



“Career competencies and employee performance: Mediating roles of job crafting and employee engagement in Islamic banking in North Sumatra, Indonesia”

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CAREER COMPETENCIES AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: MEDIATING ROLES OF JOB CRAFTING AND EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT IN ISLAMIC BANKING IN NORTH SUMATRA, INDONESIA

Abstract

This study focuses on highlighting the performance of employees in Sharia banking. The research gap in this study is the impact of job crafting on employee performance. Thus, this study aims to investigate the role of career competencies and job crafting against employee performance mediated by employee engagement of Sharia banking employees in North Sumatra, Indonesia. The paper used the stratified random sampling technique with disproportionate random samples. The sample involved 386 Sharia bank employees in North Sumatra, Indonesia. The data were analyzed using the SEM PLS approach. The hypotheses results suggest that job crafting and employee engagement have a significant impact on employee performance, job crafting has a significant effect on employees' engagement, career competencies have a major impact on job crafting (< 0.05), career competencies do not have an impact on employee engagement and employee performance (> 0.05). Indirectly, career competencies influence employee engagement and employee performance through job crafting. Career competencies influence employee performance through job crafting and employee performance. Job crafting has a significant impact on employee performance at employee engagement < 0.05 , and career competencies do not have a significant effect on employee performance through employee engagement. The implications are that job crafting has a role inherent in the individual level of an employee and as a strategy to emphasize employee engagement and employee performance in the Sharia banking sphere in North Sumatra, Indonesia.

Keywords organizational behavior, human resources, performance

JEL Classification D23, O15, L21, M51

INTRODUCTION

Today, in an era of global competition, the Sharia banking industry must continue to improve the performance and productivity of its employees. Currently, the capacity of employees in the Sharia banking sphere can be more optimized in completing the job. The question is how to create human resources that can produce optimal solutions to the company's goals. Dubbelt et al. (2019) state that to improve the performance of employees, companies should pay attention to workplace behavior as a serious issue in the field of human resource management. The decline in employee performance becomes a major problem in the personal life of employees and a company. It can lead to the following impacts: low productivity, poor quality of work, low levels of presence, conflict, and tension in the team, and a negative impact on the work culture. If that happens, it can lead to a decrease in customer satisfaction and a poor company reputation.

A company must enhance the employee's self-potency through the behavior that each employee should have. In particular, it includes understanding banking products and services, job crafting such as allocating employee time more efficiently, looking for additional interesting projects, or working with teams. Further employee engagement includes a sense of responsibility toward customers and primary tasks.

To address problems in the cruel business world, management has prioritized employee performance and initiated several actions to ensure that employees remain in a company. However, this fundamental problem has not been noticed by the top management. They may not fully understand how decreased employee performance can negatively affect a company's performance.

Therefore, it is interesting to research employee behavior that affects employee performance to help companies understand their problems, provide potential solutions, and know the various reasons and components that affect employee performance in a Sharia banking sphere.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee performance has been discussed and evaluated as one of the most critical variables in business research (Kaakeh et al., 2020; Jarrah et al., 2020; Al-Shehab et al., 2021; Alkhalailah & Mjlae, 2023). Employee performance is the main predictor of company performance (Donkor et al., 2021; Tisu et al., 2022; Davidescu et al., 2020). Employee responsibilities are essential because they reveal the ability to complete them. Therefore, a company needs to establish clear and measurable criteria as a reference for performance (Al-Fakeh et al., 2020; Jufrizen et al., 2021). In addition, performance can be interpreted as work results that can be measured in quantity and quality according to specific criteria that employees have achieved in working at a company (Arslan & Roudaki, 2019; Roberts & David, 2020). The performance framework proposed integrating two performance paths, namely internal and external performance (skill and proactive behavior) (Griffin et al., 2007; Carpini et al., 2017; Nasution & Priangkatara, 2022).

One of the behaviors that employees must have is job crafting. According to Guan and Frenkel (2018), Zhang and Liu (2021), Nguyen et al. (2019), and Moon et al. (2020), job crafting can affect employee performance because employees will carry out a behavior change process to adapt to job characteristics (Dan et al., 2020; Khan et al., 2022; Li et al., 2022). Its effectiveness can improve work and help individuals maintain employee engagement (vigor, absorption, and dedication) (Liu et al., 2021). Job crafting done by employees can positively impact both employee performance and

company performance (Johari & Subramaniam, 2020). Work crafting refers to an employee's capacity or skill to redesign a work independently, with or without management's input, to make it more pleasant and straightforward to perform. This happens due to balancing the job's requirements and resources and each employee's skills or needs (Tims et al., 2015). Employee performance is affected by job crafting (Guan & Frenkel, 2018; Shin et al., 2020). Guan and Frenkel (2018) also discovered that job crafting affects task performance, but this study does not demonstrate the overall effect of employee performance indicators.

Römogens et al. (2020), Sultana and Malik (2019), and Talluri and Uppal (2023) recommend that every employee should invest in career competencies in order to increase individual capacity to adapt to different work environments. Career competencies differ from career development, where they can be interpreted as relevant competencies for all employees to develop their own careers, regardless of the specifics of their jobs (Kuijpers & Scheerens, 2006). People who work in the service areas normally copy to independent professional paths (McCabe, 2008). Previous empirical studies have linked career competencies with career success (career resilience), with employees' career competencies considered capable of overcoming difficulties at work compared to incompetent employees (Ahmad et al., 2019). Empirically, studies related to career competencies have not been widely discussed by scientists, and this is of value for adding to scientific contributions, especially those discussing career development and performance.

Park (2020) sought to identify career competencies for performance improvement. Park et al. (2020) confirmed that career competencies influence employee performance. However, mixed findings by Sultana and Malik (2019) needed to fully explain the correlation between career competencies and individual performance. Therefore, as these results are insufficient for generalization, further research is needed to contribute to understanding professional abilities related to individual success.

Plomp et al. (2016) highlighted the importance of career competencies in enhancing human resources, such as raising job satisfaction. However, this study has some limitations because it did not examine the connection between career competencies and job crafting. It was determined that it is necessary to test the relationship between career competencies and job crafting. The findings of Akkermans and Tims (2017) show that career competencies can be considered personal resources, which can improve job crafting.

Furthermore, it is crucial to identify the importance of career competencies on job performance and the importance of career competencies on job crafting and employee engagement, as well as the importance of job crafting and employee engagement as mediating variables. Work behavior that greatly influences employee performance is employee engagement. Work engagement is a behavioral factor that can improve performance (Kim et al., 2019; Sendawula et al., 2018). Highly engaged workers are unlikely to easily separate from their work because they invest their time and energy and can increase emotional bonds with the organization, leaders, and colleagues (Teo et al., 2020).

Employee engagement demonstrates a consistent and positive mental state in individual work behavior (Nguyen et al., 2019; Kumar et al., 2022; Robledo & Zappal, 2019). Individuals showing a positive mental state at work will have feelings identified by three dimensions: energy, loyalty, and immersion (Tian et al., 2021; Valldeneu et al., 2021; Prayogi & Fahmi, 2021). Enthusiasm is related to the energy needed by employees to complete tasks and responsibilities; dedication is related to employee enthusiasm for work and responsibilities; and absorption describes employees being absorbed in the work itself (Judeh, 2021; Drūteikienė

et al., 2023). Park et al. (2020), Zhang and Li (2020), and Tian et al. (2021) confirm that job crafting and employee engagement have a positive correlation because employees who have a work crafting tendency will show a high employee commitment.

There are calls for further studies (Plomp et al., 2016; Akkermans & Tims, 2017; Guan & Frenkel, 2018; Zhang & Liu, 2021) to expand the concept of job crafting, but job crafting as an employee performance booster still needs to be explored as a new research area. This research gap must be investigated as a whole. The overall performance indicators are investigated in this study. However, because it is believed to be less helpful in enhancing employee performance, this study did not include reducing burdensome job expectations.

2. AIM AND HYPOTHESES

The purpose of this study is to gain a deeper understanding of the effects of job career competencies and job crafting on employee engagement and employee performance. This study seeks to identify the areas where more potent variables contribute to raising employee performance by better understanding the interaction between these variables.

The following are the hypotheses developed for this study (Figure 1 shows the research framework):

- H1: *Career competencies can increase job crafting.*
- H2: *Career competencies can increase employee engagement.*
- H3: *Career competencies can improve employee performance.*
- H4: *Job crafting can increase employee engagement.*
- H5: *Job crafting can improve employee performance.*
- H6: *Employee engagement can improve employee performance.*
- H7: *Career competencies can increase employee engagement mediated by job crafting.*

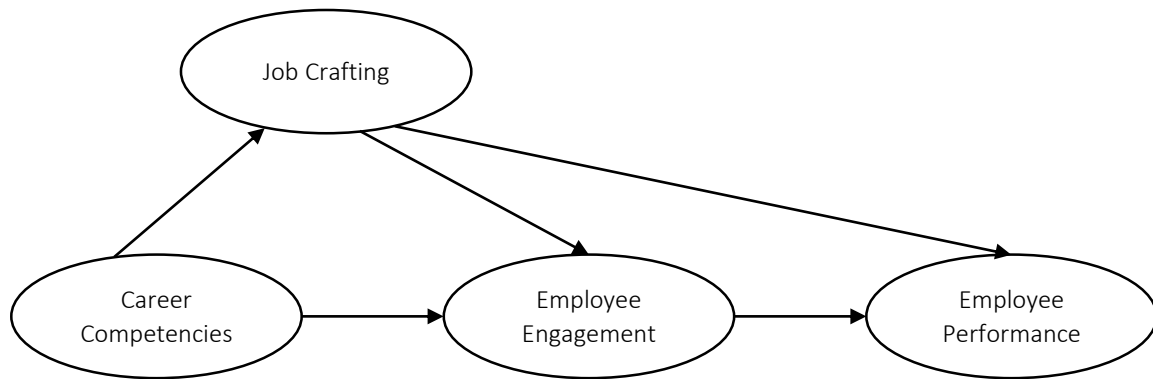


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

H8: Career competencies can increase employee performance mediated by job crafting.

H9: Career competencies can increase employee performance mediated by job crafting and employee engagement.

H10: Job crafting can increase employee performance mediated by employee engagement.

H11: Career competencies can increase employee performance mediated by employee engagement.

$n = (1.960)^2(0.5) / [(0.10)^2(0.5)] = 385.16$, the number of samples obtained from 386 employees of Islamic banking in North Sumatra. This study uses SEM to cover the weaknesses in the regression model. Using theoretical mathematical models that can explain analyzed phenomena, the study found a correlation or causation between the variables involved in this study. The software used is SmartPLS 4. The data for this study were gathered via a questionnaire, which respondents had to fill out with questions or statements on a Likert scale with a score of 1–5. Data were gathered directly through focus group talks and online questionnaires.

3. METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach because it was carried out in a structured and systematic manner so that the data obtained could be generated. This study's population consists of all Islamic banking employees in North Sumatra. Because of the limitation to reach all Sharia bank employees in North Sumatra, Indonesia, Lemeshow et al.'s (1990) formulation was used to obtain the appropriate number of samples to represent the population. To calculate the size of the sample, the following sample proportion is used:

$$n = Z^2 P(1 - P) / d^2, \quad (1)$$

where n denotes the number of samples, $Z_{(1-\alpha/2)}$ denotes the Z score at the $1-\alpha/2$ confidence level, p denotes the estimated proportion, and d denotes the precision.

The study determines $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.05$, and $d = 0.05$, then the following calculation is:

4. RESULTS

The demographic profile of the respondents revealed that the majority were women (59.06 percent, or $n = 228$) compared to men (40.94 percent, or $n = 158$). The majority of respondents were aged between 36 and 40 years (22.90, or $n = 102$). While only nineteen respondents (4.95 percent) were over 45 years old, it is interesting that many were still in their productive age, aged 19–35. Likewise, 66.83 percent ($n = 258$) of employees have bachelor's degrees. Furthermore, the majority of employees have a married status of 73.05 percent ($n = 282$) (Table 1).

In the early stages, a converging validity test was carried out to measure the validity of the model for each variable with its indicators. This study uses a loading factor limit of at least 0.6. The results of the PLS algorithm calculation for the outer

Table 1. Demographics of respondents

Category	Details	Counts	Percent
Gender	Male	158	40.94
	Female	228	59.06
	Total	386	100
Age	19-27 years	81	20.98
	28-32 years	88	22.90
	33-39 years	54	13.98
	40-45 years	102	26.42
	46 > years	42	10.88
	Total	386	100
Employee Status	Permanent	386	100
	Non-permanent	0	0
	Total	386	100
Qualification	High School	61	15.80
	Associate degree	50	12.95
	Bachelor's	258	66.83
	Master's	17	4.42
	Total	386	100
Marital Status	Married	282	73.05
	Single	104	26.95
	Total	386	100

model (convergent validity) found indicators that did not meet the assumptions where the expected CR value was > 0.7. In the proactive personality variable, some indicators do not meet this value, including PP1, PP2, and PP3 indicators; these indicators were eliminated from this research model. While the indicators on the variables “career competencies,” “job crafting,” “employee engagement,”

and “employee performance” have met the value of CR > 0.7.

Table 2 shows the outer loading value for each having an outer loading value > 0.6; a good AVE value is required to have a value greater than 0.50. The composite reliability value is greater than 0.6. The research variables have high reliability. It is supported by a Cronbach’s alpha value of > 0.7 to strengthen the composite reliability value, meaning that the variable has a high-reliability value and fulfills the reliability test.

Likewise, with the analysis of the coefficient of determination (R²) in the study, the results obtained were employee engagement of 0.967, employee performance of 0.986, and job crafting of 0.815. All exogenous variables (job crafting and career competencies) simultaneously affect work engagement by 0.96%; if the R-square value is > 0.75, it can be categorized as strong. Likewise, the influence of career competencies on job crafting is 0.815 or 81.5% influenced by career competencies, while the rest is influenced by other variables not involved in this study.

Next is to test the hypotheses through a bootstrapping process of 5,000 repetitions. The results are shown in Figure 2.

Table 2. PLS-SEM algorithm analysis results

Construct	Dimension	Indicator	Outer Loading	CA	(rho_a)	AVE
Job Crafting	Structural Resources	JCR1.1	0.880	0.992	0.992	0.860
		JCR1.2	0.964			
		JCR1.3	0.964			
		JCR1.4	0.973			
		JCR1.5	0.951			
	Job Demands	JCR2.6	0.883			
		JCR2.7	0.938			
		JCR2.8	0.968			
		JCR2.9	0.958			
		JCR2.10	0.939			
	Social Resources	JCR2.11	0.949			
		JCR3.12	0.957			
		JCR3.13	0.951			
		JCR3.14	0.949			
		JCR3.15	0.957			
		JCR3.16	0.951			
	Challenging Job Demands	JCR4.17	0.977			
		JCR4.18	0.952			
		JCR4.19	0.966			
		JCR4.20	0.981			
		JCR4.21	0.983			

Table 2 (cont.). PLS-SEM algorithm analysis results

Construct	Dimension	Indicator	Outer Loading	CA	(rho_a)	AVE
Career Competencies	Reflective Career Competencies	RCCI2	0.688	0.951	0.962	0.658
		RCCI3	0.722			
		RCCI4	0.836			
		RCCI5	0.915			
		RCCI6	0.903			
		RCCI6	0.944			
		RCCI7	0.856			
	Networking Career Competencies	NCC1	0.865			
		NCC2	0.865			
		NCC3	0.899			
		NCC4	0.879			
		NCC5	0.936			
		NCC6	0.926			
		NCC7	0.910			
Exploration Career Competencies	ECC1	0.925				
	ECC2	0.087				
Employee Engagement	Vigor	VG1	0.080	0.997	0.998	0.961
		VG2	0.959			
		VG3	0.986			
		VG4	0.972			
		VG5	0.992			
		VG6	0.981			
		VG7	0.981			
	Dedication	DD1	0.982			
		DD2	0.984			
		DD3	0.989			
		DD4	0.979			
	Absorption	AB1	0.989			
		AB2	0.985			
		AB3	0.991			
		AB4	0.993			
		AB5	0.986			
		AB6	0.975			
	Employee Performance	Employee Performance	EFORM1			
EFORM 2			0.980			
EFORM 3			0.988			
EFORM 4			0.992			
EFORM 5			0.991			
EFORM 6			0.992			
EFORM 7			0.993			
EFORM 8			0.992			
EFORM 9			0.994			
EFORM 10			0.994			
EFORM 11			0.995			

Figure 2 is a schematic structural model (inner model) resulting from bootstrapping, and Table 3 shows bootstrapping output in the form of path coefficients.

Table 3 shows that H1 is supported: job crafting has a significant positive effect on increasing employee performance. H2 is supported: job crafting has a significant positive effect on in-

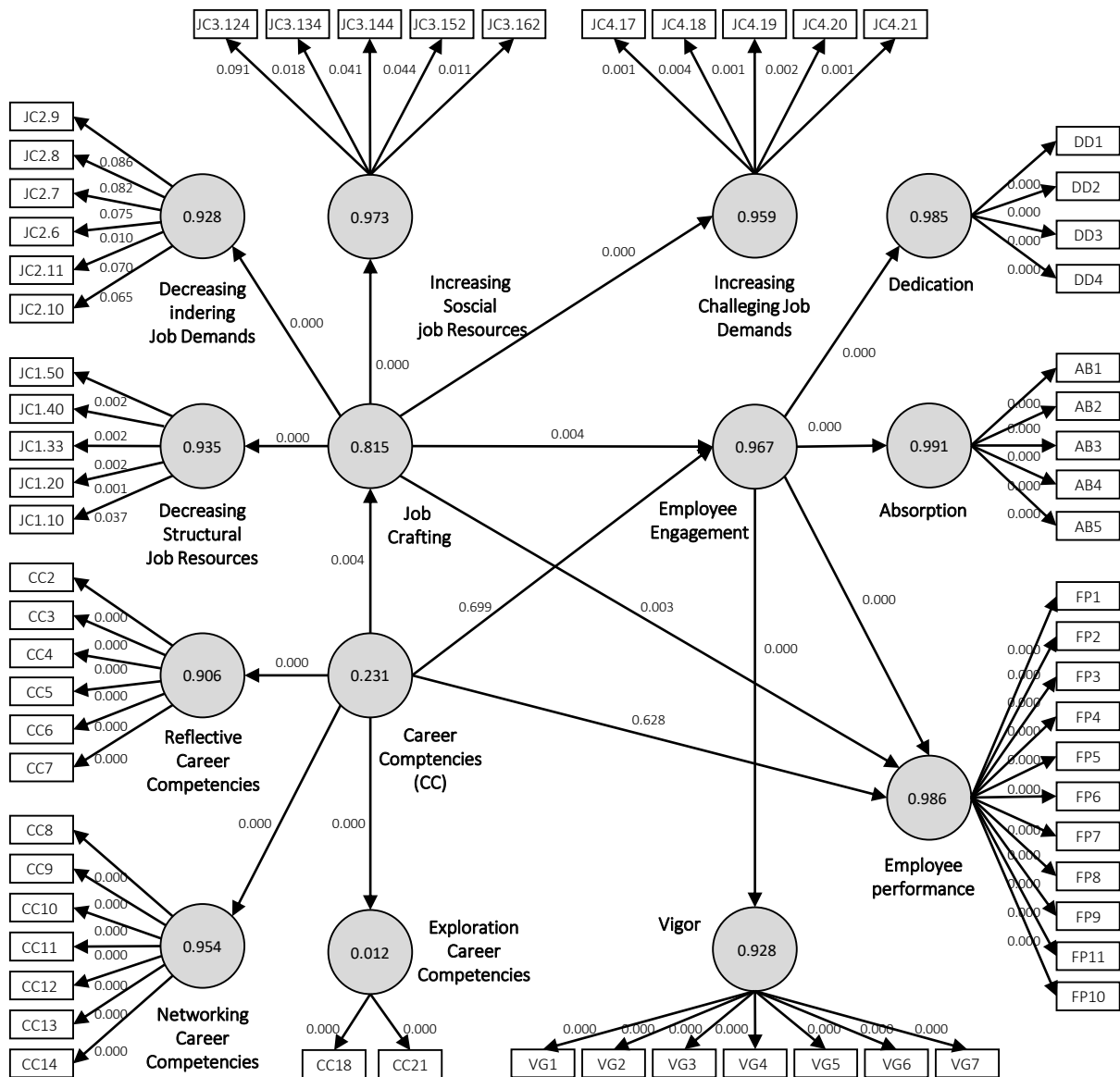


Figure 2. Structural model (P-Value)

creasing employee engagement. H3 is supported: career competencies have a significant positive effect on increasing job crafting. Concerning H4, career competencies do not affect employee performance; H5: career competencies do not affect employee engagement; H6 is supported: employee engagement significantly positively affects employee performance. H7 is supported: career competencies can significantly and positively increase employee engagement through job crafting. H8 is supported: career competencies can significantly and positively improve employee performance through job crafting. H9 is supported: career competencies can significantly and positively increase employee per-

formance mediated by job crafting and engagement. H10 is also supported. Concerning H11, there is no influence between career competencies on employee performance mediated by employee engagement.

Partially, job crafting has a significant influence on increasing employee engagement, as can be seen from the original sample value of 1.012. Moreover, job crafting is the most significant contribution among the variables to improve employee performance, with an original sample value of 0.243. At the same time, this study's most significant indirect effect is between job crafting → employee engagement → employee performance.

Table 3. Estimated coefficient values between the variables

	Paths between the variables	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (O/STDEV)	P values	Information
H1	Job Crafting → Employee Performance	0.243	0.232	0.082	2.973	0.003	Supported
H2	Job Crafting → Employee Engagement	1.012	0.753	0.355	2.851	0.004	Supported
H3	Career Competencies → Job Crafting	0.903	0.716	0.312	2.896	0.004	Supported
H4	Career Competencies → Employee Performance	-0.021	-0.036	0.044	0.484	0.628	Not Significant
H5	Career Competencies → Employee Engagement	-0.031	-0.052	0.081	0.387	0.699	Not Significant
H6	Employee Engagement → Employee Performance	0.772	0.638	0.186	4.159	0.000	Supported
Indirect Effect							
H7	Career Competencies → Job Crafting → Employee Engagement	0.913	0.644	0.380	2.404	0.016	Supported
H8	Career Competencies → Job Crafting → Employee Performance	0.219	0.177	0.075	2.919	0.004	Supported
H9	Career Competencies → Job Crafting → Employee Engagement → Employee Performance	0.705	0.477	0.324	2.180	0.029	Supported
H10	Job Crafting → Employee Engagement → Employee Performance	0.781	0.538	0.325	2.402	0.016	Supported
H11	Career Competencies → Employee Engagement → Employee Performance	-0.024	-0.027	0.034	0.717	0.473	Not Significant

5. DISCUSSION

The results show that employees have attempted to develop their job-crafting skills. This study is in line with Guan and Frenkel (2018), Viet and Tuan (2018), and Nguyen et al. (2019), who stated that there is a strong correlation between job crafting and employee performance. This study found that job crafting significantly affects employee engagement of Islamic banking employees; thus, the more employee job crafting is shown, the more it will increase employee engagement. These findings support Federici et al. (2021), Aldrin et al. (2019), and Letona-Ibañez et al. (2021), who confirmed a strong relationship between the crafting of jobs and laborer obligation. Employees who exhibit job crafting behavior will develop individual strengths and opportunities to efficiently and effectively adjust tasks and responsibilities based on individual abilities without reducing the value of the work itself.

Nguyen et al. (2019) recommend that “job crafting” is a form of modification carried out by employees to balance job requirements and work resources based on their personal preferences and competencies. Then Demerouti (2014) describes job crafting as a change in work so that their work is more satisfying, attractive, and meaningful.

Career competence has no effect on employee performance and work engagement; this result contradicts Park (2020) and Sultana and Malik (2019) that career competencies affect employee performance. In studying the relationship between career competence and employee performance, there is a disagreement with Wang (2013), where career competency is a construction that affects employee career success; in particular, career competencies are the control over career success.

The results of this study do not support (Wardani et al., 2021), this can be explored in future research so that the dimensions or indicators of career competencies can be further developed. According to Akkermans and Tims (2017), Wardani et al. (2021), and Tachia et al. (2020), there is a significant association between professional abilities and work design.

Career competence contributes to employee performance, and this study found a positive relationship between career competence and employee performance. Individuals with career competence can feel what they want, then decide who they will approach and ask for advice from and how they can seek opportunities for self-development (Akkermans & Tims, 2017). Consistent with the results of previous research,

career competencies can significantly contribute to improving employee performance (Park, 2020). Furthermore, career competencies have an indirect effect on improving employee performance. This is because employees understand the importance of career competencies, and almost all employees can clearly identify passion, talent, and skills and show others what they want in achieving a career. These findings also provide updates to cover gaps found by Plomp et al. (2016) and Bakker et al. (2012).

The correlation matrix concludes no influence between career competencies and employee engagement, although Wardani et al. (2021) also concluded a weak correlation between career competencies and employee engagement. It is caused by educational mismatches, a lack of communication to

convey knowledge and skills both internally and externally to employees, a lack of enthusiasm for work, and a lack of total concentration in carrying out work. The findings agree with Karatepe and Aga (2016), who asserted a significant correlation between laborer obligation and laborer completion, where employees who contribute work will display a high level of employee engagement.

Organizations should also pay attention to employee engagement levels and seek to improve them through employee development programs, employee wellness programs, and the development of an organizational culture that emphasizes employee engagement. Furthermore, companies can use the findings of this study as a basis for measuring and evaluating the performance of their employees.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to explore the impact of career competencies on the performance of employees concerning job crafting and employee engagement of Sharia banking employees in North Sumatra, Indonesia. It has clarified the theoretical background related to the improvement of employee performance.

The findings have shown a positive and significant influence of career competencies on employee performance, positive and significant influence of job crafting on employee performance, positive and significant influence of employee engagement, and no influence between career competencies and employee performance. Moreover, there is no effect between career competencies and employee engagement, but there is a significant impact of employee engagement on employee performance. The result of indirect influence demonstrates a positive and significant influence of career competencies on employee engagement through job crafting, positive and significant influence of career competencies on employee performance by job crafting, and positive and significant influence of career competencies on employment performance through job crafting and employee engagement. However, there is no positive and significant influence of job crafting on employee performance through employee engagement and no influence between career competencies on employee performance through employee engagement. The strategy used in improving the performance of Sharia bank employees is by looking at the role of job crafting because it greatly contributes to increasing employee performance. The second strategy is to encourage job crafting as a mediation variable between career competencies to improve employee performance.

Encouraging active job crafting, companies can create a culture that supports job crafting by giving employees freedom and flexibility in organizing their tasks, roles, and responsibilities. Management support and recognition of employee job-crafting initiatives are also important. In addition, organizations can facilitate knowledge exchange and collaboration among employees to encourage effective job crafting. Encouraging high employee engagement, companies can create a working environment that promotes employee engagement by providing constructive feedback, providing career development opportunities, and facilitating effective communication and collaboration among employees. Managers can use management approaches that focus on employee engagement, such as providing appropriate autonomy, providing effective feedback, providing recognition and appreciation, and facilitating employee career development.

AUTHOR CONTRIBUTIONS

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 Data curation: Salman Farisi, Muhammad Taufik Lesmana.
 Formal analysis: Muhammad Andi Prayogi.
 Investigation: Muhammad Andi Prayogi, Salman Farisi, Muhammad Taufik Lesmana.
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 Validation: Muhammad Andi Prayogi.
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