

ABSTRACT

Job crafting and idiosyncratic deals represent employees' proactive efforts to make changes to their jobs to meet their needs and goals. In the context of a fast-paced hyper-competitive globalized economy, it has become crucial for employees to take the onus of meeting their needs and goals. Research on job crafting and idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) negotiation has been burgeoning ever since their inception. Crafting and i-deals have several benefits for both employees and employers, and therefore merit attention from academicians and practitioners.

This thesis acknowledges the importance of job crafting and i-deals and makes an attempt at understanding the relationship between the two. It begins by describing the present state of literature on both the constructs and the differences between them. It then summarizes the several similarities between them, which encouraged us to study the two constructs together.

The research conducted in this thesis catered to three research objectives: (a) understanding how employees obtain their desired idiosyncratic deals at their workplace, (b) investigating the relationship between job crafting and i-deals, and (c) examining how employees implement and manage their obtained i-deals at the workplace. Three studies were undertaken to cater to each of these objectives. Overall, a mixed methods approach was followed. Two studies adopted a qualitative approach (semi-structured interviews were used for data collection) and one adopted a quantitative approach (a time-lagged survey was used for data collection).

The synthesis of existing literature on job crafting and i-deals shows that both the constructs have received considerable attention from researchers. The constructs have been well-established with clear conceptualizations and operationalizations. A vast amount of empirical work investigating the antecedents, intermediates and outcomes exists. The review shows that

there is scarcity of qualitative research on i-deals negotiation; and that the two constructs have majorly been studied in siloes so far.

Findings from the studies reveal a four-stage process used by employees to obtain their desired i-deals (germination and intensification, evaluation and enhancement, discussion / negotiation, and post-negotiation), an inter-linkage between job crafting and i-deals negotiation, and that i-deal receipt is not the end of the i-deal obtainment pursuit by the employees. I-dealers face several challenges and use various strategies to successfully implement and manage their i-deal. These findings together show that obtaining job customizations is not a simplistic pursuit. It is rather a complex process, which requires substantial efforts from employees to both obtain and implement the customizations.

An understanding of the i-deal obtainment process in detail is especially important for future i-dealers, as they can understand the factors affecting their chances of receiving the i-deal and can evaluate those for themselves and work on the same. The process understanding is also useful for i-deal grantors, particularly in understanding how the outcome of the i-deal negotiation shapes employees' future behavior in the organization. Insights into i-deal implementation and management by i-dealers makes employers aware of the challenges faced by employees and support required by them to implement their deal. Inter-linkages between job crafting and i-deal seeking behavior open several avenues for future research, which are described in detail in the thesis.

Keywords: idiosyncratic deals, i-deals, job crafting, i-deals obtainment process, i-deals post-receipt phase