it supports employees' positive psychological functioning at work, which provides a key foundation for innovation-related efforts (Jiang et al., 2025). When employees' skills are well aligned with their job roles, they are more likely to possess the knowledge and capabilities required to manage job demands effectively and to participate more actively in innovation-related activities (Huang et al., 2019). From this perspective, PJF is expected to be positively associated with innovative behavior, partly because it fosters motivation and positive work-related attitudes. Consistent with this reasoning, Anjum et al. (2016) reported that motivation is positively related to IWB, and employees with higher levels of PJF tend to exhibit greater innovative behavior (Afsar et al., 2015).

Tang et al. (2021) demonstrated that PJF increases employees' willingness to engage in innovation. Similarly, Permatasari et al. (2025) found that when employees' abilities correspond with job requirements, the likelihood of demonstrating IWB increases. Furthermore, Huang et al. (2019) suggest that PJF can promote innovative behavior by strengthening employee engagement. The following hypothesis is proposed:

H_3: There is a positive relationship between PJF and IWB.

2.7. The Mediating Role of Person–Job Fit

Prior studies have provided evidence of a relationship between job crafting and IWB (Ninkovic et al., 2025; Alwali, 2023; Mansour et al., 2023; Rafiq et al., 2023; Pradana and Suhardi, 2020). Building on this body of research, the present study extends the literature by examining PJF as a potential mechanism that may explain the relationship between job crafting and IWB.

It is proposed that PJF amplifies the impact of job crafting on innovative behavior by enhancing employees' competencies and intrinsic motivation toward their work. Employees who progressively achieve a strong alignment with their roles are more likely to translate their creative potential into tangible organizational outcomes. In this context, elevated levels of PJF facilitates a closer correspondence between employees' cognitive abilities and the specific demands of their positions, thereby increasing the probability of engaging in innovative behaviors (Wang et al., 2025; Huang et al., 2019; Afsar et al., 2015; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005). Moreover, participation in job crafting may enhance employees' perceptions of work meaningfulness, which can reinforce PJF and create conditions conducive to the generation and implementation of innovative ideas (Bakker et al., 2012). Based on the foregoing theoretical and empirical arguments, the following hypothesis is proposed.

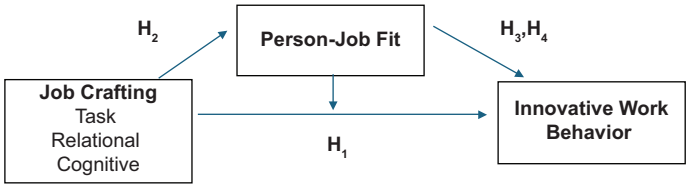
H_4: PJF mediates the relationships between the task (H_{4a}), cognitive (H_{4b}), and relational (H_{4c}) dimensions of job crafting and IWB.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1. Research Purpose and Model

Focusing on employees of five-star hotels in Muğla, this study examines the mediating role of PJF in the relationship between

Figure 1: Research model



job crafting and IWB. The proposed research model is presented in Figure 1.

3.2. Research Population and Sample

The study population comprised employees working in five-star hotels in Muğla, one of Türkiye's prominent tourism destinations. As no comprehensive and up-to-date database on employee numbers was available, the population size was estimated using the Accommodation Facility List published by the General Directorate of Investment and Operations of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism. According to these records, there were 68 five-star hotels in Muğla in the year 2026 (Republic of Türkiye Ministry of Culture and Tourism, 2026). The estimated number of employees was calculated using the coefficient "Number of Beds × 0.59" recommended by Ağaoğlu (1992), yielding N = 23,405. Given the infeasibility of reaching the entire population due to time and cost constraints (Büyüköztürk et al., 2008), convenience sampling was employed.

The required sample size was determined using Cochran's formula at a 95% confidence level, with a margin of error of ±5% and p set at 0.50. Following the finite population correction, the estimated minimum sample size was approximately 378 respondents. Accordingly, 400 questionnaires were distributed, and after excluding 47 incomplete or invalid forms, 353 valid responses were retained for analysis. The literature suggests that, for factor analysis, a sample size corresponding to at least 5 to 10 times the number of scale items is generally considered adequate (Nunnally, 1978; Meyers et al., 2006). Furthermore, sample sizes of 300 or more are typically regarded as sufficient under many research conditions (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013; Worthington and Whittaker, 2006). Participation in the study was voluntary, and informed consent was obtained from all participants. The research protocol was approved by the Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University Human Research Ethics Committee on February 11, 2026 (Protocol No. 260038).

3.3. Measures and Data Analysis

The data collection instrument consisted of 39 items organized into four distinct sections. The first section included four questions regarding participants' demographic characteristics, while the remaining sections were devoted to measuring PJF, job crafting, and IWB, respectively. PJF was measured using the nine-item unidimensional scale developed by Brkich et al. (2002), adapted into Turkish by Kerse (2018). IWB was assessed with the six-item unidimensional scale developed by Scott and Bruce (1994) and adapted into Turkish by Akkoç (2012). Job crafting was measured using the 19-item scale developed by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013) and adapted into Turkish by Kerse (2017), comprising three dimensions: task crafting (Items 1–7), cognitive crafting (Items 8–12), and relational crafting (Items 13–19).

The study employed a quantitative research design, and the data were analyzed using SPSS 22.0 and AMOS 24. Construct validity was examined through exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA). Internal consistency reliability was evaluated using Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability (CR), while convergent validity was assessed through average variance extracted (AVE). The hypothesized relationships were tested using structural equation modeling (SEM).

4. RESULTS

4.1. Sample Characteristics

The sample comprised 353 participants, of whom, 21% were female and 79% were male. The largest age group was 18-30 years. Regarding marital status, 47.9% were married and 52.1% were single. In terms of education, high school graduates represented the largest group.

4.2. Normality Analysis Results

For the scales employed in the study, PJF, IWB, and job crafting, skewness values ranged from −1.292 to −0.256, whereas kurtosis values ranged from −0.419 to 1.273. Considering the widely accepted ±1.5 thresholds for skewness and kurtosis in social sciences (Tabachnick and Fidell, 2013), all values were within acceptable limits. These findings indicate that the data met the normality assumption and were suitable for subsequent parametric analyses (Table 1).

4.3. Validity and Reliability Analyses

The validity and reliability of the measurement instruments were evaluated through EFA and Cronbach's alpha coefficients. Prior to conducting the EFA, the suitability of the dataset for factor analysis was examined using the KMO coefficient and Bartlett's test of sphericity. The results indicated acceptable factor loadings and sufficient explained variance, suggesting that the scales adequately captured the constructs under investigation

Table 1: Normality analysis results

Scales	Skewness	Kurtosis
PJF	−1.021	0.211
IWB	−1.292	1.273
Job crafting	−0.256	−0.419

Table 2: Factor analysis results for the PJF scale

Scale Items	Factor Loading
pjf1	0.752
pjf2	0.763
pjf3	0.761
pjf4	0.815
pjf5	0.771
pjf6	0.769
pjf7	0.773
pjf8	0.777
pjf9	0.787

KMO: 0.900, Eigenvalue: 5.398, Variance explained: 59.972, Cronbach's alpha: 0.915

Table 3: Factor analysis results for the IWB scale

Scale Items	Factor Loading
ib1	0.779
ib2	0.828
ib3	0.799
ib4	0.814
ib5	0.847
ib6	0.760

KMO: 0.858, Eigen value: 3.887, Total variance: 64.790, Cronbach's alpha: 0.888

(Kalender and Kılıç, 2018; Büyüköztürk et al., 2008). Detailed results for the scales employed in the present study are presented in Tables 2-4.

The preliminary diagnostic results supported the suitability of the data for factor analysis (KMO = 0.900; Bartlett's $\chi^2(36) = 1890.306$, $P < 0.001$). As reported in Table 2, the EFA results provided evidence for the construct validity of the PJF scale, as all items loaded satisfactorily onto a single-factor structure. The reliability findings further indicated strong internal consistency (Kaiser, 1974; Hair et al., 2010).

The preliminary diagnostic results supported the use of factor analysis for the IWB scale (KMO = 0.858; Bartlett's $\chi^2(15) = 1138.886$, $P < 0.001$; Table 3). As reported in Table 3, the EFA findings provided evidence for a valid single-factor structure, with all items loading satisfactorily on the factor. The reliability results further indicated strong internal consistency.

Preliminary diagnostics supported the use of factor analysis (KMO = 0.854; Bartlett's $\chi^2(171) = 3399.521$, $P < 0.001$; Table 4). The findings revealed a three-factor structure for the Job Crafting scale, with factor loadings ranging from 0.575 to 0.875 and 59% of the total variance explained. The eigenvalues were 5.143 for the first factor, 3.833 for the second, and 2.341 for the third, accounting for 27.070%, 20.174%, and 12.322% of the variance, respectively. The scale also demonstrated acceptable internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.766).

4.4. Confirmatory Factor Analyses

In the present study, CFA was employed to evaluate the construct validity of the scales. CFA is a statistical technique used to determine how well the latent factors specified in a theoretical model are represented by the observed data. Within this framework, the extent to which the proposed structure is supported by the data is examined, and the relevant indicators are expected to display strong factor loadings (Sümer, 2000). The results of the confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) for the scales are presented in this section.

Table 4: Factor analysis results for the job crafting scale

Scale items	Factor loadings	Eigen value (%)	Cronbach's alpha
Factor 1: Task crafting		**27.070**	**0.919**
tc1	0.714		
tc2	0.830		
tc3	0.816		
tc4	0.875		
tc5	0.871		
tc6	0.835		
tc7	0.797		
Factor 2: Relational crafting		**20.174**	**0.761**
rc13	0.671		
rc14	0.802		
rc15	0.740		
rc16	0.809		
rc17	0.715		
rc18	0.769		
rc19	0.626		
Factor 3: Cognitive crafting		**12.322**	**0.860**
cc8	0.636		
cc9	0.752		
cc10	0.771		
cc11	0.808		
cc12	0.575		

KMO: 0.854, Total variance: 59.567, Cronbach's alpha: 0.766

4.4.1. Confirmatory factor analysis results for the person–job fit scale

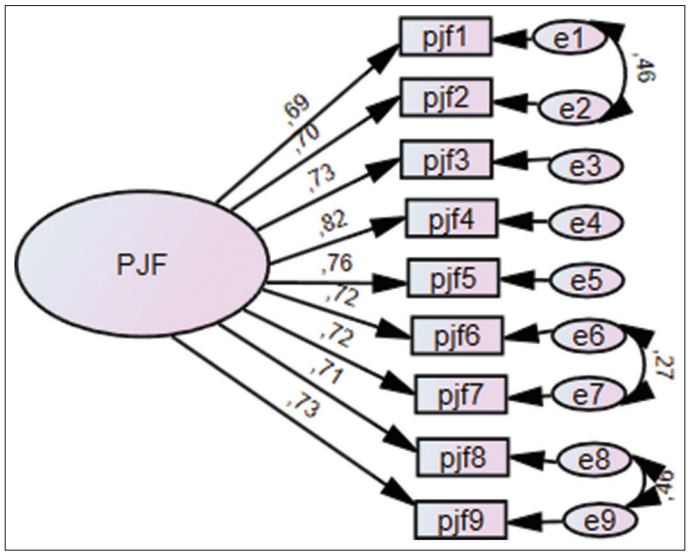
The construct validity of the person-job fit scale was evaluated using CFA. Due to some items exhibiting similar content, covariance paths were specified between the error terms of e1 and e2, e6 and e7, and e8 and e9. Following these modifications, the model yielded acceptable fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 3.43$, CFI = 0.969, TLI = 0.953, RMSEA = 0.083, 90% CI [0.064, 0.103], GFI = 0.955, AGFI = 0.917). Overall, these results indicate that the proposed single-factor model was reasonably supported by the observed data.

Convergent validity was confirmed by the AVE value of 0.534, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). In addition, the CR value of 0.911, indicating strong internal consistency for the scale (Hair et al., 2010). The CFA results are illustrated in Figure 2.

4.4.2. Confirmatory factor analysis results for the innovative work behavior scale

The construct validity of the scale was examined through CFA. As several items exhibited similarities in wording, covariance paths were specified between the error terms of e1 and e4, and e5 and e6. After these adjustments, the model yielded acceptable fit indices ($\chi^2/df = 3.29$, CFI = 0.986, TLI = 0.970, RMSEA = 0.081, 90% CI [0.046, 0.118], GFI = 0.979, AGFI = 0.936, RMR = 0.009). Although the RMSEA value was close to the recommended cut-off, the overall pattern of fit statistics suggested an acceptable level of model fit (Browne and Cudeck, 1993). Convergent validity was confirmed by the AVE value of 0.58, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). In addition, the CR value of 0.89, demonstrating strong internal consistency for the scale (Hair et al., 2010). Figure 3 illustrates the CFA results.

Figure 2: Confirmatory factor analysis of the PJF scale



4.4.3. Confirmatory factor analysis results for the job crafting scale

Initial CFA results indicated that rc13 did not perform satisfactorily, as it exhibited cross-loading on the cognitive dimension and conceptual overlap with cc12. Moreover, cc8, cc12, and rc19 displayed low standardized loadings. To improve the measurement model, these items were removed. To account for wording-related shared variance among items within the same factor, covariance paths were specified between the error terms of e1 and e2 and between e6 and e7. These adjustments improved model fit. The three-dimensional measurement model yielded acceptable fit indices (χ^2/df = 2.99, CFI = 0.939, TLI = 0.924, RMSEA = 0.075, 90% CI [0.065, 0.086], GFI = 0.913, AGFI = 0.876, RMR = 0.014).

Construct reliability and convergent validity were then evaluated for each dimension. The task dimension produced CR = 0.914 and AVE = 0.605, the cognitive dimension produced CR = 0.757 and AVE = 0.511, and the relational dimension produced CR = 0.842 and AVE = 0.510. Since all CR values exceeded 0.70 and all AVE values surpassed 0.50, the three sub-dimensions demonstrated acceptable measurement quality (Hair et al., 2010). Overall, the CFA findings supported the construct validity of the three-factor structure of the Job Crafting scale. The CFA results are illustrated in Figure 4.

4.5. Testing of Research Hypotheses

In this study, PJF was proposed as a mediating mechanism in the relationship between the task, cognitive, and relational dimensions of job crafting and IWB. In testing the research hypotheses, the direct effects were first examined through an initial structural model in which the mediator variable was not included. In the second stage, the mediation model was tested to assess the mediating role of PJF, and the significance of the indirect effects was evaluated based on a bootstrap analysis with 5,000 resamples and 95% confidence intervals.

The fit indices for this initial model indicated acceptable fit for a multidimensional model (χ^2/df = 2.49; CFI = 0.934; TLI = 0.922; RMSEA = 0.065, 90% CI [0.057, 0.073]; GFI = 0.893; AGFI = 0.862; RMR = 0.015). Based on these values, no scale items were removed from the analysis, and no error terms were combined.

The initial SEM results showed that all three dimensions of job crafting had positive and significant effects on IWB. Among these dimensions, relational crafting had the strongest effect (β = 0.337, P < 0.001), followed by task crafting (β = 0.181, P = 0.001) and cognitive crafting (β = 0.154, P = 0.012). The model explained 17.8% of the variance in IWB (R^2 = 0.178). The findings indicate that the subdimensions of job crafting are positively associated with IWB, albeit at a limited level. These findings support H_{1a}, H_{1b}, and H_{1c} (Figure 5).

To test the remaining hypotheses, an alternative model was constructed in which PJF served as a mediator variable (Figure 6). The results indicated that relational crafting (β = 0.266, P < 0.001) and cognitive crafting (β = 0.133, P = 0.039) had significant and

Figure 3: Confirmatory factor analysis of the IWB Scale

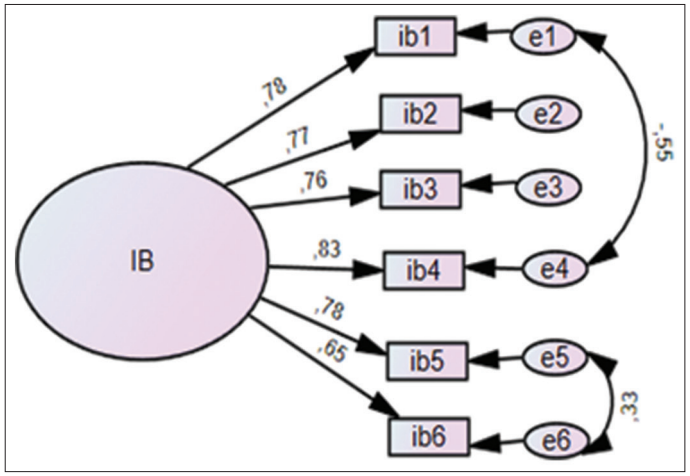
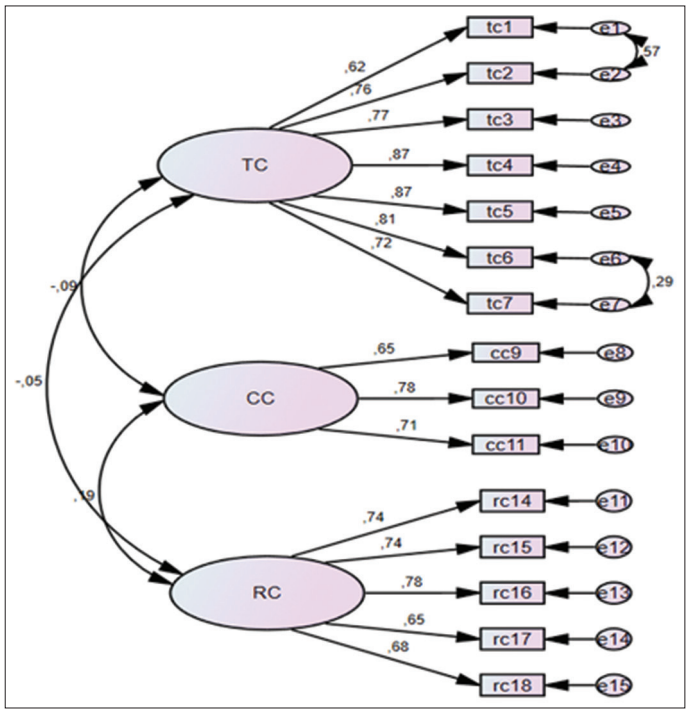


Figure 4: Confirmatory factor analysis of the job crafting scale



positive effects on PJF, whereas task crafting (β = 0.090, P = 0.113) did not significantly influence PJF. The model accounted for 10.5% of the variance in PJF. Accordingly, hypothesis H_{2a} was not supported, while hypotheses H_{2b} and H_{2c} were confirmed.

In addition, PJF exerted a significant positive effect on IWB (β = 0.759, P < 0.001), and the model explained 69.2% of the variance in IWB, supporting hypothesis H_3.

With the inclusion of PJF in the model, the direct path coefficients from the task, cognitive, and relational dimensions of job crafting to IWB were also examined. Accordingly, the direct effect of relational crafting on IWB decreased (β = 0.134, P = 0.002) but remained significant. In contrast, the direct effect of cognitive crafting on IWB became non-significant (β = 0.054, P = 0.207). On

Figure 5: Initial direct-effects model

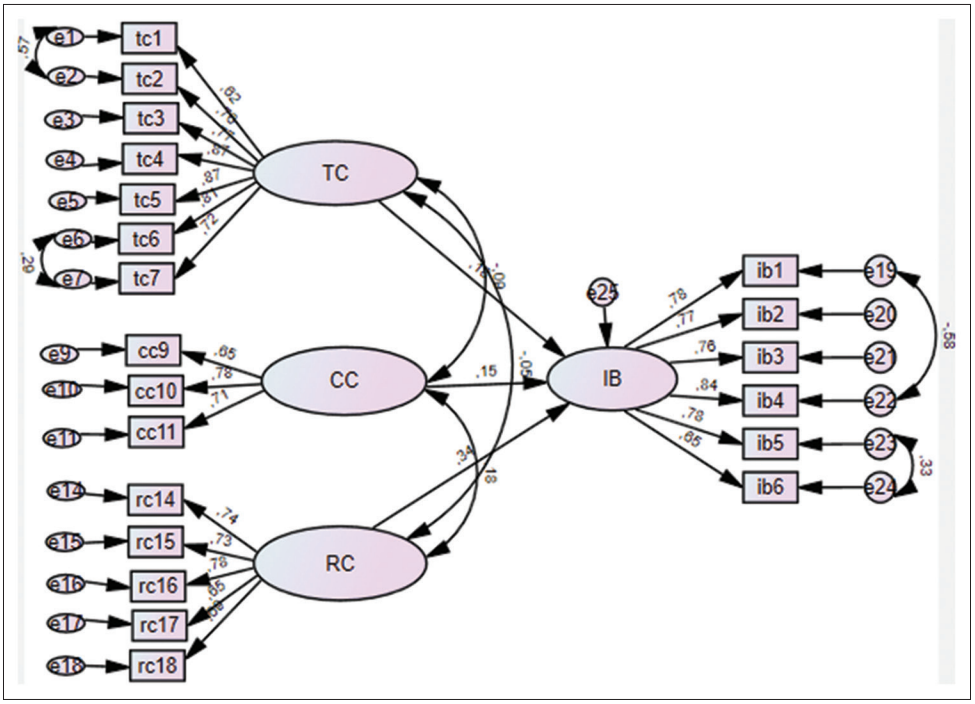
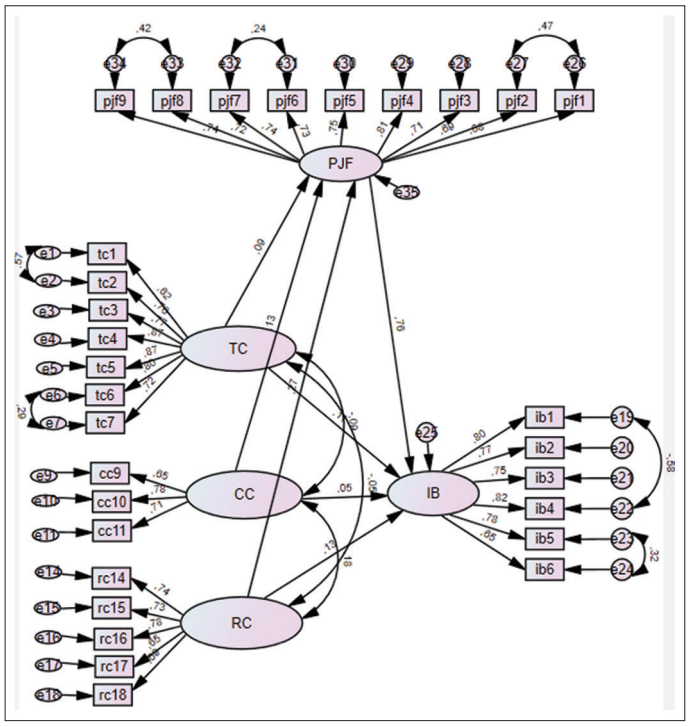


Figure 6: Proposed mediation model



the other hand, the direct effect of task crafting on IWB remained significant (β = 0.111, P = 0.004). However, the evaluation of the mediation relationship was based primarily on the bootstrap findings regarding the indirect effects.

The proposed mediation model showed an overall acceptable level of fit (χ^2 (388) = 953.76, χ^2/df = 2.46, CFI = 0.912, TLI = 0.901, RMSEA = 0.064, GFI = 0.852). To evaluate the mediation effect, a bootstrap-based path analysis was conducted using 5,000 resamples.The bootstrap findings indicated that the confidence intervals for the indirect effects of relational and cognitive crafting did not contain zero, whereas the interval for task crafting crossed zero. Specifically, relational crafting had a significant indirect effect on IWB through PJF (β = 0.202, 95% CI [0.114, 0.290], P < 0.001), and cognitive crafting also showed a significant indirect effect via PJF (β = 0.101, 95% CI [0.012, 0.192], P = 0.028). By contrast, the indirect effect of task crafting on IWB through PJF was not significant (β = 0.069, 95% CI [−0.017, 0.152], P = 0.123). These findings support H_{4b} and H_{4c}, whereas H_{4a} was not supported.

5. CONCLUSION

This study, framed within the JDR model and Holland's PJF theory, provides a theoretical lens for understanding employees' innovative behaviors. The findings offer a multidimensional perspective on how organizational structures, work environments, and motivational processes shape employees' innovative behaviors. By examining the interrelationships among job crafting, IWB, and PJF, the study contributes to the organizational behavior literature. The empirical findings demonstrate that job crafting is positively associated with IWB and that PJF mediates this relationship differently across the dimensions of job crafting.

The first findings of the study indicate that all dimensions of job crafting are positively related to IWB, aligning with prior studies in the literature. Job crafting fosters a conducive environment for innovation by enabling employees to restructure task responsibilities, shape job perceptions, and reorganize work-related relationships, thereby creating a supportive climate for creativity (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Through these proactive modifications, employees experience increased autonomy and

enhanced task engagement, which positively influence IWB. Employees who perceive their work as meaningful are more likely to generate novel ideas and implement them within work processes (Bakker and Oerlemans, 2019; Mehboob and Haque, 2024; Hammond et al., 2011; Afsar et al., 2019).

Similarly, Song and Jo (2023) emphasized that employees' proactive efforts to reshape their work, facilitated by job crafting, strengthen their motivation and foster innovative behaviors. Job crafting enables employees to circumvent inefficient processes, implement necessary improvements, and drive task-related enhancements. Consequently, job crafting emerges as a crucial mechanism supporting innovation at both individual and organizational levels, and sustain development (Mansour et al., 2023). Similarly, Soliman et al. (2024) and Gisella et al. (2025) found that job crafting significantly affects IWB. Mansour et al. (2023) specifically reported that all dimensions of job crafting have a significant and positive effect on IWB, consistent with the present study. Additionally, studies by Çakıroğlu and Altınöz (2021), Katırcıoğlu (2022), Teng and Cheng (2025), Kaur and Rahmadani (2023), Adikara and Soetjipto (2021), Özteber (2021), and Guo et al. (2022) provide further support for the positive relationship between job crafting and IWB.

Another important finding of this study is that the cognitive and relational dimensions of job crafting positively related to PJF, which is particularly relevant in the context of the tourism sector (Shani et al., 2014). Relational crafting refers to behaviors aimed at modifying the quantity and quality of workplace interactions, whereas cognitive crafting involves employees' efforts to reorganize their perceptions of their job roles (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). By enhancing knowledge, reframing perceptions, and strengthening work relationships, employees increase the meaningfulness of their tasks, thereby reinforcing PJF (Chen et al., 2014; Lu et al., 2014). These findings are consistent with prior studies; for example, Tims et al. (2016) and Kooij et al. (2017) reported that job crafting positively influences PJF.

On the other hand, the study found that the task dimension of job crafting does not have a significant relationship with PJF. Task crafting refers to employees' ability to modify the number, type, and scope of tasks they are required to perform. In the tourism sector, where the work environment is predominantly customer-focused, the quality of customer–employee interactions becomes particularly important. Consequently, employees' perception of fit is likely shaped more by cognitive or relational crafting rather than task crafting (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Shani et al., 2014). Consistent with the findings of the present study, Graff (2021) reported no significant relationship between task crafting and PJF.

Similarly, Verelst et al. (2021) found that task crafting did not significantly relate to demand–ability fit.

The study further confirmed a positive relationship between PJF and IWB. According to Amabile (1988), employees performing tasks aligned with their knowledge, skills, and expertise exhibit a greater capacity to generate novel work-related ideas. Employees whose job demands closely match their capabilities are more likely to engage effectively in the innovation process (Zhao and Han, 2016). Alqhaiwi et al. (2023) similarly demonstrated that PJF significantly enhances employees' innovative behaviors by fostering intrinsic motivation. High levels of PJF create alignment between individual needs and work environment, minimizing resource depletion and establishing psychological conditions conducive to innovation. Such an environment particularly supports behaviors requiring sustained attention, effort, and strong intrinsic motivation. Consequently, PJF is considered a key mechanism enhancing organizational innovation capacity (Jiang et al., 2025). Moreover, job–employee alignment strengthens the meaningfulness and satisfaction of work for employees, thereby encouraging them to generate new ideas and implement them within work processes (Suwanti and Udin, 2018). Consistent with these findings, Huang et al. (2019), Afsar (2015), Ulu and Demirel (2023), Amırlı (2024), and Singh et al. (2024) all reported that PJF positively influences IWB.

The final finding of the study concerns the mediation effects. The mediating role of PJF in the relationship between job crafting and IWB can be interpreted in light of Holland's (1997) PJF theory. Holland argued that a higher level of PJF increases the likelihood that employees develop positive job attitudes and engage in effective work behaviors. Consistent with this theoretical perspective, analyses revealed that PJF partially mediates the relationship between the relational dimension of job crafting and IWB. Relational crafting refers to employees' efforts to establish effective work relationships and share knowledge with others (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Social interactions between individuals and their work environment play a critical role in fostering innovative behaviors, which are difficult to develop without idea exchange and feedback (Scott and Bruce, 1994).

As the quality of interpersonal relationships improves, person–job fit becomes stronger, work engagement increases, and job attitudes become more positive. Through relational crafting, employees are able to derive greater meaning from their work (Berg et al., 2013). By reshaping work relationships, relational crafting enhances employees' control over their work, strengthens PJF, and facilitates knowledge sharing and creative behavior within the organization (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001).

Additionally, the study found that PJF fully mediates the relationship between the cognitive dimension of job crafting and IWB. Cognitive crafting enables employees to mentally reframe their tasks and attribute greater meaning to their work, thereby enhancing perceptions of PJF. This strengthened fit, subsequently increases intrinsic motivation and supports innovative behavior (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Afsar et al., 2016; Huang et al., 2019; Teng and Chen, 2025). Hu et al. (2020) also emphasized that the cognitive crafting dimension makes a significant contribution to explaining IWB. In line with these findings, Wang et al. (2025) reported that PJF positively moderates the relationship between cognitive crafting and innovative employee performance.

The findings further indicate that PJF does not mediate the relationship between the task dimension of job crafting and IWB. Compared to other dimensions, the task dimension primarily focuses

on routine aspects of how work is performed and may therefore limit processes associated with idea generation. Consequently, it is suggested that the task dimension may not stimulate IWB to the same extent as other dimensions (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Parker et al., 2010). Moreover, although job crafting reflects proactive behavior, employees' tasks are often shaped within the framework of organizationally prescribed duties, demands, and hierarchical structures. These constraints may limit employees' perceived autonomy to reorganize their work, thereby reducing the effectiveness of task crafting (Berg et al., 2010). In this regard, Zhang and Parker (2019) suggested that task crafting tends to support operational improvements rather than innovation. Bakker et al. (2012) also noted that its impact on innovative behavior is relatively limited.

6. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study examines the relationship between job crafting and IWB and highlights the mediating role of PJF. The research was conducted in the tourism sector, specifically in five-star hotels in Muğla province. For future studies, it is recommended that research be conducted with different samples and across various industries, using longitudinal and mixed-method research designs to further clarify the relationships among the variables. Additionally, redesigning the study to include other potential mediators—such as self-efficacy, supportive organizational climate, organizational commitment, and organizational identification—may provide further insights into the mechanisms underlying these relationships.

7. AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Conceptualization, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; methodology, İ.K.K; validation, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; formal analysis, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G.; investigation, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; resources, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; data curation, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; writing—original draft preparation, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; writing—review and editing, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G; supervision, İ.K.K., E.B.B.G. All authors have read and ag-reed to the published version of the manuscript.

8. INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD STATEMENT

The study was conducted in accordance with the Declara-tion of Helsinki and approved by the Ethics Committee of Muğla Sıtkı Koçman University (protocol no. 260038, February 11, 2026).

9. INFORMED CONSENT STATEMENT

Informed consent was obtained from all participants included in this study.

10. DATA AVAILABILITY STATEMENT

The data presented in this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request.

11. CONFLICTS OF INTEREST

The authors declare no conflicts of interest.

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