The Roles of Leader Empowering Behaviour and Employee Proactivity in Daily Job Crafting: A Compensatory Model

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Abstract

The study investigates how daily fluctuations in leader self-rated empowering behaviour are related to employees' daily level job crafting behaviour. From an interactionist perspective, the authors propose and test two competing theoretical models investigating how supervisors' daily empowering behaviour and subordinates' proactive personality jointly affect subordinates' daily work engagement and daily job crafting. One hundred and six leader-follower dyads working in several companies completed a questionnaire and a diary booklet over five consecutive workdays. The results of multi-level analyses revealed a cross-level-moderated mediation model, of which the indirect effect of empowering behaviour on job crafting via work engagement was stronger for less proactive employees than for higher proactive employees. The findings reveal a compensatory relation between leader empowering behaviour and employee proactive personality, suggesting that empowering behaviour would be more effective for increasing the work engagement of less proactive workers. Future directions and human resource management implications are discussed.

Introduction

In an ever-changing workplace, organizations and employees are faced with increasing uncertainty and dynamism, with which employees are encouraged to flexibility make adjustments to cope (Tims et al., 2014). Consequently, employees often diverge from their formally assigned job duties, and instead shape and remodel their jobs to fit their passions and preferences, an active initiative called *job crafting* (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Applied psychologists and management scholars agree that job crafting has the capacity to benefit employees in many aspects, such as increasing job satisfaction, reducing turnover intention and job strain, and improving job performance (e.g., Grant, 2012; Petrou et al., 2012).

Crafting actions require employees to seek feedback or information to help them meet job demands and even take on more challenges and responsibilities (Bakker et al., 2012). This is where the role of supervisors comes into play. Literature suggests that one such leadership is of particular relevance, namely empowering leadership (Kim & Beehr, 2017; Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Thun et al., 2018), a group of leadership behaviours that help set up meanings of work requirement, stir up passions and motives to work, and raise a sense of initiating and regulating actions (e.g., Esteves & Lopes, 2017; Spreitzer, 1996). However, there are still three issues that need to be noted. First, the way how empowering behaviour affects employee's job crafting needs to be investigated. Under empowering supervision, employees may be more self-efficacious (Conger & Kanungo, 1988) and hence more motivated to exert self-leading (Petrou et al., 2012) and self-initiating, which are critical elements for crafting behaviour. Unfortunately, past research has predominantly focused on the relationship between empowering behaviour and job crafting, little is known about the underlying mechanism. Hence in the current study, we propose that leaders' empowering behaviour is associated with job crafting via promoting workers' work engagement.

Second, although past research has mainly focused on work engagement as one of the consequences of job crafting (e.g., Hyvönen et al., 2009; Rudolph et al., 2017), some scholars argue that the relationship between job crafting and work engagement is dynamic and reversible (Bakker, 2011; Bakker et al., 2012). Specifically, employees who feel positive affect, such as vigour and dedication of engagement, tend to show an approach tendency, suggesting that they will be more actively engaging in proactive work behaviour (Bindl & Parker, 2011; Parker & Griffin, 2011). For example, in their three-year panel study, Hakanen et al. (2008) surveyed 2,555 Finnish dentists and found that work engagement led to personal initiative. Similarly, in their study among young teachers, Bakker and Bal (2010) observed that engaged teachers were good at mobilizing their own job resources. Therefore, it is reasonable to expect that work engagement could lead to job crafting. In the current research, we attempt to directly test the work engagement – job crafting link using diary data.

Third, although previous studies displayed the relationship between leadership and job crafting, the question that how leaders and employee factors jointly affect job crafting received scarce attention. According to Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989), both supportive behaviour from leaders (i.e., empowering behaviour) and positive personal characteristics (i.e., proactive personality) are resources that

individuals desire, and may result in positive outcomes. However, previous research failed to simultaneously take both of them into consideration. For example, in their work to clarify the effects of empowering leadership on job crafting, Kim and Beehr (2017) made the personal factor (i.e., proactive personality) controlled for rather than tested its joint effects with leadership. In the present study, we draw on COR theory and person-situation interactionist perspective to identify the interplay of leaders' empowering behaviour and employees' proactive personality on individuals' job crafting through work engagement. We proposed and tested two competing models that depict the cross-level interactive relationship in which proactive personality moderates the relationship between empowering behaviour and work engagement.

Apart from addressing the issues mentioned above, our study has two more methodological advantages. On the one hand, most previous studies on empowering behaviour and work engagement adopt a between-person design, which cannot capture the fluctuation of daily changes in them. Diary research, relying less on retrospective recall than ordinary surveys by asking ones' experiences and feelings on a specific day, is critically important for researching work engagement as it helps detect fluctuation on a daily basis (Bakker, 2010). Given both empowering behaviour and state engagement could fluctuate over time (Foster-Fishman et al., 1998), in the current study, we collected data on daily basis.

On the other hand, past research commonly measures empowering leadership and job crafting by self-report surveys from employees. Such single-source data collection can easily exaggerate the relation between leaders' behaviour and employees' responses. To offset this shortcoming, in the current study, we collected data from multi-sources, that is, supervisors reported their empowering behaviour while their subordinates rated their engagement, job crafting and proactive personality.

According to COR theory, several types of resources that may impact job crafting (Hobfoll, 1989), such as object resources (e.g., offices, computers, and cars), condition resources (e.g., supportive supervision), personal resources (e.g., self-efficacy, proactive personality), and energy resources (e.g., time, money, knowledge). In this study, we focus on condition resources in the form of supervisors' empowering behaviour and personal resources in the form of subordinates' proactive personality. Drawing on the theories and research findings of COR and empowering leadership, we propose that work engagement mediates the link between empowering behaviour and job crafting. We also suggest a cross-level interactive relationship in which proactive personality moderates the relationship between empowering behaviour and work engagement. We tested our model by collecting diary fluctuations of subordinates and supervisors for five consecutive working days.

Supervisor empowering behaviour and subordinate job crafting

COR theory assumes that individuals strive to obtain, retain, foster and protect what they primarily value, and the more resources they have, the more gain they will get (Hobfoll, 1989; Hobfoll & Shirom, 2001). Accumulated resources might result in more positive personal outcomes such as adaptation, engagement, and

better coping (Bakker, 2010). Empowering leaders thus provide a critical condition resource by encouraging subordinates and giving them rational and motivational reasons for initiating actions (e.g., Conger, 1999; Conger & Kanungo, 1988; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990) through control, power, and flexibility (Arnold et al., 2000).

Following prior work, we define leader empowering behaviour as the process by which leaders share power with employees by providing additional responsibilities and decision-making authority over work and resources, and support needed to handle the additional responsibilities effectively (Hollander, 2009). Empowerment theory argues that psychological empowerment that fosters a sense of impact, autonomy, competence and meaning could enhance employees' intrinsic motivation and encourage them to reach their full potential through taking initiative and making positive changes in their work roles (Kim & Beehr, 2016; Wong & Giessner, 2018). Consequently, leaders' interpersonal style serves as a contextual catalyst of employee intrinsic motivation (Deci et al., 2017). Given that empowering leaders share power with employees, involve them in decision making, and encourage self-leadership (Wong & Giessner, 2018), we argue that leader empowering behaviour is related to employees proactivity (e.g., Lichtenthaler & Fischbach, 2018; Martin et al., 2013).

As a form of proactive behaviour, job crafting requires adaptation to challenges and constraints posed by a job so as to cope with ongoing changes (Berg et al., 2010). Job crafting can take the form of three different types of behaviour: (a) increasing job resources; (b) seeking job challenges; and (c) reducing job demands (Tims et al., 2012). Based on the conceptualization of Bruning and Campion (2018), it is appropriate to regard seeking resources and challenges as approach crafting, and to treat reducing demands as avoidance crafting. Given that leader empowerment encourages employees to actively solve problems (Zhang & Bartol, 2010), it is likely to be highly related to approach crafting rather than avoidance crafting. Therefore, in the current study, we mainly focused on approach job crafting, namely seeking resources and challenges.

Supervisors' empowering behaviour may promote subordinates' resource-seeking activities. Empowering leaders delegate authority allowing subordinates to determine work arrangements and job designs (Kim & Beehr, 2017; Lee et al., 2017). Delegation flattens organizational structures, so that subordinates have easier access to knowledge, information, and resources (Wang et al., 2017). When empowering leaders ensure that subordinates know about company goals and missions, and provide them with more resources through one-on- one coaching and providing feedback, subordinates are able to overcome barriers and craft their jobs more easily.

Supervisors' empowering behaviour may also facilitate subordinates' challenge-seeking activities. Empowering leaders enable subordinates to perceive themselves to be competent; that their work has meaning, value, and importance; that they can self-initiate and regulate their actions; and that their work impacts others and the organization (Dewettinck & van Ameijde, 2011; Zhang & Bartol, 2010). Their increased self- efficacy, intrinsic motivation, and responsibility will motivate them to seek and overcome challenges to achieve higher performance (e.g., Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001; Zhang & Bartol, 2010) and

to autonomously cope with work challenges (Liu et al., 2003; Vecchio et al., 2010). Empowering leaders may often praise subordinates for being trustworthy. In response, subordinates are apt to maintain the image of being trustworthy by seeking and meeting challenges. Hence, we hypothesize:

Hypothesis 1. Supervisors' empowering behaviour is positively related to subordinates' efforts to seek resources and to seek challenges.

Work engagement as mediator

Work engagement is "an active, positive work-related state of fulfillment . . . characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Bakker, 2011, p. 265). The vigour dimension indicates energy and mental resilience; the dedication dimension indicates strong and enthusiastic involvement; the absorption dimension indicates deep concentration and engrossment. We argue that work engagement could be a mediator explaining how empowerment facilitates job crafting.

COR theory argues that resources are a central motivator that guides behaviour (Hobfoll, 1988, 1989). Organizational resources enhance personal engagement, intrinsically and extrinsically (Hakanen et al., 2006; Llorens et al., 2007). We reason that as an important condition resource, leaders' empowering behaviour could enhance personal engagement. First of all, empowering leadership behaviour intrinsically motivates employees by fulfiling their basic human needs for autonomy, competence, and relatedness (Deci & Ryan, 1985; Ryan & Frederick, 1997). As leaders delegate responsibility, job competence increases, subordinates perceive increased decision latitude, and their needs for autonomy are satisfied. Similarly, when they perceive that leaders care about them, their needs to belong are satisfied. Basically, when subordinates are fulfilled in their work, they have increased energy, mental endurance, significance, and pride, leading to engagement, a positive affective-motivational state.

Second, empowering leadership behaviour is extrinsically motivating in that if subordinates perceive access to environmental resources, they will be more willing to dedicate efforts and abilities to work tasks. Supportive empowering leaders may give more feedbacks and priorities of using work-related resources, resulting in higher engagement. Indeed, empowering behaviour typically involves concern, trust, and encouragement that generate greater employee involvement (Rafferty & Griffin, 2006). Individualized consideration increases vigour, dedication, and absorption, all of which are the key elements of work engagement (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Segers et al., 2010). For example, a multilevel study of Australian fire brigade captains revealed that empowerment creates a vigorous, dedicated, and absorbed workforce (Tuckey et al., 2012). Taken together, empowering leadership behaviour, as a condition resource, fulfill psychological needs and encourages work engagement.

Engaged subordinates are likely to show fuller job investment "by actively changing the job itself to one that is a better fit" (Christian et al., 2011, p. 123), which is analogue to job crafting in the sense that individuals

"make the physical and cognitive changes . . . in the task or relational boundaries of their work" (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001, p. 179). Engaged subordinates are likely to craft their jobs for at least two reasons (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008). On the one hand, engaged individuals feel positive emotions such as interest and contentment that widen their thoughts, actions, and desires to alter the meaning of their work, and seek challenges (Schaufeli & Van Rhenen, 2006). This notion is also consistent with broaden-and- build theory (Fredrickson, 2001; Fredrickson & Branigan, 2005), which claims that positive emotions broaden people's action repertoires, bringing their enduring resources. Specifically, engaged subordinates may tend to pursue changes by altering the form or number of activities they are engaged in, by rearranging work procedures that were not well-designed, or by seeking challenges that enrich the meaning of work.

On the other hand, engaged subordinates are more likely to seek resources as well (Tims & Bakker, 2010). Engaged subordinates devote efforts to accumulate personal or job-related resources for accomplishing tasks. Longitudinal studies have shown that work-engaged employees tend to garner more personal resources (e.g., self-efficacy, organization-based self-esteem) and job resources (e.g., autonomy, coaching, and feedback) over time (e.g., Llorens et al., 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). Therefore, we propose:

Hypothesis 2. Work engagement mediates the relationship between supervisors' daily empowering behaviour and subordinates' daily job crafting indicated by (a) challenge-seeking and (b) resource-seeking.

Employee Proactive Personality as Moderator

Although leader factor is a strong driver for employee work outcomes, employees also play active roles in shaping work experiences and relationships that influence their work (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Specifically, followers' own proactivity, a dispositional tendency to go beyond original work requirements (Crant & Crant, 1995), also plays a role in influencing work performance through work engagement. Inspired by previous work (Newman et al., 2017), the present work poses the following questions: Does work engagement require both employee proactivity and leader empowerment? Or can an employee with low (vs. high) level of proactivity feel engaged under the supervision of an empowering (vs. disempowering) leader? In other words, does employee proactivity interact with leader empowerment in a synergistic or compensatory manner?

Synergistic model

Trait activation theory (Tett et al., 2013) suggests that the effect of personality traits in influencing work behaviour is more pronounced with the presence of relevant situational cues. Individuals are thus likely to behave in a way consistent with their predisposition only when this predisposition is activated by task-related or organizational aspects of the job. This view was supported by empirical studies investigating the relationship between proactive personality and work outcomes. For example, Fuller et al. (2006) found that

individuals higher in proactive personality voiced more only when they had access to resources. Similarly, Parker and Sprigg (1999) reported that individuals with a proactive personality responded positively only if the jobs were with high demands and high control. The fact that employees with different levels of proactive personality react differently to the same management emphasizes the contingencies that proactive employees may prefer certain managerial style. In addition, Blanchard (2018) suggested that employees who are at lower "development levels" should be managed in a "directed" and "coached" way, whereas those at higher levels should be managed in a "supported" and "delegated" way. Accordingly, an empowering style should be more beneficial to employees who are more proactive and prepared to engage in their work. Therefore, the synergistic model anticipates:

Hypothesis 3: Supervisor's empowering behaviour will be related to work engagement to higher extent for employees with higher proactive personality.

Compensatory model

A compensatory model suggests a different joint effect of employee proactivity and leader empowering behaviour on work engagement. The interactional perspective holds that individuals are affected by situations and at the same time shape the situations, through actively selecting, interpreting and changing the situations (Kim et al., 2016). As known, proactive workers tend to be "relatively unconstrained by situational forces, in causing environmental change" (Bateman & Crant, 1993, p. 105), they may optimize their own work methods, procedures, and task assignments as they perceive the contingencies in their working environment and anticipate changes (Li et al., 2014). Similarly, one corollary of COR theory is that resources can be replaced, which suggests that individuals may employ other resources to compensate the functioning of lack resources. As Hobfoll and Shirom (2001) once depicted that "those who lack resources attempt to employ what resources they have" (p. 519). For instance, new employees will seek more supervisory or support from leaders for insufficient personal competence and skills. Whereas individuals who are rich in one resource are less susceptible to the lack of other resources (Hobfoll & Shirom, 2001).

According to Hobfoll and Shirom (2001) statements, employees with low proactive personality may have relatively fewer personal resources, instead, they tend to use whatever resources they have, for example, the support from supervisors. Hence, supervisors' empowering behaviour, as a condition resource, becomes more salient and valuable, which may lead to more work engagement. In contrast, employees with high proactive personality may have more personal resources, for example, they could be more innovative and politically knowledgeable (Seibert et al., 2001). All these personal resources help to yield support and assistance, beyond the resources from supervisors (Thompson, 2005). Consequently, their work engagement will remain steady even if they lack the condition resource – leader empowerment. Moreover, the literature on substitutes for leadership further suggests that employees' task knowledge, propensities may serve as substitutes for social

sources of leadership (Hussain et al., 2016). Rosenbach (2018) further argued that employees are able to exert self-leadership on the basis of self-evaluations when they are aware that they possess all skills and knowledge needed to successfully accomplish a task. The role of supervisors becomes less crucial.

Higher proactive employees, who have higher role-breadth self-efficacy (Parker et al., 2006) and intrinsically held autonomy (Gagné & Deci, 2005), are more likely to perform a range of proactive, interpersonal and integrative activities that extend beyond prescribed tasks, and hence are less affected by or sensitive to supervisors' empowering behaviour. Whereas low proactive employees, who are less self-efficacious concerning role-breadth, should benefit more from empowering behaviour through increased autonomy and support. Thus, the compensatory model predicts:

Hypothesis 4: Supervisor's empowering behaviour will be related to work engagement to a great extent for employees with lower proactive personality.

The above two hypotheses suggest a cross-level-moderated mediation model:

Hypothesis 5: At the within-participants level, supervisors' empowering behaviour is associated with job crafting via work engagement (mediation effect). At the between-participants level, subordinates' proactive personality moderates the link from empowering behaviour to work engagement and subsequent job crafting (cross-level moderated mediation effect).

Methods

Participants

We recruited participants through several companies located in Beijing and Shanghai. A human resource officer in each company nominated pairs of supervisors and subordinates and assigned a unique identification code for each pair. Each supervisor or subordinate can only be nominated once. HR officers emailed questionnaires to the supervisors where they could report their daily empowering behaviour. They also emailed questionnaires to the subordinates where they could report their proactive personality, daily work engagement, and daily job crafting. They were required to answer items relating to the latter two constructs over five consecutive working days. Supervisors and subordinates returned their responses through emails separately.

We sent out 140 dyad questionnaires and received 106 valid dyads (N= 530) (response rate, 75%) from machinery (43%), real estate (33%), and finance/securities (20%) industries. All of them completed surveys over five consecutive days. Demographically, 63.2% of the participants were men; averaging 32.99-years-old (SD = 4.49). Supervisors had worked for the company for an average of 52.33 months (2 to 156 months); subordinates for an average of 26.32 months (1 to 108 months). Supervisor–subordinate relationships

averaged 15.75 months; 80% of supervisors had at least a bachelor's degree; 70.4% of subordinates had at least a bachelor's degree.

Measures Proactive Personality

We assessed subordinate proactive personality using a Chinese version (Zhang et al., 2012) of the Proactive Personality Scale developed by Claes et al. (2005). The six-item scale is assessed from 1 = *totally disagree* to 7 = *totally agree*. For example, "I am always looking for better ways to do things." Cronbach's α was.75.

Daily Empowering Behaviour

For daily empowering behaviour, we used the eight-item scale developed by Zhang and Bartol (2010) and rephrased it to fit daily collection. Supervisors reported their empowering behaviour, ranging from 1 (*not true at all*) to 5 (*totally true*). For example, "Today, I allowed [subordinate] to do the job in his/ her way." We computed an overall empowering behaviour for each of the 5 days. Cronbach's αs ranged from.75 to .79 (*M*=.77).

Daily Work Engagement.

We followed Xanthopoulou et al. (2009) in adapting six items for assessing day-level work engagement to include dimensions of *vigour* (e.g., "Today, I felt strong and vigorous while working"), *dedication* (e.g., "Today, I was enthusiastic about my job"), and *absorption* (e.g., "Today, I was completely immersed in my work"). The total score may better represent engagement (Schaufeli et al., 2006), so we computed an overall work engagement factor score for each of the 5 days. Cronbach's αs ranged from .82 to .87 (*M*= .84).

Daily Job Crafting

Daily job crafting was assessed with the job crafting scale modified by Petrou et al. (2012). Four items measured *day- level resource-seeking* (e.g., "Today, I asked my supervisor for advice"). We computed its reliability for each of the 5 days. Cronbach's αs ranged from .76 to .83 (*M*= .79). Three items measured *day-level challenge-seeking* (e.g., "Today, I asked for more responsibilities") Cronbach's αs ranged from .79 to .87 (*M*= .84).

Control Variables

We examined leader empowering behaviour as an important contributor to employee daily proactivity by controlling for supervisor–subordinate gender similarity (0 = same, 1 = different) and length of working relationship (months). A reason to control for these two variables is that familiarity is an important factor influencing supervisor-subordinate interactions. According to social categorization theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986) and similarity-attraction paradigm (Byrne et al., 1971), individuals are more likely to feel comfortable and interact with whom they identify or see as similar to themselves. Past research suggests that such familiarity is associated with employees' satisfaction, the quality of leader-member exchange and leader ratings of employees job performance (Arnold et al., 2007; Liden et al., 1993; Turban et al., 2002). As both

gender and length of working relationship are two salient indicators of familiarity, we controlled statistically for these two variables.

Construct Validity

We first tested whether these core variables represent distinct constructs. We examined the discriminant validity of the four latent variables by conducting a multilevel confirmatory factor analysis (MCFA) using Mplus 7.0 software (Muthén & Muthén, 2012). We used the parcelling method (Landis et al., 2000), constructed three indicators for daily work engagement and proactive personality, respectively, and constructed two indicators for day-level resource-seeking, day-level challenge- seeking, respectively. Specially, we adopted Single-factor method in parcelling which Pair off items with highest and lowest loadings based on a single-factor solution (Landis et al., 2000). The results indicated that the hypothesized four- factor full model fit the data well ($\chi 2$ = 95.548, df = 40, p < .001; CFI = .958; TLI = .931; RMSEA = .051).

We further ran the MCFAs for alternative models and compared the model fits with each other. Cheung and Rensvold (2002) provided guidelines for model fit comparisons, i.e., ΔCFI < .010 indicates a non-significant difference and ΔCFI > .020 indicates a significant difference. Results indicated that the three-factor model by combining two job crafting variables into one factor ($\chi 2$ = 183.814, df = 45, p < .001; CFI = .896; TLI = .848; RMSEA = .076; ΔCFI = .062, ΔCFI > .020), the two- factor model by combing work engagement and two job crafting variables into one factor ($\chi 2$ = 492.324, df = 48, p < .001; CFI = .667; TLI = .543; RMSEA = .132; ΔCFI = .291, ΔCFI > .020) fits the data significantly worse than the hypothesized four-factor full model. Thus, our daily measures and personality assessment captured distinct constructs.

Analytical Strategy

To test the hypotheses, we used multilevel modelling techniques to analyse nested data. In this path analytical model, our data structure included two levels. Within-participants level data included day-specific measurements of daily empowering behaviour, daily work engagement, and daily job crafting. Between-participants level data refers to relatively stable data specific to the person: dispositional proactive personality. Results of one way ANOVA showed that the proportion of within-person variances of empowering behaviour, work engagement, resource-seeking and challenge-seeking were .35, .32, .39, and .31, respectively. Prior to analysis, we also computed intraclass correlation (ICC(1)). ICC(1) refers to the proportion of difference from between-and within-level variance compared to the total variance. ICC (1) was .65 for empowering behaviour, .48 for work engagement, .45 for resource-seeking, and .60 for challenge-seeking, indicating substantial variability at the between-subject level.

Results

Table 1 provides descriptive statistics of the study variables. Correlation results showed that within-level

supervisors' daily empowering behaviour was positively correlated with resource- seeking and challenge-seeking. In addition, resources- and challenge-seeking were regressed on supervisor's daily empowering behaviour with gender similarity and time working with supervisor as control variables. Results indicated that both resources-seeking ($\beta = .18$, $p < .001$) and challenge-seeking ($\beta = .14$, $p = .001$) were positively related to supervisors' daily empowering behaviour. Thus, Hypothesis 1 was supported.

----------------------------------Table 1 about here--------------------------

The within-level mediation effect

To test hypothesized main effects and mediation effects, following Bauer et al. (2006), we estimated a multilevel model (M1) that specified the Level 1 random slope effect of supervisors' daily empowering behaviour on subordinates' daily work engagement and the Level 1 random slope effects of subordinates' daily work engagement on daily job crafting in the form of resource-seeking and challenge-seeking. In addition, we controlled for time worked with the current supervisor and gender similarity from Level 2 on all Level 1 endogenous variables. To facilitate interpretation, we group-centred the Level 1 variables and grand-mean centred the Level 2 variables.

Table 2 details coefficients for M1. Gender similarity and time working with the supervisor were insignificant, but length of time working with the supervisor was related to work engagement ($\gamma = .01$, $p < .05$). Daily empowering behaviour was positively but insignificantly associated with subordinates' daily work engagement ($\gamma = .11$, $p = .17$, *ns*). Furthermore, daily work engagement was significantly related to daily resource- seeking ($\gamma = .20$, $p < .01$) and challenge-seeking ($\gamma = .21$, $p < .01$).

The mediation analyses with bootstrapping test indicated that work engagement failed to mediate the relationship between supervisors' daily empowering behaviour and resource-seeking: 0.02, with a 95% CI [−0.01, 0.05], with zero. Similarly, for the relationship between supervisors' empowering behaviour and subordinates' challenge-seeking, work engagement had an insignificant indirect effect of 0.02, with a 95% CI [−0.01, 0.05], with zero. The total effects of the associations between supervisors' empowering behaviour with resource-seeking and challenge-seeking were 0.11, [−0.003, 0.22] and 0.01, [−0.11, 0.13], respectively. In sum, the M1 results indicated that daily work engagement failed to mediate the relationship between supervisors' daily empowering behaviour and subordinates' daily job crafting. Thus, Hypothesis 2 was not supported. Nevertheless, we investigated proactive personality for a cross-level moderation effect. Moderated mediation is verified if two conditions are met: (1) mediators are significantly associated with dependent variables; (2) indirect effects have significantly varying strength with the level of moderators (Liu et al., 2012). Alternatively, significant mediation effects are not required for testing moderated mediation effects. Considering that M1 showed that daily work engagement was significantly associated with challenge-seeking and resource-seeking, we thus analysed the cross-level moderation effect and moderated mediation effect.

-- Table 2 about here--

The cross-level moderation effect

To test cross-level moderation effects (Hypotheses 3 and 4), we estimated a multilevel model (M2) that added the cross-level moderation effect of proactive personality on the random slope for supervisors' daily empowering behaviour predicting subordinates' daily work engagement. Table 3 displays coefficient estimates of M2. As Table 3 shows, proactive personality was negatively related to the random slope between daily empowering behaviour and daily work engagement ($\gamma = -.15$, $p < .05$), suggesting that proactive personality negatively cross-level moderated the relation between empowering behaviour and work engagement. Thus, Hypothesis 4 rather than 3 was supported.

-- Table 3 about here--

Following Cohen et al. (2003), we plotted the moderation effect at conditional values of proactive personality (±1 standard deviation). As Figure 1 shows, supervisors' daily empowering behaviour was more strongly related to subordinates' daily work engagement when subordinates had low (b = 0.26, $p < .001$) rather than high (b = $-.04$, $p = 0.47$) proactive personality.

-- Figure 1 about here--

To test the cross-level moderated mediation effects, we estimated the indirect relationships of daily empowering behaviour with job crafting via daily work engagement at different levels (±1SD) of proactive personality using Bauer et al.'s (2006) method. Regarding challenge-seeking, high proactive personality had an indirect effect of -0.163, with a 95% CI [-0.314, -0.011]; while low proactive personality had an indirect effect of -0.108, with a 95% CI [-0.214, -0.002]. The difference was -0.055, with a 95% CI [-0.101, -0.008], indicating that proactive personality significantly moderated the indirect effect. Regarding resource-seeking, high proactive personality had an indirect effect of -0.168, with a 95% CI [-0.308, -0.027]; while low proactive personality had an indirect effect of -0.112, with a 95% CI [-0.211, -0.013]. The difference was -0.056, with a 95% CI [-0.099, -0.013], indicating that proactive personality significantly moderated the indirect effect. Hypothesis 5 was supported: the proposed cross-level-moderated mediations were significant, suggesting a compensatory effect.

Discussion

We tested a cross-level moderated mediation model with multisource diary data. We found that supervisors' daily empowering behaviour was positively associated with subordinates' daily crafting behaviour as indicated by resource-seeking, challenge- seeking. In addition, proactive personality moderates the indirect effect via daily work engagement across levels and the compensatory model was supported, such that the association of supervisor's empowering behaviour and employee work engagement was stronger for employees with lower proactive personality. We did not find the mediation of work engagement. It is not so

surprising if we consider that this path is nested at the within level. As noted earlier, in the cross-level-moderated mediation model, between-level moderators may result in insignificant within-level mediation effects (Liu et al., 2012).

Theoretical contributions and future directions

Our research made four distinct contributions. First, we built and tested a conceptual model based on COR theory and extended its implication to job crafting. Previous COR studies have predominantly focused on negative job aspects such as major life stress (e.g., Hobfoll et al., 2006; Norris et al., 1999), and burnout (e.g., Brotheridge & Lee, 2002; Hobfoll, 2002; Neveu, 2007). More recently, building on COR theory, longitudinal data have confirmed that work engagement-enhanced job crafting in which employees seek structural and social resources (Harju et al., 2016). Similarly, drawing on COR theory, job resources, work engagement, and personal initiative have shown cross- lagged associations (Hakanen et al., 2008). Our results echo these findings by showing that employees would craft their jobs using condition and personal resources that generate positive work engagement. More importantly, our finding supported one important prediction of COR that lack of one type of resources could be compensated by the presence of another. Consequently, we extended past findings and addressed the mechanism by which empowering supervisors provided condition resources and proactive subordinates provided personal resources, with joint effects on job crafting via work engagement.

Second, we extended understandings about how empowering behaviour is related to work engagement. Past empirical findings have verified that empowerment positively affects work engagement (Tuckey et al., 2012), but less attention has gone to the boundary conditions regarding the best targets for empowering behaviour. We found that proactive personality negatively moderated the link between empowering behaviour and work engagement, suggesting that non-proactive employees may have greater need for empowerment because they may not be good at seeking resources and support. Thus, when employees are given responsibility and perceive that their supervisor believes in their competence, they will benefit most from the increased respect and encouragement to pursue task goals. Therefore, future investigations may keep exploring who empowers whom in what manners.

Third, we contributed to the leadership literature by repeatedly measuring leader empowerment as daily fluctuations in behaviour rather than a one-time static state (e.g., Ahearne et al., 2005; Albrecht & Andreetta, 2011). Although scholars have long argued that empowerment is contextually embedded and fluctuates over time (e.g., Foster-Fishman et al., 1998; Zimmerman, 1995), little work has been conducted to detect whether empowering behaviour is dynamic until now. Our investigation in empowering behaviour at the day level shows that it is closely associated with day-level work engagement and job crafting. Future research might examine the effects of other types of daily leadership on job crafting or job performance.

Fourth, our findings revisited the interplay among personal resources, job resources, and work engagement.

Synergistic perspective suggests personal proactivity and leader empowering behaviour are both needed to for lifting engaged feelings. Compensatory perspective, on the contrary, depicts that the effects of these two factors can be substituted for each other, therefore, either personal proactivity or leader empowerment can lead to an engagement. We found that proactive personality negatively moderates the relationship between empowering behaviour and work engagement, supporting the compensatory assumption. Beyond the two perspectives, future studies may further investigate the dynamic connection between employee proactivity and leader empowering behaviour. Such work may deepen our understanding of the dynamic interaction between personal resources and job resources.

Practical implications

Our theoretical model has implications for managers and organizations. First, empowering behaviour effectively encourages job crafting. Specifically, as part of their daily management, leaders should consult with subordinates, show personalized consideration, and allow participative decision-making. Consequently, employees will be more work engaged, perceive the job as more meaningful for their lives, and be more inclined to be job crafters.

Second, our results suggest that proactive personality, affects whether empowering behaviour leads to job crafting. That is, empowering behaviour would be more effective for increasing the work engagement of passive workers. In contrast, regardless of supervisor behaviour, proactive workers tend to actively identify opportunities, take actions, be work engaged, and craft their jobs. Therefore, interventions for promoting job crafting should focus on personal resources in addition to job resources or other organizational determinants. Identifying proactivity would benefit both workers and organizations.

Limitations and conclusion

Our study has limitations that suggest caution in drawing conclusions. First, we collected multisource data, in particular, supervisors assessed their own empowering behaviour; subordinates assessed the other variables. However, supervisor's self-reported empowering behaviour do not guarantee that subordinates may have actually felt empowered. Second, although we collected data from several companies, our sample was restricted to urban areas, resulting a limited representativeness. Future studies might use random or highly diverse samples. Third, although we collected diary data for five consecutive days, when testing the moderated mediation model, we chose to treat them as cross-sectional data given the short time duration, which limits us from disentangling causality. Future research could be improved by collecting more data points in a longer time duration so that the longitudinal causal effect of empowering behaviour on employee job crafting could be verified. And finally, the self-report nature of the measurements might render it susceptible to common method bias. However, we believed that it was not a significant problem in present study for several reasons: (1) we did Harman's one-factor test, and results indicated that first factor explained

only 25.82% of the total variance (Podsakoff et al., 2003, 2012); (2) we conducted CFA to confirm whether there was unmeasured construct serving as a common method variance. Following the suggestions of Williams and McGonagle (2016), we compared the model fits among four, three, and two factors models, results suggested the latter two models fitted the data significantly worse than the hypothesized four-factor full model; (3) we asked supervisors to report their empowering behaviour and subordinates to report their engagement and crafting, respectively. Certainly, such multi- sources data would help reduce the bias of self-report measures (Spector, 2019). Future investigations may include some extra marker variables and cause variables. Correlation analysis between theses variables and the substantial variables would directly uncover if there is a common method bias (Simmering et al., 2015).

In conclusion, we based our work on COR theory to test whether supervisors' daily empowering behaviour influences subordinates' daily job crafting. We also considered subordinates' daily work engagement as a mediator and proactive personality as a cross-level moderator. Finally, our theoretical model, confirmed with empirical findings, is a modest spur to induce future research to study how organizations can motivate job crafting.

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TABLE 1. The means, the standard deviations, and the correlations between the study variables

	M	SD (Between level)	SD (Within level)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
Within level										
1.Daily empowering behavior	3.67	.31	.53	1	.12	.21*	.17	.23*	-.17	.26**
2.Daily work engagement	3.04	.40	.71	.11*	1	.71**	.65**	.44**	.09	.01
3.Daily seeking resources	3.30	.44	.71	.16**	.54*	1	.77**	.43**	.09	-.01
4.Daily seeking challenge	3.05	.45	.81	.12**	.52*	.68**	1	.58**	.05	-.12
Between level										
6.Subordinate proactive personality	4.88	.86						1	.07	.04
7.Gender similarity	.41	.49							1	-.13
8.Time working with supervisor (months)	15.75	11.42								1

Note: Gender similarity was coded as follow: 0=the gender between subordinate and supervisor is the same, 1=the gender between subordinate and supervisor is different. Correlations below diagonal are within-level correlations (N=530), and correlations above diagonal are between-level correlations (N=106). * $p<.05$; ** $p<.01$; *** $p<.001$.

TABLE 2. Within-Subject Main-Effect (M1)

Predictor	SWE			Seeking resource			Seeking challenge		
	Coefficient	*SE*	95% CI	Coefficient	*SE*	95% CI	Coefficient	*SE*	95% CI
Fixed effects									
Intercept	2.88***	.11	[2.69, 3.07]	1.02***	.22	[.66, 1.38]	2.84***	.03	[2.79, 2.88]
Gender similarity	.11	.12	[-.08, .31]	.03	.07	[-.09, .16]	.03	.13	[-.19, .25]
Time working with supervisor	.01*	.004	[.002, .02]	.000	.003	[-.01, .01]	.00	.01	[-.01, .01]
SEB slope [a]	.11	.08	[-.02, .23]	.09	.07	[-.02, .20]	-.01	.08	[-.14, .11]
SWE slope [b]				.20**	.07	[.09, .32]	.21**	.07	[.10, .32]
Variance components									
SEB slope	.15	.08	[.01, .28]						
SWE slope				.001	.07	[-.01, .01]	.01	.01	[-.01, .02]
Residual Variances	.18***	.02	[.15, .22]	.22***	.02	[.19, .26]	.23***	.02	[.20, .27]

Note: SEB=Supervisors' empowering behaviors, SWE=Subordinates' work engagement. * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001.

[a] The effects of SEB was estimated as a random slope on SWE and as fixed slope on seeking resources and seeking challenge.

[b] The effects of SWE was estimated as a random slope on seeking resources and seeking challenge.

TABLE 3. Cross-level Moderation (M2)

Predictor	SWE			Seeking resource			Seeking challenge		
	Coefficient	SE	95%CI	Coefficient	SE	95%CI	Coefficient	SE	95%CI
Fixed effects									
Intercept	2.91***	.10	[2.74, 3.07]	3.20**	1.06	[1.46, 4.95]	.19***	.02	[.15, .23]
Gender similarity	.09	.11	[-.09, .26]	.09*	.10	[-.08, .26]	-.09	.10	[-.26, .07]
Time working with supervisor	.01	.00	[.000, .01]	.005	.004	[-.002, .01]	-.01*	.004	[-.02, -.002]
SPP	.30***	.07	[.20, .41]	.27*	.13	[.06, .48]	-.32***	.05	[-.40, -.24]
SEB slope [a]	.11	.07	[-.01, .24]	.09	.07	[-.02, .20]	-.01	.08	[-.14, .11]
SWE slope [b]				.20**	.07	[.09, .32]	.21**	.07	[.10, .32]
SEB ×SPP	-.15**	.06	[-.25,-.05]						
Variance component									
SEB slope	.149	.08	[.007, .28]						
SWE slope				.001	.004	[-.01, .01]	.005	.007	[-.006, .02]
Residual	.23*	.04	[.17, .30]	.21*	.03	[.01, .40]	.22***	.09	[.12, .33]

Note: SEB=Supervisors' empowering behavior, SPP= Subordinates' proactive personality, SWE=Subordinates' work engagement. * p<.05; ** p<.01; *** p<.001. [a] The effects of SEB was estimated as a random slop on SWE and as fixed slop on seeking resources and seeking challenge. [b] The effects of SWE was estimated as a random slope on seeking resources and seeking challenge.
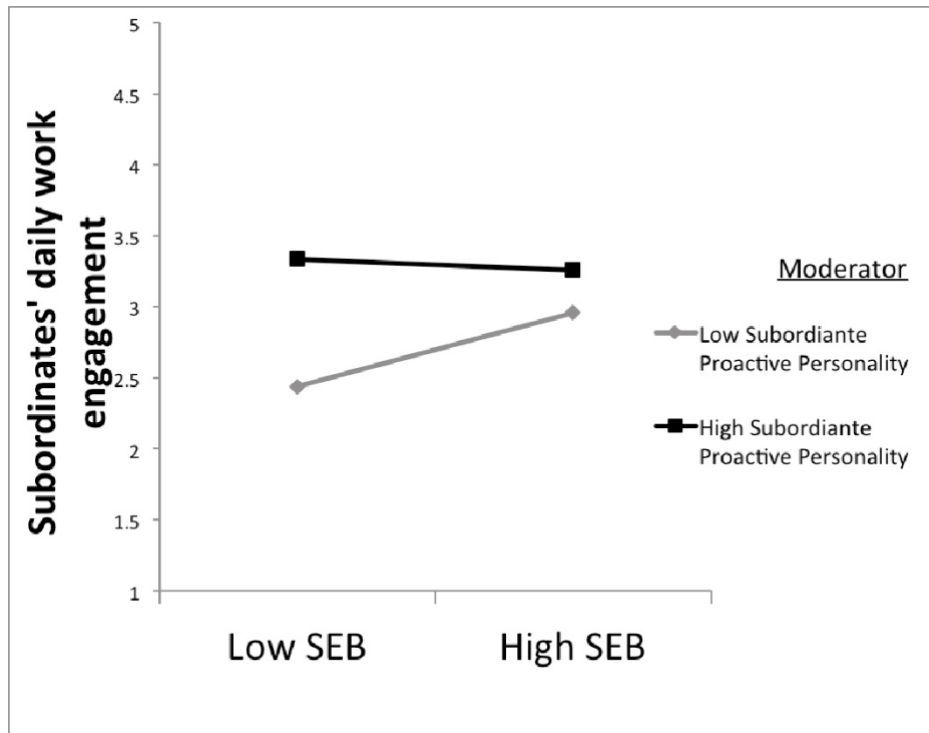
FIGURE 1. The Interaction of Supervisor Empowering Behaviour and Subordinate Proactive Personality