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**Idiosyncratic deal seeking for personal brand verification**

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**Idiosyncratic deal seeking for personal brand verification**

**Abstract**

**Purpose:** Grounded in social learning theory and conservation of resources theory, this study examines the link between witnessing co-workers’ idiosyncratic deals (i-deals) and task crafting, task crafting and task i-deals negotiation; and the route that employees take to build their perceptions of personal brand equity.

**Methodology:** A time-lagged survey was used to collect data from 259 information technology (IT) and consulting professionals in India. Hypotheses were tested using PROCESS MACRO in R.

**Findings:** Results show that witnessing co-workers’ i-deals is positively associated with both task crafting and task i-deals negotiation; and task i-deals negotiation is positively associated with employees’ personal brand equity. Findings also show that task crafting mediates the positive impact of witnessing co-workers’ i-deals on task i-deals negotiation. Further, the study shows that need for legitimization of task customizations moderates the positive relationship between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation, in such a manner that the relationship is stronger when employees’ need for legitimization is low, and it is insignificant when their need for legitimization is high.

**Originality:** This is one of the earliest studies that examine the relationship between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation; and shows that employees negotiate task i-deals to build their personal brand equity.

**Keywords:** task crafting, idiosyncratic deals, personal brand equity, task i-deals, conservation of resources, social learning

## 1. Introduction

Employees are no longer willing to accept one-size-fits-all human resource management (HRM) policies (Bal and Dóci, 2018). They are increasingly seeking personally customized terms of employment to meet their needs, goals and aspirations (Jiang et al., 2023; Parker and Collins, 2010; Rofcanin et al., 2022). Extant research shows that customization of one's employment terms engenders higher employee commitment (Rosen et al., 2013), organizational citizenship behavior (Singh and Vidyarthi, 2018), intentions to stay with the organization (Ezerdi et al., 2023; Rofcanin et al., 2016), organization-based self-esteem (Guerrero and Challiol-Jeanblanc, 2016) and work performance (Geldenhuys et al., 2021; Lopper et al., 2024; Rofcanin et al., 2021). Job customizations are desired by employees, but they benefit both the employees and the organizations. It is not really a choice now, it is a must for HRM. Therefore, we wish to explore the dynamics of employment customizations. We wish to understand how, why and when employees seek job customizations. Research shows that employees make customizations either on their own - conceptualized as job crafting (Tims et al., 2012); or with the consent of their organization - conceptualized as idiosyncratic deals or i-deals (Rousseau et al., 2016). Literature on job crafting and i-deals have been growing independently, but we believe an integration of these two literatures can help to open the black box of employment customizations. Both job crafting and i-deals are employee-initiated proactive behaviors, with the primary difference being the organizational consent requirements. Understanding the inter-linkage between the two behaviors would benefit organizations as they can design appropriate strategies (for instance, interventions) to stimulate and manage these behaviors to create an engaged and proactive employee pool.

Studies of employment terms' customization have looked at developmental assignments (Srikanth et al., 2022), job tasks and work responsibilities modifications (Rofcanin et al., 2021), financial incentives (Mackintosh, and McDermott, 2023), flexibility of work

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schedule and location (Kelly et al., 2020) and reduction of workload and work hours (Gascoigne and Kelliher, 2018). We chose to study customizations of how an employee performs their job tasks because of two reasons. One, task customizations constitute changes made to the job content, ~~that is, i.e.,~~ the duties and responsibilities of employees on their job (Rousseau et al., 2016), which have the capability of making the most immediate impact on employees as well as their organizations. Second, task customizations are especially likely to be observable and imitable by professionals. Task customizations “enable employees to capitalize on their skills, abilities, and knowledge at work (i.e., their work competence),” and thus when granted as i-deals are “likely to convey strong signals about the organization’s recognition of the recipient’s competence” (Ho and Kong, 2015, p. 151). Since professionals (our sample) are valued for their knowledge and competency, they would want to pursue task customizations to improve their competence and personal brand value.

Researchers have emphasized the need to investigate the role of contextual factors in shaping employees’ job customizations behavior (Liao et al., 2016; Simosi et al., 2023; Zhang and Parker, 2019). Existing studies highlight the role of leadership and HR systems in encouraging employees to pursue job customization behaviors (Zhang and Parker, 2019). For instance, transformational leadership has been found to have a motivational impact on employees’ job crafting (Wang et al., 2017) and i-deals negotiation (Karakitapoğlu-Aygün et al., 2024). I-deals researchers emphasize that i-deals obtainment can be impacted by three parties: i-dealers (employees negotiating the i-deal), their organization and their co-workers (Liao et al., 2016; Rousseau, 2005; Rousseau et al., 2016). Despite acknowledging the influence of co-workers in shaping employees’ job customizations behavior (Ng and Lucianetti, 2016; Ng, 2017; Peeters et al., 2016), their role has received little research focus (Liao et al., 2016). We contribute to this research call, by including witnessing co-workers’ i-

deals as a crucial contextual variable and investigating its impact on encouraging employees to pursue not just task i-deals negotiation, but also task crafting.

Recipients of i-deals often benefit from increased recognition and credibility, which in turn can strengthen their own perception of their competence and brand value. Personal Brand Equity (PBE) is “an individual’s perceptions of the value of one’s personal brand derived from its appeal, differentiation and recognition in a given professional field” (Gorbatov et al., 2021, p. 508). PBE can be categorized as a personal resource, as individuals’ evaluations of their brand value can impact their strength to persist and perform in their professional lives. I-deals researchers have examined the impact of i-deals negotiation on personal resources such as self-efficacy (Hornung et al., 2014; Wang et al., 2018) and organization-based self-esteem (Guerrero et al., 2021; Sun et al., 2021); but not on employees’ PBE, which we focus on in this study.

Another contextual variable that we bring to the forefront is the *need for legitimization of job customizations*. While legitimization (organizational consent or approval) underpins the very conceptualization of i-deals and distinguishes it from crafting, it is important to take into consideration employees’ perception of the need for their organization’s approval for their desired customizations (Liao et al., 2016). This perception captures the sense that employees make of their organizational environment.

In this paper, we examine the relationship between witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and task crafting; and between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation. We further investigate the role played by employees’ perceptions of the need for legitimization of their desired task customizations on their task i-deals negotiation pursuit. Finally, we examine the association between employees’ task i-deals negotiation and their PBE. Our study makes several contributions to the literature: first, by including witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and need for

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legitimization of task customizations in the study, we take into account the impact of employees' perceptions of their work context on their task crafting and task i-deals pursuit. Second, we open the black box of job customizations and show that one proactive job customization behavior (task crafting) can influence the pursuit of another (task i-deals negotiation). Last, we show that employees make proactive efforts to acquire not just job resources, but also personal resources, that is, i.e. PBE.

**2. Literature Review**

Job crafting and i-deals are similar in nature as they both represent self-initiated job customization behaviors of employees. Job crafting represents employees' efforts to make changes to their jobs in order to balance their job demands and resources, thereby improving their job and increasing their meaningfulness from it (Bruning and Campion, 2018; Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). I-deals represent the job customizations negotiated between employees and their organizations for mutual benefits (Rousseau, 2001, 2005). Both job crafting and i-deals are aimed at improving or changing the work conditions and/or the job boundaries. They represent employees' agentic behavior, that is, i.e., employees behave like an agent of their own self, undertake suitable steps required to achieve their goals and assume responsibility for the resultant outcomes. Further, both behaviors have been found to be beneficial for employees and organizations as they lead to enhancements in innovative behavior at work (Kimwolo and Cheruiyot, 2018; Tomas et al., 2023), performance at work (Rofcanin et al., 2021; Rudolph et al., 2017) and perceptions of employability (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015; Zhang et al., 2021).

Despite these similarities, there exist differences between the two constructs. The key difference is the involvement of the organization at the time of pursuit of the two behaviors. While the organization may not necessarily know about an employee's job crafting pursuit, they know about the i-deals pursuit since i-deals are obtained with the consent or support of

the organization. Other features distinguishing job crafting and i-deals are highlighted in Table I.

Insert Table I here

To date, the majority of researchers working in the area of job customizations have studied these two separately. There is a growing call for studying the two constructs together (Liao et al., 2016; Rofcanin et al., 2016), and developing a nuanced understanding of how and why job customizations are pursued (Simosi et al., 2021).

Researchers initially focused on the conceptualization (Rousseau et al., 2006; Tims and Bakker, 2010) and operationalization of job crafting and i-deals negotiation (Rosen et al., 2013; Tims et al., 2012). Later, they focused on investigating the antecedents and outcomes of these behaviors (Liao et al., 2016; Simosi et al., 2021; Zhang and Parker, 2019). More recently, researchers have started exploring newer types of customizations, for instance, negotiation of financial bonus (Marescaux et al., 2019) and crafting of working hours and location to fit work and personal demands (Wessels et al., 2020). Recent research is also looking at how contextual factors affect the outcomes of job customizations pursued by employees. For instance, Mackintosh and McDermott (2023) show that a financial i-deal negotiated vis-a-vis market-value of the employee will make the employee feel entitled and lead to no major reciprocations by the employee; whereas a flexibility i-deal negotiated using relational strength with the employer will make the employee feel valued and lead to employee reciprocations. Most of this research on job crafting is dominated with job demands-resources theory (Zhang and

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Parker, 2019) and the same for i-deals is dominated with social exchange theory (Liao et al., 2016).

In our research, we draw upon social learning theory (SLT) and conservation of resources (COR) theory for two major reasons. One, both the theories allow for integration of contextual factors such as witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and need for legitimization. Two, the theories lend well to understanding the motivation behind job customizations’ pursuit. SLT asserts that people learn by observing others’ behaviors and simulating those behaviors that they perceive to be fruitful (Bandura, 1977; Gibson, 2004). Using SLT helps to understand the source of learning and the impetus to imitate the customizations pursued by employees. The knowledge that employees develop from observing their co-workers and their organization gives them a motivational nudge to pursue customizations in their jobs. COR theory asserts that the things that individuals value are resources (Hobfoll, 1989). It focuses on the acquisition, conservation and investment of these resources by individuals (Hobfoll et al., 2018). Given its focus on the value individuals place on gathering and conserving resources for attainment of their goals (Halbesleben et al., 2014), COR theory complements SLT by helping to explain that employees value the resources that they gain through witnessing i-deals: knowledge of the job customization possibilities available in the organization, etc., and strive to strengthen their own resource position (by getting customizations and associated benefits for themselves).

**3. Hypothesis Development**

**Witnessing co-workers’ i-deals, task crafting and task i-deals negotiation**

Employees notice what is happening around them in their organizations, make interpretations of their observations and label them in categories that they can refer to when making decisions (Weick et al., 2005). SLT describes how these vicarious and observational experiences influence individuals’ behavior significantly (Bandura, 1977). Vicarious experiences impact



employees' confidence and perceptions of possibilities, based on their observation of significant others in their work environment. The significant others most frequently observed by employees in their organizations are their co-workers and their managers. Because of the inherent task interdependence, employees work and interact with their co-workers on a regular basis, and make observations in this process. Employees also indulge in comparing their inputs at, and rewards from, their job with that of their co-workers (Adams, 1965). If they perceive any kind of difference in the rewards they receive ~~versuss~~ the rewards their co-workers receive, they make efforts to equalize the two (Rousseau, 2001). Being a type of reward that employees receive for their contributions (actual or expected) to the organization, i-deals also come under the gambit of observation, comparison and learning that happens amongst employees at the workplace.

Witnessing co-workers' i-deals signals the plausibility of receiving job customizations similar to the ones that the co-workers obtained (Rousseau, 2005). Additionally, witnessing i-deals may also seed a desire for pursuing fresh job customizations in the employee's mind (Ng and Lucianetti, 2016; Zhang et al., 2021). I-deals often lead to heightened work performance (Rofcanin et al., 2021; Taser et al., 2022), and therefore, co-workers may get motivated to pursue them, expecting similar kinds of positive results for themselves. Previous research has established that employees try to imitate the behaviors of their co-workers, particularly when they perceive such behavior to be beneficial for them (Manz and Sims, 1981; Myers, 2018; Ng et al., 2021). Since i-deal negotiation involves organizational authorization, which may take some time (Clark, 1999; Simosi et al., 2021), employees may first resort to task crafting to modify or redefine their tasks on their own. Hence, we hypothesize that witnessing co-workers' i-deals will motivate employees to pursue task crafting.

H1: Witnessing co-workers' i-deals is positively associated with task crafting by the employee.

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Task crafting signifies the modifications employees make in their tasks without any explicit organizational consent. After making such modifications on their own, employees are likely to feel more engaged in their work (Federici et al., 2021; Shin et al., 2020) and more committed towards their career (Kundi et al., 2022; Wong et al., 2021). The enhanced work engagement and career commitment symbolize energy resources (Hobfoll, 2001), which help employees in not just surviving through their work demands but also meeting their performance expectations (Christian et al., 2011). As a result, employees are driven to increase these energy resources for themselves. This is supported by the resource investment principle of COR theory, which states that “people must invest resources in order to protect against resource loss, recover from losses, and gain resources” (Hobfoll, 2011, p. 197). Using this principle, we argue that employees will invest their energy to pursue more task customizations in order to retain and multiply their feelings of work engagement and career commitment. Since employees’ job responsibilities are governed by organizational boundaries, they have a limited capacity to modify their tasks on their own, ultimately leading them to seek their organization’s support or consent for obtaining further task customizations. Therefore, we propose that task crafting will motivate employees to pursue task i-deals negotiation.

H2: Task crafting is positively associated with task i-deals negotiation.

We have proposed that witnessing co-workers’ i-deals will motivate employees to pursue customizations in their jobs. We further suggest that upon learning about the possibility of, and acceptability of, making job customizations as well as the benefits of job customizations, employees will want to start or accelerate their own resource accumulation cycle. Understanding the pre-requisites to successfully receive the i-deal and carry out the actual negotiation may take some time (Hochschild, 1997; Rousseau et al., 2016), leading employees to first attempt crafting. Once they have tested the waters on the ground as well as experienced the benefits for themselves (gain of energy resources like work engagement and

career commitment), they will want to convert their own efforts (task crafting) into a more legitimate resource (task i-deal). They will want to retain, protect and multiply their newly acquired energy resources, for which they will want to obtain more such customizations, and rather in a stable form (Rofcanin et al., 2021). This is supported by the basic idea behind COR theory which states “individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster, and protect those things they centrally value” (Hobfoll et al., 2018, p. 104). Therefore, we hypothesize that task crafting will act as a mediator between witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and task i-deals negotiation.

H3: Task crafting has a mediating impact on the positive association between witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and task i-deals negotiation.

#### **Moderating role of need for legitimization (NL)**

Employees’ perceptions of their need to obtain organizational approval or consent for customizing their job elements is conceptualized as “*need for legitimization of job customization(s)*”. Need for legitimization of job customizations(s) has not been studied in i-deals research so far. To date, i-deals researchers have focused on the “*individually negotiated*” feature of i-deals; ~~but~~ employees’ perceptions of the necessity to obtain organizational consent has not been captured.

Research has established that a person or an entity obtains legitimization to show to others that they conform to the acceptable norms existing within the internal environment – the organization, or the external environment – the society (Ashforth and Gibbs, 1990; Suchman, 1995). It is a way of justifying one’s actions (Smart Oruh et al., 2020). With respect to i-deals, employees may feel the need to obtain legitimization to show - to themselves and others - that their desired job customizations are acceptable within their organization.

We suggest that employees’ perceptions of the NL of their desired customization(s) will affect their pursuit of i-deals negotiation. These perceptions may be shaped by the

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outcomes that an organization values (achieving well-being of its employees or maintaining internal control of the organization or ensuring environmental adaptation and innovation or ensuring productivity and goal achievement for optimum functioning of the organization) and the resultant managerial practices. For instance, organizations having a performance orientation may encourage their employees to excel in their careers (Prince et al., 2020; House et al., 2002; Prince et al., 2020). Employees belonging to such organizations may perceive that their organizations are open to providing employees with individualized job elements. Such perceptions can influence how strongly employees feel about their need for legitimizing their desired customizations.

We propose that employees who strongly perceive that they require legitimization of their desired task customization(s) are keener towards pursuing task i-deals negotiation. On the contrary, employees whose NL is low, may not be so keen towards pursuing such explicit negotiation for customization(s).

H4: NL (of task customizations) moderates the positive relationship between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation, such that the positive relationship is stronger for employees with greater NL as compared to those with lesser NL.

Combining hypotheses 3 (the mediation hypothesis) and 4 (the moderation hypothesis), we propose a moderated mediation hypothesis: NL (of task customizations) will moderate the indirect effect of witnessing co-workers' i-deals on task i-deals negotiation through task crafting.

H5: The indirect effect of witnessing co-workers' i-deals on employee's task i-deals negotiation via task crafting is stronger for employees with greater NL as compared to those with lesser NL.

### Task i-deals negotiation and personal brand equity

In any job, employees must build a brand value which is unique to them (Clark, 2011). PBE is a unique resource that employees start building from early on in their careers. Right from the early-career stages, individuals pursue those professional assignments which would help them in establishing their personal brands to increase their value in the employment market (Close et al., 2011). Research on PBE was initiated by marketing scholars in their studies on *human brand* (Thomson, 2006). Given the increasing importance of personal branding in managing jobs and careers, PBE has been picked up by careers literature (Gorbatov et al., 2018, 2019). Since PBE is a personal resource that can be developed by all employed people (Lair et al., 2005), we included it in our study as an important outcome variable.

To hypothesize the association of task i-deals negotiation with PBE, this study uses the resource gain corollary of COR theory, which states that “initial resource gains lead to future resource gains” (Halbesleben et al., 2014, p. 1337). Successfully obtaining task i-deals helps employees to obtain more useful resources such as abilities, knowledge, **fitment with the job** and greater job **alignment and** control (Rousseau et al., 2016). These instrumental resources put employees in a psychologically advantageous position where they perceive themselves to have a positive standing in their profession. Thus, we propose that gaining task i-deals can lead to the gain of one’s PBE.

This is also supported by signaling theory which explains that signals are used to convey powerful messages between two parties (Connelly et al., 2011). I-deal researchers have highlighted that i-deals “can signal [to their recipients] the value an employer places on [them]” (Rousseau et al., 2006, p. 979). The widely accepted perception that i-deals are given to good performers (Rousseau et al., 2006), translates into signals of recognition of i-dealers’ competence by their organization (Ho and Kong, 2015). Hence, by providing task i-deals,

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employers convey to the i-dealers that they are held in high regard by their organizations, strengthening i-dealers’ PBE perceptions.

H6: Successful task i-deals negotiation is positively associated with employees’ personal brand equity.

A summary of proposed hypotheses is presented in Figure 1 below.

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Insert Figure 1 here

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**4. Methods**

**4.1 Sampling and Data Collection**

Data were collected from full-time working professionals in IT and consulting industry in India. IT and consulting firms are major contributors to the service sector in India, which is a key driver to the Indian economy (IBEF, 2023).

Our choice of sample was driven by Eisenhardt’s (1989) recommendation about theoretical sampling. Recent studies show that consulting and IT professionals engage in i-deals negotiation at their workplaces (Anand et al., 2018; Avgoustaki and Cañibano, 2024; Ng and Feldman, 2015; Rofcanin et al., 2021, among others). IT and consulting professionals are knowledge workers, who are heavily reliant on their expertise and knowledge to deliver their work and grow in their career (Donnelly, 2009; Sokolov and Zavyalova, 2021). Their organizations are also dependent on them as they want to leverage their human capital to create innovative solutions and products for their clients (Ray et al., 2023). Research suggests that such professionals are crucial to drive clients’ relationships using their personal brand (Sokolov and Zavyalova, 2021), and may have an advantageous position in their organizations (Bal and

Hornung, 2019; Dawson et al., 2013). Therefore, we chose to collect data from IT and consulting professionals working in India. Our sample largely comprised alumni of top tier academic institutions in India. Alumni of top tier academic institutions may hold a privileged position and hence, one can expect these professionals to pursue i-deals negotiation and personal brand development.

Individuals were invited to participate in the study via social media (e.g., LinkedIn). All participants were informed of the study's objectives, duration, confidentiality of data, and their rights as participants (right to exit the study at any time of their choice, voluntary participation, and anonymity of their identity). Data were collected in three waves via online survey links, separated by two months each. Two months' time has been considered sufficient in organizational behavior studies (Guo et al., 2022; Liu et al., 2021). ~~Four hundred~~400 individuals were invited to participate. ~~Three hundred and three~~303 individuals completed all the three surveys. Respondents who defaulted on attention check questions were removed, resulting in a 277 sample size. Finally, participants who had not negotiated task i-deals successfully were removed, resulting in a final dataset of 259 respondents. In the first round of data collection, participants were requested to fill out their email id (to be used for all three rounds of surveys) and their age. This information was used to generate a code for each participant using a macro enabled automated script. The code consisted of first four characters of their email id followed by the four digits of their birth year. In subsequent rounds of data collection, the form had a field where the participants were asked to input the first four characters of their email id and their birth year. In this way, data was matched throughout the three rounds. Of the final respondents, 80 percent were male. The mean age of the participants was 29 years. On an average, they worked for 48 hours per week. Education-wise, 81 percent ~~participants of the respondents~~ had ~~completed~~ post-graduation and above degrees and while the rest ~~were graduates~~ had completed under-graduation. ~~44.79 percent participants~~ About 45

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percent of the respondents had 2-5 years of work experience and 68.73 percent participants-of the respondents had worked under their current manager from 0-12 months (see Table II for complete distribution).

Insert Table II here

4.2 Measures

Witnessing co-workers’ i-deals was measured at T1 with an adapted version of Hornung et al.’s (2014) nine-item i-deals scale. The instruction was adapted to convey the meaning of witnessing co-workers’ i-deals for respondents: “Employees negotiate with their organization to customize their jobs to suit their personal needs, interests and strengths. In the following statements, rate the extent to which you believe your co-workers have such arrangements. Co-workers are people in your organization in a comparable position who have similar work loads and with whom you work frequently.” The scale measures task i-deals (three items, sample item: “job tasks that fit their personal strengths and talents”), developmental i-deals (three items, sample item: “career options that suit their personal goals”), and flexibility i-deals (three items, sample item: “a work schedule suited to them personally”). We added one more item to developmental i-deals (previously used by Hornung et al., 2008), as we found it to be relevant for our sample: “special opportunities for skill development”. The measure used a 7-point likert scale (1= “Not at all” to 7= “To a very large extent”). Since our purpose was to capture whether the respondents have witnessed any type of i-deal in their organization, we used this as a second-order scale in our analysis (cronbach alpha,  $\alpha = 0.941$ ).

Task crafting was measured at T2. Four-items of promotion-oriented task crafting from Bindl et al. (2019)’s job crafting questionnaire ( $\alpha = .844$ ), with sample items as: “I actively took on



more tasks in my work” and “I changed my tasks so that they were more challenging”, were used with a 7-point likert scale (1= “Not at all” to 7= “To a very large extent”).

*Need for legitimization* was measured at T2. NL for task customizations was an adapted version of the Hornung et al. (2014)’s three-item task i-deals scale ( $\alpha = 0.941$ ). Sample item is: “personally motivating job tasks”. The instruction was adapted to convey the meaning of NL of customizations for respondents: “Employees customize their jobs to suit their personal needs, interests and strengths which may require their organization’s approval. Please indicate the extent to which you may require your organization’s approval to make the following customizations.” The measure used a 7-point likert scale (1= “Not at all” to 7= “To a very large extent”).

*Task i-deals negotiation* was measured at T3 using Hornung et al. (2014)’s three-item task i-deals scale ( $\alpha = 0.856$ ). Respondents were given the instruction: “Employees negotiate with their organization to customize their jobs to suit their personal needs, interests and strengths. In the following statements, rate the extent to which you have asked for and successfully negotiated each of the personalized conditions (in the past two months).” Sample item is: “personally motivating job tasks”. Since our study was on successful i-deals negotiation, we anchored the ratings of the seven-point scale (1 = “Did not ask at all”, 2 = “Asked but did not succeed”, 3 = “To a very small extent” to 7= “To a very large extent”) to ensure that the respondents who were not successful in their i-deals negotiation were able to indicate so. We included the data of only those respondents who had negotiated task i-deals successfully (respondents who had marked a 1 or a 2 on all the items were excluded from the study).

*Personal brand equity* was measured at T3 using the Gorbatov et al.’s (2021) twelve-item scale. The scale measures employees’ brand appeal (four items, sample item: “I have a positive professional image among others”), brand differentiation (four items, sample item: “I am

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10 considered a better professional compared to others”), and brand recognition (four items,  
11 sample item: “My name is well known in my professional field”). We used this scale as a  
12 second-order scale because the purpose was to capture employees’ perceptions of their overall  
13 personal brand equity ( $\alpha = 0.941$ ).  
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18 **4.3 Control variables**

19 Demographic variables controlled were age, gender, number of working hours, total working  
20 experience and manager-employee tenure. The impact of these variables on task crafting and  
21 task i-deals negotiation was controlled. Further, the impact of interpersonal influence on task  
22 crafting and task i-deals negotiation was also controlled as it has been found to be influencing  
23 both these variables (Philip, 2021; Rosen et al., 2013). Interpersonal influence was measured  
24 with three items from Ferris et al.’s (2005) interpersonal influence scale; sample item is: “I am  
25 able to make most people feel comfortable and at ease around me” ( $\alpha = 0.885$ ). Interpersonal  
26 skills can also influence employees’ perceptions of their brand value, therefore we controlled  
27 for its impact on PBE. All the control variables were measured at T1. The preliminary analysis  
28 showed that age, number of working hours and manager-employee tenure did not have any  
29 impact on task crafting and/or task i-deals negotiation. Hence, it was deemed appropriate to  
30 remove them from the final hypotheses testing for more parsimonious results (Becker et al.,  
31 2016).  
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43 **5. Data analysis**

44 There were no patterns of missing values in the data. We had already removed the defaulters  
45 on attention check items. The final sample was ~~of~~ 259 respondents. The means, standard  
46 deviation, and inter-correlations between the variables used in this study are given in Table IV.  
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48 The values of variance inflation factors (VIFs) for all constructs were below 10 (highest value  
49 was 1.268); showing that multicollinearity was not an area of concern for this study (Hair et  
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al., 1998). Further, we used mean-centred values of task crafting and NL to prevent any multicollinearity issue (Aiken and West, 1991). PROCESS MACRO and simple linear regression in R were used to test the hypotheses. First, measurement and structural models were tested by running CFA in AMOS, which established the factorial validity of the theoretical model.

### Measurement model

Following the widely accepted recommendations of Hair et al. (2010), we first assessed construct reliability for all the study variables. Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) values ranged from 0.844 to 0.949, and all the composite reliability (CR) values were greater than 0.70. These values indicate that the variables had good internal consistency (Hair et al., 2010). Next, convergent validity was assessed. The values of all item loadings were greater than 0.5 and significant at  $p < 0.001$ . Additionally, the values of AVE for all variables were greater than 0.50, indicating that convergent validity for all variables was good (Hair et al., 2010). Lastly, following the recommendations of Fornell and Larcker (1981), discriminant validity was assessed by comparing the correlations between the variables with the square root of their AVE values (see Table IV). Since values of square root of AVE were greater than all the correlation values for all variables, it was established that discriminant validity was good (Hair et al., 2010).

In addition to conducting the CFA for assessing discriminant validity, we also used heterotrait–monotrait ratio (HTMT) criterion (Henseler et al., 2015). HTMT is calculated using correlations matrix of the variables (Henseler et al., 2015). It was done in MS Excel by using the formula:  $HTMT (Var1Var2) = \frac{\text{average (correlations of items across Var1 and Var2)}}{\sqrt{\text{average (correlations of within Var1)} * \text{average (correlations of items within Var2)}}}$ . All the HTMT values were well below the recommended value of 0.85 (see Table III), and thus discriminant validity was upheld using this criterion also. These criteria are being used widely

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10 by researchers to establish the reliability and validity of study variables (Lathabhavan and  
11 Griffiths, 2024; Sharma et al., 2022).

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21 **Structural model**

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23 The proposed theoretical model demonstrated good fit with the empirical data. The values of  
24 model fit indices were within the acceptable range. The acceptable range is: CMIN/df should  
25 be between 1 and 3, TLI and CFI should be greater than 0.90, RMSEA and SRMR should be  
26 less than 0.80 (Hair et al., 2010; Hu and Bentler, 1999). The model fit indices values for this  
27 study’s proposed model were well within the recommended range: CMIN = 760.426, df = 448,  
28 CMIN/df = 1.697, TLI = 0.952, CFI = 0.956, RMSEA = 0.052, SRMR = 0.052; indicating  
29 good fitment of empirical data.

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42 **Common method bias**

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44 Several approaches were adopted to prevent the occurrence of common method bias (Podskaoff  
45 et al., 2003). First, it was ensured that participants understood that their data would remain  
46 confidential with the research group. This would reduce the social desirability bias (Podskaoff  
47 et al., 2003). Second, well-established scales were used for all the constructs’ measurements.  
48 This ensured that the items clearly represented the meaning of the construct (MacKenzie and  
49 Podskaoff, 2012). Third, participants were informed that the survey questions were supposed

to be filled out purely on the basis of their current experience of their professional life. There was no sense of right or wrong associated with those questions. Fourth, it was ensured that the participants understood the purpose of the research is purely professional (knowledge enhancement for practitioners and academicians in the HR/OB field) and not personal. Fifth, following the recommendations of MacKenzie and Podsakoff (2012), the measurement of predictor, mediating and criterion variables was separated, by collecting data at three times in two months lag. Lastly, Harman's single factor test was run to evaluate if the variance in the findings was due to the presence of any common method bias. The results demonstrated that only 28 percent variance was explained by the single factor, which is well below the acceptable limit of 50 percent (Chang et al., 2010).

### Hypothesis testing and results

Hypotheses were tested using PROCESS MACRO in R (Hayes, 2012). First, Model 4 was used to test hypotheses 1 to 3. Then, Model 14 was used to test hypotheses 4 and 5. 10000 bootstraps and 95 percent confidence level were chosen for estimating bias-corrected confidence intervals in the outputs for both models (Hayes, 2017). Lastly, we used the linear regression function (lm) to test hypothesis 6.

#### *Mediation test*

Mediation results are presented in Table V. Hypothesis 1 proposed that witnessing co-workers' i-deals was positively related to task crafting. It was supported as the path coefficient was significant at  $p < 0.001$  and confidence intervals did not contain any zero ( $\beta = 0.279$ ,  $SE = 0.068$ , 95% CI = 0.146 to 0.412). Hypothesis 2, proposing a positive relationship between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation, was also supported ( $\beta = 0.232$ ,  $SE = 0.051$ , 95% CI = 0.131 to 0.332). Hypothesis 3, proposing an indirect effect of witnessing co-workers' i-deals on task i-deals negotiation, via task crafting, was also supported ( $\beta = 0.065$ ,  $SE = 0.022$ , 95% CI = 0.027 to 0.112). Since the effect of witnessing co-workers' i-deals on task i-deals negotiation was

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also significant ( $\beta = 0.174$ ,  $SE = 0.057$ , 95%  $CI = 0.062$  to  $0.286$ ), we can conclude that there was a partial mediation effect.

Insert Table V here

*Moderation and moderated mediation tests*

Hypothesis 4 proposed the moderating effect of NL on the positive relationship between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation, such that the positive relationship is stronger for employees with greater NL as compared to those with lesser NL. Interestingly, the results showed counter-intuitive finding (see Table VI). The moderation effect was significant, but not in the direction as hypothesized ( $\beta = -0.072$ ,  $t = -2.733$ ,  $p < 0.01$ , 95%  $CI = -0.124$  to  $-0.020$ ). It showed negative (dampening) rather than positive (strengthening) effect. The simple slope analysis is depicted in Figure 2. Since task crafting and NL were mean-centred, the values depict the slopes for 1SD below mean, mean, and 1SD above mean. In figure 2, the slope is steeper for 1SD below mean and mean values of NL, as compared to 1SD above mean. This indicates that the moderating effect was significant for low ( $\beta = 0.370$ ,  $SE = 0.066$ , 95%  $CI = 0.239$  to  $0.500$ ) and average values ( $\beta = 0.249$ ,  $SE = 0.051$ , 95%  $CI = 0.149$  to  $0.349$ ) of NL, and it became insignificant for high level ( $\beta = 0.128$ ,  $SE = 0.069$ , 95%  $CI = -0.007$  to  $0.263$ ) of NL (also see Table VII).

Insert Table VI here

Insert Figure 2 here

Hypothesis 5 proposed a moderated mediation relationship between witnessing co-workers' i-deals and task i-deals negotiation, through task crafting, on NL. The index of moderated mediation showed support for hypothesis 5 as the confidence intervals did not include a zero ( $\beta = -0.020$ ,  $SE = 0.009$ , 95%  $CI = -0.040$  to  $-0.004$ ). Here again, the direction of the impact was opposite from expected. It was negative, rather than positive. The moderating effect for different levels of NL is reported in Table VII. For low NL, the first phase (i.e., the analysis commands that run before bootstrapping) indirect effect is 0.370 and for the second phase (the analysis commands that run after bootstrapping) indirect effect is 0.103. The total indirect effect is 0.038 ( $0.370 \times 0.103$ ). The direct effect is 0.177; and the total effect is 0.215 ( $0.038 + 0.177$ ). For high NL, the first phase indirect effect is 0.128 and the same for the second phase is 0.036. Total indirect effect is 0.005. The direct effect is 0.177 and the total effect is 0.182. The difference between the indirect ( $-0.0334$ ) and total ( $-0.0334$ ) effects for high and low NL shows that the effect is much stronger for low NL.

Insert Table VII here

#### *Linear Regression for testing hypothesis 6*

Last step of hypothesis testing involved testing the association between task i-deals negotiation and PBE by using linear regression function in R. The impact of interpersonal influence on PBE was controlled. The results show that task i-deals negotiation is positively associated with PBE ( $\beta = 0.304$ ,  $SE = 0.040$ ,  $t$  value = 7.525,  $p < 0.001$ ).

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**6. Discussion**

In this study, we investigated the relationship between witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and task crafting; and between task crafting and task i-deals negotiation. Further, the role of task crafting as a mediator and the role of NL as a moderator were examined. Findings show a partial mediation effect of task crafting on the positive relationship between witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and task i-deals negotiation. This mediation effect was stronger for employees who perceive low NL as compared to those with high NL. The direction of NL’s moderating effect was counter-intuitive to the proposed hypothesis, opening opportunities for future research.

**Theoretical implications**

Our study makes significant contributions to the task crafting and task i-deals literature. Despite several similarities between job crafting and i-deals, research investigating the two constructs together is scarce. This is one of the very few studies that investigate the two constructs together.

Previous research has established that witnessing co-workers’ i-deals can convey to employees that i-deals are feasible in their organization and can motivate them to negotiate their own i–deals (Ng and Lucianetti, 2016; Skyes-Bridge et al., 2023). In a trickle-down study of i-deals negotiation behavior, Rofcanin et al. (2018) highlighted that managers who successfully negotiate i-deals for themselves set a leading example for their subordinates to negotiate i-deals. In job crafting literature too, studies have shown crossover of crafting behavior from employees to their co-workers and colleagues (Bakker et al., 2016; Demerouti and Peeters, 2018; Peeters et al., 2016). The existing studies examine the transmission of the same proactive behavior (i-deals or job crafting) from employees to other organizational members. Our study extends this line of research by examining the effects of witnessing coworkers’ i-deals on task crafting and task i-deals negotiation. Our results indicate that witnessing co-workers’ successful i-deals negotiation seeds a desire in employees for pursuing



customizations in their own jobs and the plausibility of getting it. As a result, they resort to both crafting and i-deals negotiation to pursue task customizations at work.

The finding that task crafting acts as a mediator between witnessing co-workers' i-deals and task i-deals negotiation indicates that employees try to build their capability (to make and manage the task customizations) before seeking formal approval. Partial mediation shows that crafting could be one of the routes that employees may choose to pursue i-deals negotiation. However, it is not necessary that all employees will pursue crafting before i-deals negotiation or that all i-deals negotiation will happen after crafting. For instance, an employee who witnessed their co-worker negotiating permission to work on a more challenging project, might approach the manager to negotiate the same, without attempting prior crafting for the same.

The positive association of task crafting with task i-deals negotiation indicates that successful task customizations without organizational involvement build confidence in employees, which serves as an impetus to seek formal consent. Employees therefore, get motivated to foster, retain and sustain the resources gained through task crafting by investing effort in negotiating task i-deals. This finding shows the importance of conducting research on interdependent proactive behaviors at work as it provides insights into how employees make efforts (that go noticed or unnoticed) to accumulate resources for themselves at work.

NL requires attention since the need for authorization underpins i-deals. Contrary to our hypothesis, we found that the effect of NL was stronger for employees with low NL and it became insignificant for those with high NL. This counterintuitive finding opens avenues for future research. First, pursuing task crafting usually offers better task and career satisfaction and strengthens engagement with work (Dubbelt et al., 2019); making employees enter a positive resource gain cycle. This may precipitate the employee to invest more energy in obtaining additional resources by negotiating for task i-deals, to help sustain the satisfaction,

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engagement and associated resources gathered through task crafting. Second, since the motivation to pursue task customizations is triggered by witnessing i-deals, they may want to have the first-hand experience of negotiating i-deals with their organization, even if their NL is low. Lastly, employees may be negotiating i-deals to verify whether they are being perceived as valuable enough to be awarded an i-deal. This may be further explained by the positive association of task i-deals negotiation with PBE as discussed below.

The positive association of task i-deals negotiation with employees' PBE indicates that employees pursue task i-deals negotiation to verify and/or build their personal brand equity. Researchers have indicated that employees should ideally have a good relationship with their manager (Skyles-Bridge et al., 2023), and an established reputation for continuous high performance (Rousseau et al., 2006), to increase their chances of receiving task i-deals. Successful task i-deals negotiation conveys to employees that their organization "not only recognizes their competence and skill sets, but also values them to the extent of reconfiguring their work tasks so as to better utilize such skill sets" (Ho and Kong, 2015, p. 151). Employees therefore, may pursue task i-deals negotiation, despite low NL, to verify their worthiness in the eyes of their organization and enhance their own and others' perceptions of their PBE. This finding contributes to the job design literature too, which has since its inception moved from focus on predictability and efficiency through standardized job designs (Taylor, 1911), to examining how job design/redesign leads to work engagement, job satisfaction, job performance, person-job fitment, employee well-being, etc. (Oldham and Fried, 2016). The advent and growth of research on task crafting, not only recognized that job redesign can be initiated by the employee (bottom-up) without awaiting managerial interventions (top-down), but also recognized the individual requirements that defy the one-size-fits-all approach to job design. Job customizations not only help to meet employees' unique needs/aspirations, but can

also create avenues for their brand appeal, differentiation and recognition, within and outside of their organization, an insight surfaced by our findings pertaining to PBE.

These findings show that i-deals pursuit is a proactive attempt at building resource reservoirs. Researchers advocate that “people employ key resources not only to respond to stress, but also to build a reservoir of sustaining resources for times of future need” (Hobfoll et al., 2014, p. 104). With regard to i-deals, the findings of this research indicate that employees may use task i-deals negotiation as a route to adding to their reservoir of resources such as reputation that they could bank upon for immediate or future use.

Our study also advances the literature on PBE. It is one of the earliest studies in HR literature that shows the relevance of the construct. Personal brand equity is a psychological resource for employees, which gives them confidence that they have a personal brand and people in their organization (especially the manager or the negotiating agent) and their professional field are aware of it. They may not need to use their brand equity in the present but they develop and verify it, so it can be used in future for more resource gain or resource loss prevention.

### **Practical implications**

I-deals are an important source of positive reinforcement which signal the value of the employee for the organization. I-deals therefore need to be used carefully as they have the potential to impact the organizational culture in several ways. The results from our study show the importance of witnessing i-deals in perpetuating job customizations in the organization. This makes it pertinent for the managers and organizations to be aware of and open towards job customizations pursued by employees.

When an i-deal is granted, it signals the acceptability of that type of job customization in the organization, which those witnessing the deal may also pursue. Since employees may

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pursue job customizations without explicitly informing or negotiating with the organization (in the form of crafting), managing the perceptions regarding acceptability of job customizations becomes more crucial. The perceptions created by i-deals grant guide crafting efforts also. This is especially important while granting competence-enabling and/or signaling i-deals as they may influence employees' crafting efforts also. Hence, managers and organizations should give careful consideration to the scope and the eligibility criterion behind the task customizations that they are allowing. They should maintain transparency regarding the rationale behind granting task i-deals to any employee, and ensure that other employees qualifying the same rationale are also able to obtain their task i-deals. This would also help them in maintaining justice and equity perceptions.

The perception setting regarding acceptable task customizations could also be used as an indirect reinforcement mechanism to encourage those customizations that are beneficial for the organization. In this direction, organizations and managers may appreciate and promote those i-deals that align with the goals and values of the organization. For instance, if an organization values innovation, and an employee negotiates working on developing a technologically advanced integrated customer service chatbot and delivers a good prototype of the same, the organization could grant them some time to work on the same. Granting such deals can impact organizational culture fostering greater innovation and proactivity.

Since i-deals are known to be beneficial for both employees and employers (Rousseau et al., 2006; 2016), managers and organizations may want to check-in on the progress of the i-deal granted by them. It may be advisable to hold the employees accountable for execution of their i-deals, wherever necessary. This may be done by, for instance, incorporating the i-deal execution as the employee's key performance indicator for that year. This would ensure that employees feel responsible for executing their part of the i-deal's promise. Doing so would give signals to those witnessing the i-deals that organizations expect reciprocations in return of

the i-deals. Resultantly, it would promote a mutual and responsible culture with respect to job customizations behavior in the organizations.

The insight that employees may be using i-deals obtainment to verify and position themselves as competent and worthy of being invested into, has broader implications for organizations. Until now, grant of i-deals have been seen as an employer branding tool to enhance their reputation and attract talented individuals to their organization. This study shows that vice-versa is also true, that is, i.e., employees may use i-deal obtainment to enhance their personal brand, which can help them to strengthen their position in the employment market and social media visibility. In order to avoid incorrect portrayal of the granted deals, organizations need to keep a thorough record of the reasons and process through which an i-deal was granted. Repeated negotiations of certain customizations can help the organizations ~~to~~ understand if certain policy refinements are needed.

## 7. Limitations and future research directions

This paper provides important insights into task crafting and task i-deals negotiation behavior. However, these findings need to be considered in light of the constraints of the study. Our data came from employees working full-time in IT and consulting profiles in India. Future studies can validate these findings for employees working in other industries and countries, <sup>3</sup> and on different employment status (such as part-time). Future studies could also look at the differences in task crafting and i-deals negotiation behavior of employees belonging to public ~~versuss.~~ private sector. This would surface-reveal deeper insights into the contextual factors shaping crafting and i-deals negotiations and grants. Our data came predominantly from alumni of reputed tier one institutes in India. Employees from such top-ranking institutes might be more inclined towards building their personal brands. Future researchers can test whether the positive association between task i-deals negotiation and PBE holds true for employees coming from other schools/colleges too. Additionally, future studies could take into consideration the

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multiple crafting efforts that an employee may undertake before seeking i-deals. Investigating these multiple efforts can provide insights into the crafter's / i-dealer's chosen goals, strategies for progression to these goals, self-evaluation, regulation and persistence towards this pursuit, among other aspects. This opens avenues for widening the theoretical lenses used in the i-deals literature (Liao et al., 2016; Simosi et al., 2021). For instance, drawing upon the social cognitive theory, ~~which~~ can help to comprehensively capture the reciprocity between the personal, behavioural and environmental factors shaping an individual's behavior. This also requires an integration of the temporal factors associated with these efforts. Researchers may also want to measure PBE at several time points to capture the changes in PBE after successful job customizations attempts.

This study also demonstrates that negotiating task customizations with the organization is not only an attempt at strengthening the task satisfaction but also a proactive effort at building/verifying one's PBE. Future researchers can investigate additional signals that successful i-deals may convey to those within and outside of the organization. NL has emerged as an interesting construct requiring future research attention. The finding that the effect of NL became insignificant for those with high NL indicates several possibilities. It is potentially likely that other internal factors such as the desire for the customization (strength and salience) and the employee's confidence in their capability (self-efficacy) may be playing a greater motivational role in nudging them to pursue i-deals negotiation. Future research could examine this in detail. Further, the sources shaping the perceptions of NL and its effects on other types of i-deals could be investigated. For instance, the impact of seniority in the organization, career stage of the individual, risk taking capacity of the individual among other aspects could shape the perceptions of NL. Additionally, the interlinkage between other types of crafting and i-deals merits attention.

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Figure 1: Theoretical model

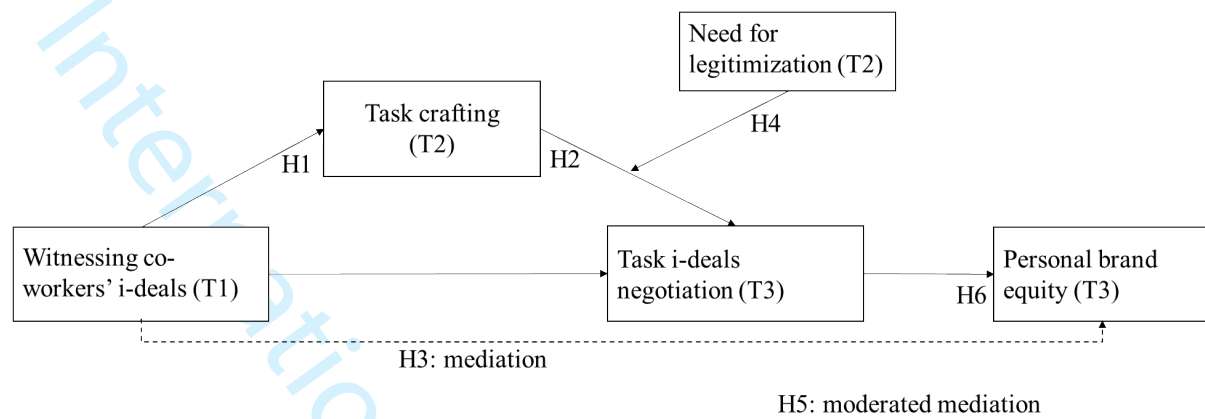


Figure 2: Interaction effect of task crafting and need for legitimization on task i-deals negotiation

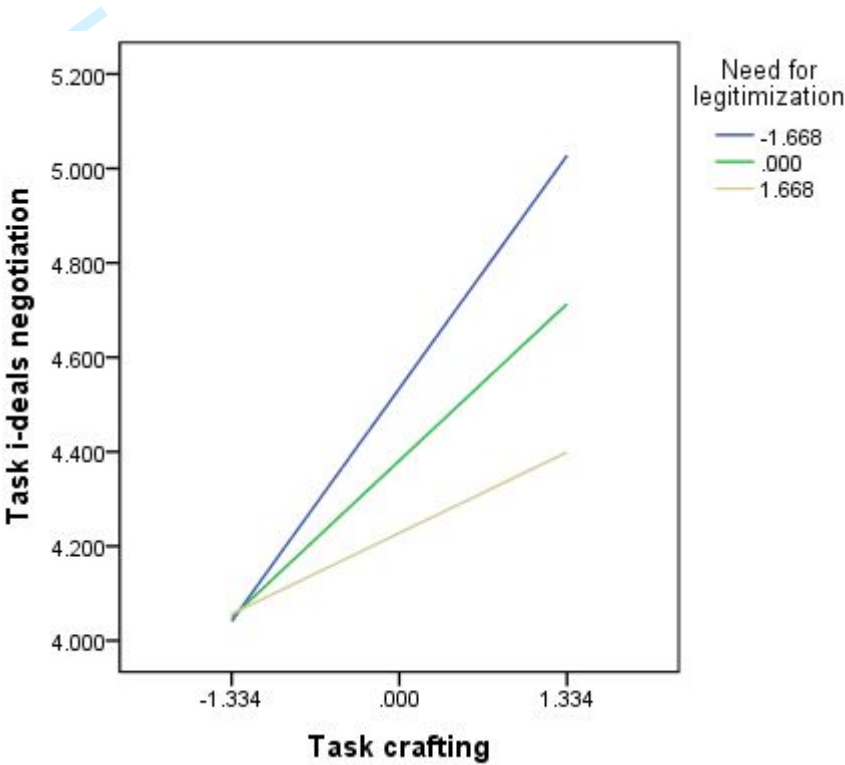


Table I: Distinguishing features of job crafting and i-deals

Features	Job Crafting	I-deals
Target	Job crafting is primarily targeted at meeting employees' personal needs. Crafting efforts may or may not be beneficial to the organization.	I-deals, though also targeted to meet employees' personal needs, are obtained with a mutual agreement between the employee and the organization, and are therefore typically beneficial for both the parties.
Theoretical grounding	Job crafting construct is grounded in the job demands-resources theory.	I-deals construct is grounded in the social exchange theory.
Route	Crafting is pursued through multiple routes, for example, by increasing the number of interactions in the workplace.	I-deals are obtained only after an explicit discussion (obtaining consent or support) with an organizational representative (supervisor, leader, etc.).
Content	Crafting changes are related to the job (tasks and relations on the job, mindset about the job, etc.).	Employees negotiate a wide range of i-deals including their compensation and schedule.
Timing	Crafting is pursued while the employee is on the job.	I-deals can be entered into both at the time of recruitment and during the job.

Table II: Demographic data of the participants

Variable	Number of participants	Percentage of participants
Total work experience (in years)		
0-2	43	16.60
2-5	116	44.79
5-10	74	28.57
10-20	25	9.65
20+	1	0.39
Tenure with the existing manager		
0-6 months	88	33.98
6-12 months	90	34.75
1-2 years	32	12.36
2-5 years	41	15.83
5-10 years	8	3.09
Age (in years)		
22-25	38	14.67
26-30	171	66.02
31-35	37	14.29
36-45	13	5.02
Working hours per week		
35-45	126	48.65
46-50	119	45.95
61 and above	14	5.40
Gender		
Male	207	79.92
Female	52	20.08
Level of education		
Post-graduate and above	210	81.08
Graduates	49	18.92

Job profile category		
Consulting	113	43.63
Information technology	146	56.37

Table III: Discriminant validity assessment using HTMT values

S.No.	Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1	Witnessing i-deals					
2	Task crafting	0.255				
3	Task i-deals negotiation	0.268	0.318			
4	Need for legitimization	0.016	0.204	-0.051		
5	Personal brand equity	0.224	0.138	0.424	0.026	

Table IV: Mean, standard deviation, CR, AVE, inter-correlations and square root of AVEs of the variables

S. No.	Variables	Mean	Std. deviation	$\alpha$	CR	AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6
1	Witnessing co-workers' i-deals	4.460	1.265	0.949	0.922	0.799	0.894					
2	Task crafting	4.054	1.401	0.844	0.851	0.597	0.265*	0.772				
3	Task i-deals negotiation	4.460	1.274	0.856	0.858	0.668	0.247*	0.281*	0.818			
4	Need for legitimization	4.115	1.737	0.941	0.942	0.844	-0.003	0.182*	-0.053	0.919		
5	Personal brand equity	5.405	0.897	0.941	0.897	0.746	0.217*	0.153*	0.389*	0.163*	0.864	
6	Interpersonal influence	5.443	1.041	0.885	0.887	0.723	0.178*	0.286*	0.182*	0.024	0.384*	0.850

Note: The diagonals of the inter-correlation matrix show the square root of AVE for calculating discriminant validity.

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

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

Table V: Mediation results from Model 4 of PROCESS MACRO

Outcome variable: Task crafting (R square = 0.159, F value = 12.027***)				
	$\beta$	SE	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	1.862**	0.616	0.649	3.075
Witnessing i-deals	0.279***	0.068	0.146	0.412
Interpersonal Influence	0.367***	0.091	0.188	0.546
Gender	-0.404*	0.192	-0.782	-0.026
Experience	-0.157	0.089	-0.332	0.018
Outcome variable: Task i-deals negotiation (R square = 0.207, F value = 13.166***)				
Constant	1.572**	0.511	0.565	2.579
Witnessing i-deals	0.174**	0.057	0.062	0.286
Task crafting	0.232***	0.051	0.131	0.332
Interpersonal Influence	0.128	0.076	-0.022	0.279
Gender	0.031	0.158	-0.280	0.342
Experience	0.201**	0.073	0.057	0.344
Indirect effect of witnessing co-workers' i-deals on task i-deals negotiation				
Task crafting	0.065	0.022	0.027	0.112
Note: N=259; ***p<0.001, **p<0.01, *p<0.05				



Table VI: Moderation results from Model 14 of PROCESS MACRO

	$\beta$	SE	t	P	BootLL CI	BootUL CI
Constant	2.362	0.501	4.715	0.000	1.375	3.348
Task crafting	0.249	0.051	4.895	0.000	0.149	0.349
Need for legitimization	-0.092	0.038	-2.411	0.017	-0.167	-0.017
Task crafting x Need for legitimization	-0.072	0.027	-2.733	0.007	-0.124	-0.020
Interpersonal Influence	0.151	0.076	2.003	0.046	0.003	0.300
Gender	0.027	0.154	0.175	0.861	-0.277	0.331
Experience	0.200	0.071	2.804	0.005	0.060	0.341

Table VII: Witnessing co-workers’ i-deals and task i-deals negotiation: The moderated mediation model

Moderator	Phases		Effect		
Need for legitimization	First	Second	Direct	Indirect	Total
Low	0.370	0.103	0.177	0.038	0.215
High	0.128	0.0360	0.177	0.005	0.182
Difference	-0.241	-0.067	0.000	-0.033	-0.033
Index of moderated mediation					
Need for legitimization	$\beta$	SE	LLCI	ULCI	
	-0.020	0.009	-0.040	-0.004	