

# Unveiling the Role of Transformational Leadership as an Antecedent in Fostering Employee Job Crafting Behaviours at Work: An Empirical Study in Banking Sector

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## Abstract

Recognising the formidable challenges faced by service employees operating in direct customer contact roles within the rapidly evolving service economy and dynamic work environment, the research underscores the efficacy of job crafting as a strategic approach to alleviate pressures. Job crafting involves the proactive adaptation of job boundaries based on individual interests and requirements, making it imperative to identify factors that facilitate such behaviours. The current study focuses on the role of transformational leadership, an organisational-related factor, in predicting job crafting behaviours at work. A sample of 266 customer contact employees from various public and private banks of Jammu and Kashmir comprised the respondents of the study. The findings of the research unveil a significant and positive impact of transformational leadership on all three facets of job crafting, with a particularly substantial influence on cognitive crafting. The study underscores the critical role of transformational leadership in fostering a thriving work environment through the mental reframing of employees' perceptions about their jobs in a positive manner. By inspiring and guiding employees, transformational leaders play a pivotal role in cultivating job crafting behaviours. The emphasis on cognitive crafting highlights the transformative power of leadership in shaping employees' mental

outlook towards their roles, contributing to an overall positive work environment. This research provides valuable insights for organisational leaders in the banking sector, emphasising the importance of adopting transformational leadership approaches. Such approaches not only positively impact job crafting behaviours among customer contact employees but also contribute to enhanced job satisfaction and well-being, thereby aiding these employees in navigating the challenges posed by the rapidly changing service economy and work environment.

**Keywords:** Transformational Leadership, Task Crafting, Relational Crafting, Cognitive Crafting, Job Crafting

## Introduction

In the contemporary business landscape, work in organisations has become highly dynamic, uncertain and complex due to the rapidly changing nature of the knowledge economy. Service employees find themselves grappling with various constraints and demands to stay abreast of technological advancements and adapt to the dynamic nature of the service sector. In this challenging environment, job satisfaction declines, leading to burnout and diminished dedication among employees (Oubibi et

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al., 2022). In order to make work more meaningful and fulfilling, it is vital to give employees some latitude to customise job requirements based on their interests and talents. Research studies have shown that job crafting—a bottom-up job redesign theory—is a valuable strategy for assisting service employees in reducing the stress that comes with working in the rapidly changing knowledge economy, by way of tailoring the jobs in according to the employee's needs, interests and skills, which in turn can foster more satisfying work outcomes for them (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Over the years, research has shown that job crafting has a positive impact on service employees by increasing their job engagement, satisfaction, organisational commitment, and job performance (Iqbal, 2016; Kim et al., 2018; Naami, 2014; Peral & Geldenhuys, 2016; Siddiqi, 2015; Zahoor, 2018). Despite the volume of research on the effects of job crafting in varied cultures and contexts, little is known about its causes or predictors. Previous studies suggest that the antecedents of job crafting can be categorised into organisational-related, individual-related and task-related factors. The present study aims to investigate the role of transformational leadership as an organisational-related antecedent in fostering job crafting behaviours among customer contact employees working in various private and public sector banks of the union territory of J & K. These employees are carefully selected due to their pivotal roles in directly engaging with customers, requiring flexible job parameters to effectively navigate and accommodate various customers needs and constraints. Their satisfaction is paramount for building sustainable customer relationships. Taking into account the significance of identifying factors that encourage job crafting behaviours, the present study focuses on the role of transformational leaders who engage and inspire their followers to proactively craft the physical, interpersonal and cognitive boundaries of their jobs in accordance with their preferences and demands at work. The already available literature on the relationship between transformational leadership and job crafting have mostly relied on the JD-R model to conceptualise the concept of job crafting by taking into consideration only the behavioural aspects of job crafting. But by embracing the job crafting theory put forth by Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001), this study closes the gap. This idea suggests that task crafting, which involves changing the physical boundaries of the job by way of bringing out new innovative methods of doing the jobs, relational crafting,

which involves crafting interpersonal relationships by way of collaborating with colleagues, attending work related events and mentorship programmes and cognitive crafting, which involves mentally redefining the job perceptions by way of thinking on a continuous basis about the significance of jobs for society and for oneself, can all lead to job crafting. On the basis of this the objectives of the study were:

- To examine the impact of transformation leadership on fostering task crafting behaviours among bank employees.
- To access the influence of transformational leadership on fostering relational crafting among bank employees, and
- To examine the effect of employees perceptions of transformational leadership on fostering cognitive crafting among bank employees.

## Literature Review

### Transformational Leadership and Job Crafting

Job crafting is defined as the proactive bottom-up approach of the job redesign theory wherein, individual employees at work take the initiative to craft the task, relational and cognitive boundaries of their jobs in accordance with their skills, interests and passion (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Over the years research has shown that there are various factors (organisational, task, individual) that trigger job crafting behaviours at work (Kim & Lee, 2016; Kim et al., 2018; Saragih et al., 2021; Siddiqi, 2015; Zahoor, 2018). In addition to these factors transformational leadership is considered as the crucial organisation related antecedent playing a central role in fostering employees proactive behaviour at work (Den Hartog & Belschak, 2012). Transformational leadership is a leadership style characterised by the leaders ability to inspire and encourage followers to accomplish exceptional results and prioritise the well-being of the organisation ahead of their personal self-interests (Bass, 1995). Further, according to Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) (JCT) job crafting theory, employees are driven to engage in job-crafting behaviour because they want to have a positive self-image. Thus, our research is predicated on the idea that transformational leaders are likely to foster a positive future self-image in their followers by acting

as role models, providing a clear vision for the future, and expressing high expectations and confidence in them. This increases the likelihood that followers will actively shape their work to maintain or improve their self-image.

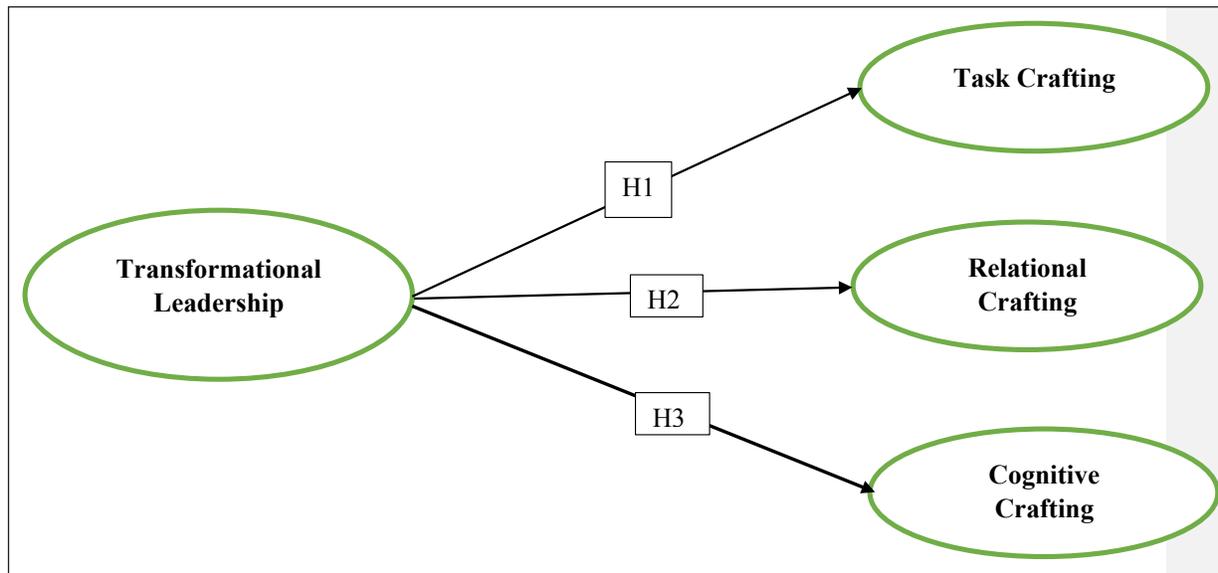
The study of Hetland et al. (2018) on 107 Norwegian knowledge employees from various organisations reveal that employees perception of daily transformational leadership has a significant positive impact in predicting employee daily level job crafting behaviours at work. The study findings revealed that transformational leaders by way of supporting and encouraging employees to work as a team to achieve exceptional results helps them to initiate the proactive behaviours at work by way of increasing structural and social resources at work. The findings of the study has made it clear that followers are more likely to alter the structural parameters of their jobs when a leader actively coaches and fosters their creativity and innovation by challenging presumptions, rephrasing issues and supporting novel ideas. This modification aims to enhance learning, development and responsibility. Further, a leader who shows attention by showing concern for each follower individually and emphasising the significance of group ideals increases the likelihood that the follower will participate in creating social resources. This entails asking co-workers as well as the leader for assistance. As a result, it becomes imperative that leaders understand the instant benefits that may be attained through consistent coaching efforts. (Wang et al., 2017) conducted a study on 185 dyads of supervisor and subordinates working in diverse organisations of Netherlands to examine the impact of transformational leadership on job crafting behaviours. The findings of the study revealed a significant positive impact of transformational leadership on employee job crafting (seeking resources, and seeking challenges) through adaptability. The study concluded that transformational leadership is the significant antecedent of fostering employee proactivity at work. The results of the study conducted by Mäkikangas et al. (2017) on various professional teams from 25 different rehabilitation centres of Finland revealed that the leadership that is engaging and connecting play a significant role in predicting job crafting of professionals at both individual and team level. The study found that leaders can stimulate job crafting behaviour of employees by connecting and binding their followers together. The results of the recent study of Jeong et al. (2022)

conducted on 280 newcomer employees working in a large corporation providing digital services in South Korea to examine the antecedent of fostering job crafting behaviours in these employees in order to cope up with the problem of adjustment in the early years of career. The results of the study revealed that transformational leadership is the significant antecedent of triggering job crafting among newcomers at organisational level. The results suggested that employee's perception of transformational leadership had a significant positive relationship with job crafting. Further, the study also revealed that occupational self-efficacy significantly mediated the relationship of transformational leadership with job crafting. Naeem et al. (2021) conducted a time-lagged study on the 600 employees working in sales departments of pharmaceutical companies of Pakistan to understand the role that transformational leadership plays in fostering the job crafting behaviours at work. The results of the study revealed that employee's perception of transformational leadership had a significant positive impact on the dimension of increasing social resources and increasing challenging demands at work. The study had stressed that employees who work under transformational leadership engage in job crafting behaviours by way of increasing their resources at work and including challenging tasks in their duties to align it with their passion and skills. The study of Son and Lee (2023) also stressed on the significant role of leaders attitude and behaviour in fostering employee job crafting at work. The study has brought a new perspective of leadership style by contending that leader's humility by way of leading from bottom focusing on employee growth and development, unlike dominant leadership plays a significant role in fostering job crafting. The results of the study have revealed a significant positive impact of leader's humility on all the three facets of job crafting (Task, Relational and Cognitive crafting). The study has also signified that when leaders follow the approach where the main focus is given to employees by valuing their contribution, by giving them opportunity to take part in decision making process it enforces them to engage in proactive behaviours at work by crafting task, relational and cognitive boundaries of their jobs. On the basis of the above mentioned literature the study postulated the following hypotheses:

H1: Transformational Leadership exerts a significant positive impact on employee task crafting.

H2: Transformational Leadership exerts a significant positive impact on employee relational crafting.

H3: Transformational Leadership exerts a significant positive impact on employee cognitive crafting.



**Fig. 1:** Conceptual Model of the Study

## Research Design

### Respondents and Sampling Design

The respondents of the study comprised of the 266 front line customer contact employees working in various public and private sectors banks of Jammu & Kashmir. A total of 300 employees were contacted for the present study by mailing them the questionnaires on their respective mail ids. Out of 300 employees who were contacted, only 266 responded, thereby representing a response rate of 88.6%. Non-probability sampling technique that is convenience sampling was employed to collect data from the respondents.

### Measures

For the measurement of the respective constructs considered in the study, the five point likert scale ranging from “strongly disagree” to “strongly agree” was used. The construct of transformational leadership was measured using the seven item global transformational leadership scale developed by Beveren et al. (2017). The dimensions of job crafting were measured using the scale

developed by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013). Task Crafting was measured using 4 items, Relational Crafting was measured using 4 items and Cognitive Crafting was measured using 5 items. In addition to these 20 items, demographic information of the respondents with respect to gender, age and work experience was also obtained. Thus, the final questionnaire comprised of total 23 items.

### Respondent’s Profile

The data (Table 1) shows a clear gender distribution among the respondents. The majority (74%) are male, while the remaining 26% are female. This suggests that the survey or study may have had a higher participation rate from males. The respondents are categorised into different age groups: 30–35 years, 36–40 years, 41–45 years, and above 45 years. The largest age group is 30–35 years, constituting 42% of the respondents, followed by 36–40 years at 21%. The cumulative percentages indicate that a significant portion (63%) falls within the age range of 30–40 years. Work experience is divided into three categories: 0–10 years, 11–20 years and above 20 years. The majority of respondents (58%) have 0–10 years of work experience, with 26% having 11–20 years of experience and 16% having above 20 years of experience.

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Variable	N	%	Cumulative %
Gender			
Male	196	74	74
Female	70	26	100
Age			
30 – 35 Years	112	42	42
36 – 40 Years	55	21	63
41 – 45 Years	40	15	78
Above 45 Years	59	22	100
Work Experience			
0 – 10 Years	155	58	58

Variable	N	%	Cumulative %
11 – 20 Years	69	26	84
Above 20 Years	42	16	100

## Data Analysis

Data analysis of the study was done with the help of SPSS Software package version 21 and Smart PLS-SEM version 4. Descriptive statistics and correlation of respective constructs was assessed using SPSS, while for assessing the measurement and structural model PLS-SEM was used.

**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics and Correlation Matrix**

Constructs	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3	4
Transformational Leadership	3.385	.642	1			
Task Crafting	3.458	.687	.667**	1		
Relational Crafting	3.395	.656	.554**	.440**	1	
Cognitive Crafting	3.386	.634	.674**	.619**	.416**	1

Note:  $p^{**} < .01$

From the above Table 2, it is quite clear that transformational relationship has a significant positive relationship with all the three facets of job crafting. This infers that higher levels of transformational leadership are associated with higher levels of job crafting behaviours. Bank employees who work with transformational leadership are likely to engage in crafting the pro-active job crafting behaviours at work.

## Measurement Model Assessment

The measurement model assessment begins by examining the reliability and validity of the model. The reliability is checked in two stages: 1) Indicator reliability, 2) Internal consistency reliability and validity is checked by assessing the model's— 1) Convergent and 2) Discriminant validity. The indicator reliability of the model is assessed by examining each indicator's factor loading. The results of the measurement model have revealed that all the indicator loadings of the model are above the threshold value of .7, therefore suggesting a satisfactory indicator reliability (Hair et al., 2011). The two most common methods of assessing the model's internal consistency are Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability. According to Hair et al.

(2011), measurement model is said to have a satisfactory internal consistency reliability when the values of both Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability exceeds the threshold value of .70. The results of the present study have revealed (Table 3) that all the values of Cronbach's alpha and Composite reliability are above .70, indicating satisfactory internal consistency reliability.

The convergent validity of the measurement model was assessed by average variance extracted (AVE). According to Fornell and Larcker (1981), measurement model is said to have established a satisfactory convergent validity when the AVE values of all the constructs are equal or exceed the threshold value of .50. The results displayed in Table 3 shows that all AVE values are above the threshold value of .50, thereby suggesting that convergent validity of the model is established. For examining the discriminant validity the two most popular methods namely 1) Fornell and Larcker criterion, and 2) HTMT ratio were utilised for the current study. According to Fornell and Larcker criterion discriminant validity is established when the square root of a construct's AVE is higher than its correlation with other variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). As is evident from the Table 4 a given constructs AVE was found to be greater than its correlation with other

variables, signifying the establishment of discriminant validity. Further, as per HTMT ratio, discriminant validity is said to have been established when the ratio is below the threshold value of .85 (Kline, 2011). The results in Table 5 have shown that all the HTMT ratio values are below the threshold value of .85 deciphering that discriminant validity is established in the present study.

Further, multi-collinearity between constructs was also assessed with the help of the most commonly used instrument Variance Inflation factor (VIF). According to Hair et al. (2019) multi-collinearity is not an issue when the VIF values are below 5. The results in Table 6 have clearly shown that the VIF values for all the constructs are below the threshold value of 5 indicating no issue of multi-collinearity among constructs.

**Table 3: Measurement Model Assessment**

Constructs	Factor Loadings	Composite Reliability	Cronbach's Alpha	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Task Crafting		.871	.869	.718
TC1	.871			
TC2	.882			
TC3	.810			
TC4	.824			
Relational Crafting		.863	.861	.705
RC1	.863			
RC2	.844			
RC3	.822			
RC4	.830			
Cognitive Crafting		.877	.876	.668
CC1	.855			
CC2	.823			
CC3	.830			
CC4	.772			
CC5	.805			
Transformational Leadership		.918	.916	.666
TL1	.892			
TL2	.791			
TL3	.823			
TL4	.809			
TL5	.768			
TL6	.778			
TL7	.844			

**Table 4: Fornell-Larcker Criterion**

	CC	RC	TC	TL
CC	<b>.818</b>			
RC	.419	<b>.840</b>		
TC	.621	.441	<b>.847</b>	
TL	.678	.559	.670	.816

Note: Bold and Italics signify the square root of AVE.

**Table 5: Discriminant Validity**

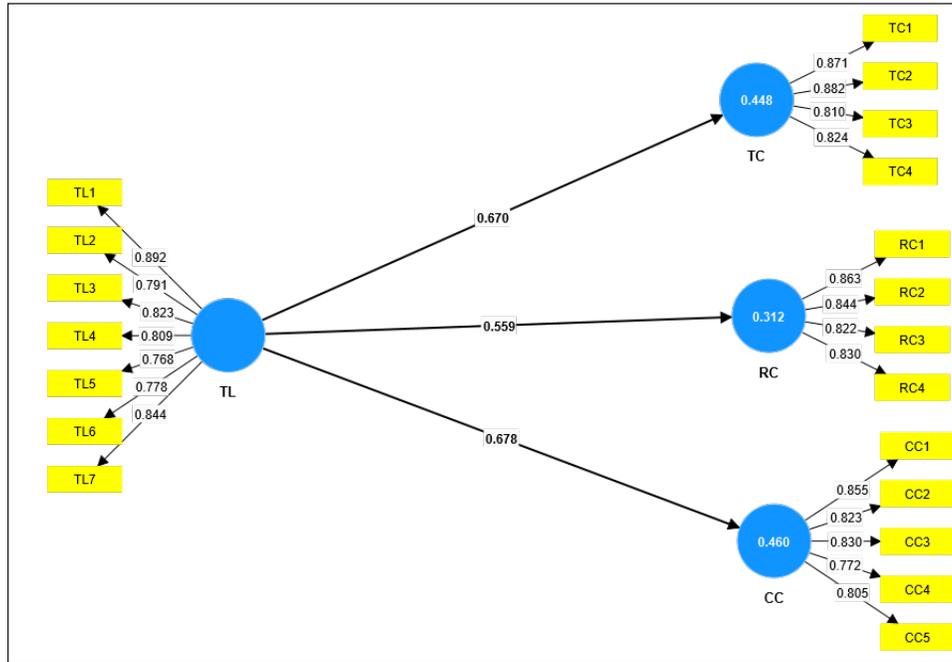
Heterotrait–Monotrait Ratio (HTMT)

	CC	RC	TC	TL
CC				
RC	.481			
TC	.712	.509		
TL	.754	.625	.745	

**Table 6: Multicollinearity Diagnostics (VIF)**

Paths	VIF
TL→CC	1.000
TL→RC	1.000
TL→TC	1.000

Note: VIF = Variance Inflation Factor.



Note: TL = Transformational Leadership, TC = Task Crafting, RC= Relational Crafting, and CC = Cognitive Crafting.

**Fig. 2: Measurement Model**

**Model Fit**

The assessment of model fit in this study included evaluating both explanatory power ( $R^2$ ) and predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) measures. The findings revealed that Transformational Leadership (TL) accounted for 44.8%, 31.2% and 46.0% of the variance in TC, RC and CC, respectively. These  $R^2$  statistics were considered acceptable as they exceeded the recommended cut-off value of .10 (Falk & Miller, 1992). The effect sizes ( $Q^2$ ) for predictive relevance were found to be .530 for TC, .426 for RC and .568 for CC, indicating a moderate influence of TL on  $Q^2$ , in line with Hair et al. (2019) guidelines.

Furthermore, the study also used the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual as a model fit index. The recommended threshold for acceptability is typically less than .08 or .10, as suggested by Hu and Bentler (1999). In the current investigation, the Standardised Root Mean Residual value was reported to be .034, which falls well below the acceptable range.

**Structural Model**

After the assessment of the measurement model the next step in PLS-SEM analysis is to evaluate the structural model for assessing the assumed relationships to support the hypothesis formulated for the study.

The results displayed in Table 7 clearly depicts that transformational leadership has a significant positive impact on all the three facets of job crafting (TC  $\beta = .670$ ,  $t = 13.149$ ,  $p < .001$ ; RC  $\beta = .559$ ,  $t = 9.703$ ,  $p < .001$ ; CC  $\beta = .678$ ,  $t = 13.895$ ), thereby confirming H1 – H3. The regression analysis results show that the independent variable TL has statistically significant and positive relationships with all the three the dependent variables TC (Task Crafting), RC (Relational Crafting) and CC (Cognitive Crafting). The beta coefficients indicate the strength of these relationships, with higher values suggesting stronger associations. The high T values and low p-values further confirm the statistical significance of the relationships.

**Table 7: Structural Path Results**

<i>Paths</i>	<i>Beta Coefficients</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>T Values</i>	<i>P Value</i>	<i>R<sup>2</sup></i>
TL→ TC (H1)	.670**	.049	13.149	.000	.448
TL→ RC (H2)	.559**	.058	9.703	.000	.312
TL→ CC (H3)	.678**	.051	13.895	.000	.460

Note: P<.001\*\*

## Discussion

The study's findings strongly support the hypothesised connections between transformational leadership and the three dimensions of job crafting—Task Crafting, Relational crafting and Cognitive Crafting. Notably, the results demonstrate a significant and positive influence of transformational leadership on all three aspects of job crafting. This aligns with prior research of Naeem et al. (2021) and Son and Lee (2023), reinforcing the pivotal role of transformational leadership as a crucial factor in fostering job crafting behaviours among employees. This becomes particularly important in alleviating the stress induced by the rapidly evolving service economy.

The study underscores the importance of how employees perceive transformational leadership, emphasising its role in instilling positive self-perception and a clear vision among followers. This, in turn, guides them towards achieving organisational objectives by actively engaging in proactive job crafting behaviours at their workplace. The research sheds light on the idea that transformational leadership significantly influences the cognitive crafting of employees, surpassing its impact on task and relational crafting. Employees working under leader's characterised by innovation and charisma are adept at positively reshaping their mental perspectives on their roles, contributing to a more gratifying and fulfilling work environment. The study thus highlights the far-reaching impact of transformational leadership in cultivating a positive work culture through the encouragement of cognitive, task and relational crafting among employees.

## Limitations and Future Research Directions

The main limitation of the study is that the study relied on self-reported questionnaires for the collection of data which in a way hampers the objectivity and reliability of the results by the inclusion of various biases. Therefore,

researchers in future should employ mixed methods of data collection by employing both qualitative and quantitative tools to enhance the validity of the results. The second limitation of the study is that the study focused on only one organisational related antecedent of job crafting. Future researchers should conduct studies by taking into consideration more organisational related factors that predict job crafting behaviours at work. Third, the study was limited to the union territory of Jammu and Kashmir because of the time and resource constraints. Future studies should test the contextual relationships of the variables under study in different cultural contexts and backgrounds to enhance the generalisations of the results to the broader populations. Fourth the data was collected from bank employees at a single point of time which makes it difficult to capture the variability that occurs with time. So, future researchers should focus on conducting longitudinal and time-lagged study in order to trace the variations over time.

## Conclusion

The study aimed to analyse the impact of organisational related factor on task, relational and cognitive crafting of bank employees. The study's main focus was to identify the importance of leadership style that is connecting and engaging in helping service employees mitigate the stress imposed by the changing demands and constraints encountered at work by engaging in proactive behaviours of crafting task, relational and cognitive boundaries of their jobs in accordance with their requirements. The results revealed that transformational leadership had a significant positive impact on all the three crafting behaviours. Among the three dimensions of job crafting, transformational leadership was found to have a substantial impact on cognitive crafting followed by task and relational crafting. The results highlighted the importance of transformational leadership as a crucial factor for bank employees to mentally reframe the perceptions of their jobs in a positive way ultimately paving way for more thriving work environment.

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