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Organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting

The mediating roles of organizational identification and work engagement

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to examine the relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness and task crafting, and to test the mediating roles of organizational identification and work engagement in this relationship.
Design/methodology/approach – The authors collected questionnaires from 175 Korean flight attendants and conducted structural equation modeling analyses.
Findings – Employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness were positively associated with task crafting. While organizational identification was not solely responsible for mediating this relationship, it intervened in the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting by affecting work engagement.
Research limitations/implications – While this study provides important insights into the roles of organizational virtuousness, organizational identification, and work engagement in promoting task crafting, the use of self-reported, cross-sectional data limits causal inferences between variables.
Practical implications – Based on the present findings, managers can better understand the antecedents and mediating processes affecting employees' task crafting.
Originality/value – This study adds value to the positive organizational psychology literature by revealing crucial intermediary processes linking organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting, thus suggesting reciprocity and social identity-based motivation as potential underlying mechanisms of task crafting.

Keywords Employee behaviour, Organizational behaviour, Jobs
Paper type Research paper

Introduction

The increasing complexity and unpredictability of today's business environment requires employees to perform tasks in an increasingly autonomous and proactive manner. In line with this trend, over the past few decades, there has been burgeoning scholarly interest in job crafting, which refers to the physical and cognitive changes that job holders make in the task or relational boundaries of their work (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). Distinct from formal job design initiated by managers, job crafting focuses on employees' proactive redesigning of their jobs which takes three forms. Physical changes refer to changes in the scope or nature of tasks, whereas cognitive changes refer to changes in one's perceptions of the job; changes in relational boundaries indicate changing the quality and amount of work interactions.

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Task crafting, characterized by expanding or altering the number, scope or sequencing of tasks, has been found to be a particularly important component of job crafting for service employees (Leana *et al.*, 2009; Lin *et al.*, 2017; Lyons, 2008). Because frontline service employees, in our case flight attendants, encounter diverse customer needs, their jobs tend to be highly unstructured and non-routine (Coelho and Augusto, 2010). Hence, for service employees task crafting activities such as adjusting task boundaries and work processes spontaneously reflect core job crafting activities crucial for successful performance.

With a focus on task crafting as a key component of service job crafting, this study explores the question of how and why employees' perceptions of their organization motivate employees to craft their tasks. Despite growing interest in understanding the antecedents of job crafting, prior research has generally focused on work and individual characteristics as precursors. Relatively little has been found regarding organizational factors such as employees' positive perceptions of their organization as the motivational basis of job crafting behaviors (Niessen *et al.*, 2016). We seek to fill this gap by suggesting reciprocity motivation (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976) and social identity-based motivation (Tyler, 1999; Tyler and Blader, 2003) as the primary mechanisms underlying task crafting behaviors.

We first examine how employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness positively relate to positive attitudes and eventually to task crafting behavior. We build our argument on social exchange theory, which suggests that when employees interpret organizational actions and characteristics as caring and valuing their well-being, they are motivated to reciprocate such socio-emotional support with a greater emotional bond and increased work effort (Blau, 1964; Emerson, 1976). We propose that such positive affective and behavioral responses should be associated with the extent to which employees engage in task crafting behaviors.

In particular, we focus on organizational virtuousness perceptions as a potential crucial organizational characteristic that may affect employees' task crafting. The idea is based on the mounting evidence in the literature on employees' perceptions about the prosocial, compassionate or socially responsible values and actions of organizations and the resulting employee work attitudes and behaviors (Armeli *et al.*, 1998; Grant *et al.*, 2008; Lilius *et al.*, 2008; Riordan *et al.*, 1997). Employees try to understand what their organization does and stands for (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991), and the way they perceive the organization can have a profound impact on their cognitions, emotions, and behaviors (Rhee *et al.*, 2006). To the extent that employees perceive the organization as caring and virtuous, they exhibit positive attitudes and behaviors such as affective commitment (Grant *et al.*, 2008) and work effort (Eisenberger *et al.*, 1990). By examining the relationship between perceived organizational virtuousness and employees' task crafting, we seek to identify a social exchange and reciprocity mechanism of job crafting behaviors.

We further aim to explore the mediating mechanisms underlying the link between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting. Drawing on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and the social identity-based model of motivation (Tyler and Blader, 2000, 2003), we propose organizational identification and work engagement as primary intermediary processes between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting. An important basis of identity assessments is how caring and trustworthy the organization is (Ellemers *et al.*, 2011). Insofar as employees identify with the organization and hold positive attitudes toward it, they are motivated to engage in behaviors that benefit the organization (Tyler and Blader, 2000, 2003). According to the proactive motivation perspective (Parker *et al.*, 2010), such an affective-motivational state of work engagement is likely to facilitate task crafting as a type of proactive behavior. Compared with the large body of research on the antecedents and consequences of job crafting, psychological mechanisms by which those antecedents affect job or task crafting remain unclear. We respond to this research gap by examining the role of social identity-

based proactive motivation as a primary psychological mechanism. The inclusion of organizational identification and work engagement is in line with the basic premise of positive organizational psychology which holds that the values and meanings an organization exudes helps its employees optimize their work functions by imbuing them with a sense of commitment and engagement (Wrzesniewski *et al.*, 2013).

Our study offers several contributions to the relevant literature. First, while both organizational virtuousness and job crafting have been separately studied in the business ethics and positive organizational psychology fields, no attempts have been made to integrate the two variables in a single study. Our study is the first to specifically examine the connection between organizational virtuousness and task crafting from the social exchange and reciprocity perspective. By attending to the role of moral virtues endorsed by organizations in enhancing proactive task crafting behaviors, this study adds new value to the positive organizational psychology literature.

Second, by investigating the sequential mediating roles of organizational identification and work engagement in the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting, this study uncovers social identity-based proactive motivation as a key intermediary mechanism leading to task crafting, which has remained a black box in prior job crafting research. Lastly, our study expands the organizational virtuousness research by proposing organizational identification, work engagement, and task crafting as potential work outcomes of virtuous organizations. As such, this study enhances the understanding of organizational virtuousness as a motivational basis of proactive behaviors and positive work outcomes through the shaping of positive employee attitudes toward the organization and work. In the next sections, the theoretical background and rationale for each hypothesis are presented in detail.

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Theoretical background and hypotheses

The impact of job design or characteristics on job incumbents' responses has long been a key research question for organizational researchers. While traditional job design research has focused on the top-down managerial interventions of modifying employees' jobs (Hackman and Oldham, 1976), there is increasing interest in the bottom-up process of employees shaping their own jobs. Job crafting is the proactive behavior of redesigning one's job roles by changing the task, cognitive, and relational boundaries of the job (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001). It enables individuals to experience work meaningfulness and positive work identities, and has a positive impact on work attitudes and job performance. For example, job crafting has been found to increase job satisfaction and commitment (Leana *et al.*, 2009), well-being (Slemp and Vella-Brodrick, 2013; Tims *et al.*, 2013), job performance (Bakker *et al.*, 2012; Leana *et al.*, 2009), and employability (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015).

Prior studies have revealed several work and individual characteristics as predictors of job crafting behaviors. Job discretion (Leana *et al.*, 2009), daily work pressure and autonomy (Petrou *et al.*, 2012), and hierarchical ranks reflective of authority and power (Berg *et al.*, 2010) have been identified as work conditions that promote job crafting. Individual characteristics that have been linked to job crafting are proactive personality (Bakker *et al.*, 2012), promotion focus (Bipp and Demerouti, 2015), positive self-image, readiness to change (Lyons, 2008), self-efficacy, and work experience (Niessen *et al.*, 2016; Tims *et al.*, 2014). These findings indicate that job crafting most likely occurs in jobs that encompass decision latitude and challenges, and that are performed by employees with proactive personalities and self-confidence.

To date, the majority of studies on the antecedents of job crafting have attended to work and individual characteristics as precursors. We still know little about the role of organizational factors in employees' job crafting. Understanding such organizational characteristics is pivotal to cultivating environments that support employees' job crafting behaviors. To our

knowledge, only a handful of studies have considered organizational factors as antecedents of job crafting. Through a qualitative case study during a merger, Kira *et al.* (2012) revealed that organizational change triggered job crafting as a way to realign one's work and identity. Similarly, in an organizational change context, Petrou *et al.* (2015) reported a positive link between perceived impact of organizational changes on employees' daily work and job crafting. Although these findings imply the influence of organizational factors on employees' job crafting activities, our knowledge is still limited in terms of how members' perceptions of the organization are related to the way they think and feel, and eventually are associated with work behaviors such as job crafting. To bridge this gap, we consider organizational virtuousness as a potential crucial organizational characteristic that can support employees' job crafting.

While job crafting can take different forms, we focus on task crafting in particular because it is a primary form of job crafting in service settings (Leana *et al.*, 2009; Lyons, 2008). In a study of sales representatives of a large consumer products firm, Lyons (2008) revealed that a considerable amount of job crafting occurred in the skill development, task function, and tactics choice domains (68 percent), which fall into the category of task crafting. Examples of task crafting behaviors included learning new languages, expanding demo material, or reading books or magazines to locate novel sales methods (Lyons, 2008). Because frontline employees such as sales representatives (Lyons, 2008), hotel employees (Chen *et al.*, 2014), and flight attendants encounter diverse customer needs, task crafting activities such as spontaneously adjusting task boundaries and shaping work practices become critical for customer satisfaction and service performance.

In the following sections, we first explore the notion of organizational virtuousness and examine how it relates to proactive task crafting from the social exchange and reciprocity perspective (Blau, 1964). Drawing on social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974; Tajfel and Turner, 1979) and the model of social identity-based motivation (Tyler and Blader, 2000), we further construct our argument on the mediating mechanisms of organizational identification and work engagement between perceptions of organizational virtuousness and task crafting.

Organizational virtuousness

Organizational virtuousness is defined as organizational contexts wherein core virtues (i.e. optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity) are practiced, developed, and disseminated at the individual and collective levels (Cameron, 2003; Cameron *et al.*, 2004). The notion of organizational virtuousness is rooted in positive organizational psychology, which theorizes that virtuousness enacted by an organization contributes to employees' optimal functioning at work by enhancing their positive meaning, sense of commitment, and engagement (Cameron *et al.*, 2004).

Due to the increasing importance of corporate ethics and social responsibility, virtuousness is deemed important in organizations as a means of achieving organizational sustainability and individual and societal welfare (Arjoon, 2000; Bolino *et al.*, 2002). Employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness tend to form emotions, self-construals, and organizational image, and strengthen their bond with the organization (Rhee *et al.*, 2006). Indeed, organizational virtuousness has been found to be positively associated not only with organizational performance (e.g. Cameron *et al.*, 2004; Caza *et al.*, 2004), but also with key work outcomes such as commitment, satisfaction, turnover intentions, and organizational citizenship behavior (e.g. Nikandrou and Tsachouridi, 2015; Rego *et al.*, 2010, 2011; Williams *et al.*, 2015).

Adopting Cameron *et al.*'s (2004) five-dimension model of organizational virtuousness, we conceptualize organizational virtuousness based on optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity. Organizational optimism refers to an organizational context in which members collectively believe that they will succeed in spite of major challenges. Organizational

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forgiveness manifests in an organizational context in which mistakes are easily forgiven and used as opportunities for learning. It is a shared choice to replace negativity with positivity, and doing so often leads to collective outcomes such as increased morale, satisfaction (McCullough *et al.*, 2000), and learning (Edmondson, 1999). Organizational trust entails valuing courtesy, consideration, and respect, and reflects an organizational context wherein employees rely on each other (Cameron *et al.*, 2004). Organizational compassion pertains to an organizational context in which employees are concerned about each other, and where acts of sympathy and compassion are prevalent among employees (Cameron *et al.*, 2004). Organizational integrity is defined as an organizational context characterized by honesty, trustworthiness, and honor (Cameron *et al.*, 2004). A high level of organizational integrity is associated with the consistency, fairness, and transparency of work policies, procedures, and practices (Harter, 2002).

Exposure to these five types of organizational virtuousness may help employees see their workplace in a positive light as a source of energy and healing (i.e. Frost, 2003), which presumably shapes their attitudes and behaviors toward the organization and work (Rego *et al.*, 2010). In response to the constant call for research on organizational virtuousness (Cameron, 2003; Cameron *et al.*, 2004; Wright and Goldstein, 2007), we analyze the role of organizational virtuousness as a crucial organizational context promoting task crafting.

Relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting

Organizational virtuousness perceptions refer to employees' evaluation of the extent to which organizational acts, systems, and practices reflect optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity as defining properties of the organization (Cameron, 2003). Employees interpret what the organization does and cares about (Dutton and Dukerich, 1991), and form a general perception of the organization concerning its core values and meanings, and whether it cares about the employees (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001). From the social exchange perspective (Blau, 1964), virtuous organizational actions that offer such emotional benefits as approval, esteem, respect, and caring would elicit employees' motivation to compensate the organization with positive attitudes and behaviors, and increased performance. For example, the literature on perceived organizational support draws on social exchange theory to propose that in exchange for receiving support from organizations, employees reciprocate with affective commitment (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001), prosocial behaviors (Lynch *et al.*, 1999; Moorman *et al.*, 1998), and performance (Armeli *et al.*, 1998). Given that employees are motivated to reciprocate organizational practices and acts of caring by behaving in ways that help the organization reach its goals (Eisenberger *et al.*, 2001; Rego *et al.*, 2010), we posit that employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness should be positively associated with proactive task crafting.

There are two primary ways through which organizational virtuousness perceptions facilitate employees' task crafting. The first involves enhanced cognitive flexibility via positive emotions. Perceived organizational virtuousness triggers positive emotions (Fredrickson, 1998), which broaden the scope of attention, cognition, and action (Fredrickson, 2001). For instance, individuals with positive emotions associate seemingly irrelevant stimuli (Isen *et al.*, 1985), use broader categories (Isen and Daubman, 1984), and generate creative solutions (Baron, 1990). Such cognitive flexibility is essential for proactively changing task contents.

More specifically, organizational optimism involves using a flexible, positive lens to seek future opportunities, thus exhibiting flexibility in cognition and interpretation. Furthermore, in order for employees to practice discretion in determining the content of their tasks, a shared sense of trust for each other is crucial (Wrzesniewski *et al.*, 2010), which may engender a positive emotion of gratitude. Employees in trustworthy organizations that allow high levels of autonomy and freedom are likely to reciprocate with proactive task crafting that benefits the organization. Positive emotions and the resulting cognitive

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flexibility are additionally relevant to organizational compassion (Lilius *et al.*, 2008) as they motivate employees to actively craft their jobs. Although it is generally assumed that employees are unwilling to craft interdependent tasks due to the potential detrimental effect on coworkers' performance (Kiggundu, 1983; Tims and Bakker, 2010), organization-wide sympathy and compassion can encourage crafting of such tasks by helping employees communicate and coordinate with each other, and by stimulating flexible, creative thinking.

The other path linking perceived organizational virtuousness and employees' task crafting is based on the contention that organizational virtuousness buffers the organization and its employees from negative contexts, attitudes, emotions, and behaviors (Bright *et al.*, 2006; Cameron, 2003; Cameron *et al.*, 2004). For instance, organizational virtuousness encourages employees to craft their tasks by helping them to recover from failures in their prior task crafting activities and rebuild their self-efficacy beliefs so that they can overcome problems and difficulties in crafting their tasks.

The display of organizational virtuousness communicates that the organization values and cares about its employees (Rego *et al.*, 2010, 2011), which likely strengthens their confidence and efficacy beliefs. The heightened level of efficacy often found in optimistic organizations prompts employees to take charge and proactively implement changes in their work (Rego *et al.*, 2015; Speier and Frese, 1997; Tims *et al.*, 2014). Due to the risk inherent in altering the content and scope of tasks (Brenninkmeijer and Hekkert-Koning, 2015), employees may perform trial-and-error during the course of task crafting. Organizations with a high level of forgiveness view such trial-and-error leniently and regard mistakes as opportunities for learning and growth, thus enabling employees to regain confidence and encouraging task crafting activities as means of career development (Cameron *et al.*, 2004). A high level of organizational integrity fosters employee confidence and efficacy beliefs through the enacted values of honesty and transparency (Harter, 2002). In such organizational contexts, employees are likely to have a clear sense of how to alter the content, scope, and sequencing of their tasks, thereby crafting their tasks easily. In sum, through the aforementioned processes, employees are expected to reciprocate virtues experienced in the organization with proactive task crafting that benefits the organization. Therefore, we hypothesize that:

H1. Employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness are positively related to their task crafting.

Mediation of organizational identification and work engagement

Grounded in social identity theory (Tajfel, 1974), we isolate organizational identification as a linking mechanism between employee perceptions of organizational virtuousness and task crafting. Social identity theory maintains that individuals' identities derived from group membership provide them with the value and significance attached to that membership, which in turn influences their affect, cognitions, and behaviors (Tajfel and Turner, 1979). In particular, valued organizational characteristics such as manifestations of virtues can elicit feelings of satisfaction with and commitment to the organizational membership (Ellemers *et al.*, 2008), which are considered to be important predictors of motivated behaviors (Ellemers *et al.*, 2004; Haslam and Ellemers, 2005). Drawing on this logic, we reason that employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness affect their task crafting through enhanced organizational identification, thus suggesting a social identity-based motivation as an important mechanism of task crafting activities.

Organizational identification refers to the extent to which employees feel oneness or belongingness to their organization (Mael and Ashforth, 1992). When employees perceive their organization to pursue optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity, they tend to generalize their perceptions as a defining organizational property (Grant *et al.*, 2008). The virtuous identity of an organization strengthens employees' desire to identify with it

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due to its positive, prestigious image (Dutton *et al.*, 1994). As a result, employees develop a sense of loyalty and behave in a way that maintains the organization's reputation. Furthermore, employees of a virtuous organization find meaning in their work and experience a strong sense of mission (Gavin and Mason, 2004; Milliman *et al.*, 2003; Wright and Cropanzano, 2004), thereby exerting effort to craft their tasks in a meaningful way (Rego *et al.*, 2011).

In a similar vein, the job crafting literature highlights that positive organizational contexts serve as an important source of finding work meaning, which stimulates job crafting (Wrzesniewski *et al.*, 2013). Organizational virtues provide employees with a strong sense of mission and calling for their organization, and inspire them to design and change their tasks in a manner that reinforces such a positive organizational identity (Wrzesniewski *et al.*, 2013). Moreover, based on the argument that employees with strong organizational identification believe that their crafting efforts are deemed desirable from the organization's perspective (Tyler and Blader, 2000), employees who strongly identify themselves with the organization are anticipated to engage in a greater amount of task crafting.

Although no research to date has investigated the relationships between organizational virtuousness, organizational identification, and task crafting, Rego *et al.* (2011) demonstrated a significant association between employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness and their commitment to the organization. Lin *et al.* (2017) showed that organizational identification exerted a facilitative moderating effect on task crafting in underemployment situations. These findings imply positive associations between organizational virtuousness perceptions, organizational identification, and task crafting. Hence, we postulate the following mediating relationship:

H2. Organizational identification mediates the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting.

In addition to organizational identification, work engagement is proposed as another critical mediator of the organizational virtuousness – task crafting relationship. We assume that organizational virtuousness perceptions shape employees' work attitudes and intrinsic work motivation (Deci, 1975), and affect proactive behavior at work (Ellemers *et al.*, 2004; Rego *et al.*, 2010). Our proposition builds on theory and research on prosocial, compassionate, and socially responsible organizational actions which hold that employees are attracted to and take pride in organizations that enact universal values or virtues (Ellemers *et al.*, 2011; Grant *et al.*, 2008). As a result of interpreting organizational actions and practices in virtuous terms, employees demonstrate increased levels of positive affect and energy at work (Cameron, 2003; Worline *et al.*, 2002), as well as stronger work motivation indicated by enjoyment of work (Fineman, 1996) and job satisfaction (Riordan *et al.*, 1997).

These affective and motivational outcomes of perceived organizational virtuousness are relevant to the notion of work engagement, which refers to "a positive, fulfilling affective-motivational state of work-related well-being that is characterized by vigor, dedication, and absorption" (Bakker *et al.*, 2008, p. 187). Empirical data from different studies converge to suggest that exposure to organizational virtuousness has an impact on employees' affective and motivational reactions to work. More specifically, organizational optimism has been associated with positive energy and motivation to achieve goals (Cameron, 2003). Similarly, organizational forgiveness and compassion offer a work environment that is lenient to employees' mistakes and is compassionate for employees' concerns and well-being (Rego *et al.*, 2010). Such a supportive work environment tends to enhance work engagement by fulfilling basic intrinsic motivation, such as the need for belonging (Gagné and Deci, 2005), and eliciting feelings of vitality and thriving (Spreitzer *et al.*, 2005). Likewise, an organizational context with a high level of trust fosters respectful and trustworthy work relationships which serve as a source of work engagement (Osatuke *et al.*, 2009). Additionally, Bakker *et al.* (2011) propose a potential

link between an organization's failures to realize its espoused values or lack of integrity, and employees' decreased work engagement. These findings indicate that organizational optimism, forgiveness, compassion, trust, and integrity function together as a positive work environment that can induce employees' affective and motivational state of work engagement. Such a heightened level of work engagement should be associated with increased task crafting (Tims *et al.*, 2015).

The link between work engagement and job crafting has been well established in theoretical accounts and empirical research (e.g. Hakanen *et al.*, 2008; Lu *et al.*, 2014; Tims *et al.*, 2015). The proactive motivation perspective (Parker *et al.*, 2010) proposes that positive emotions associated with work engagement drive an approach action tendency which propels employees to take initiative at work (Parker and Griffin, 2011; Salanova and Schaufeli, 2008). Because engaged employees find value in improving their job characteristics (Sonnentag, 2003), they constantly seek opportunities for crafting their tasks (Warr and Inceoglu, 2012). Therefore, engaged employees mobilize resources acquired from organizational virtuousness toward task crafting. Taken together, we propose the following mediation relationship:

H3. Work engagement mediates the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting.

We further expect that while both organizational identification and work engagement intervene in the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting, they operate sequentially between the two variables. The process through which perceived organizational characteristics are related to work attitudes and behaviors can be explained by the social identity-based model of motivation (Tyler, 1999; Tyler and Blader, 2000, 2003). Tyler (1999) proposes that to the extent that organizational membership contributes to a positive social identity and a sense of pride, employees will be psychologically engaged with the organization and work. The willingness to associate with the organization and to engage in work elicits intrinsic work motivation (Deci, 1975) and predicts behavior at work (Ellemers *et al.*, 2004). More specifically, valued organizational characteristics such as virtuousness can be regarded as a source of esteem and pride, which strengthens organizational identification because employees can define themselves in terms of the positive qualities of the organization (Dutton *et al.*, 1994). Perceptions of organizational virtuousness and the feelings of esteem, pride, and attachment stemming from the organizational membership induce affective and motivational responses at work such as work engagement, and further facilitate motivated behaviors including proactive task crafting.

This resonates with the context-attitude-behavior framework which postulates that organizational contexts in which employees are embedded influence their attitudes and behaviors (Martin and Cullen, 2006). Empirical data also converge to suggest that an organizational context characterized as virtuous, ethical or forgiving, for instance, contributes to work behaviors by shaping employee attitudes and motivation (Cameron, 2003; Chun *et al.*, 2011; Guchait *et al.*, 2016).

The rationale for the sequential mediation is additionally derived from the contention that proximal factors have a stronger impact on job-related outcomes than distal factors (Shalley *et al.*, 2000). For instance, Shalley *et al.* (2000) found that proximal job characteristics were more strongly related to job-required creativity than distal organizational characteristics. Based on this finding, we reason that employees' task crafting is more strongly affected by proximal attitudes related to their work than by distal attitudes toward the organization. Likewise, perceptions of organizational virtuousness are likely to have a direct impact on organizational-directed attitudes rather than on job-directed attitudes. We predict that organizational virtuousness perceptions form distal organizational attitudes (i.e. organizational identification), which in turn relates to job attitudes proximal to task crafting (i.e. work engagement).

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The proposed sequential mediation is also based on prior findings suggesting the effect of organizational identification on work engagement rather than vice versa (e.g. He *et al.*, 2014; Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2015; Reade, 2001; Tyler and Blader, 2000). Research has generally indicated that a strong psychological bond with the organization reinforces motivation to engage with work itself (Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2015). Organizational identification enables employees to internalize the organization's goals and values, thereby achieving those goals by engaging with their work (Dutton *et al.*, 1994; Karanika-Murray *et al.*, 2015). For these reasons, we predict that the mediating path between organizational virtuousness and task crafting flows from organizational identification to work engagement. Taken together, it is expected that employees will experience a strong bond with and loyalty to an organization when they perceive a high level of virtuousness in that organization. Consequently, they exert increased levels of vigor, dedication, and absorption in their work, which in turn motivates them to proactively craft their tasks. Hence, we formulate the following double-mediation hypothesis:

H4. Organizational identification and work engagement sequentially double-mediate the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting.

Method

Data collection and participant characteristics

Flight attendants from a South Korean airline participated in this study by responding to a self-administered survey. Focusing our sampling frame on a single firm allowed better control of confounding effects, such as the firm's reward/compensation strategy, firm performance, sales technology availability, and control systems (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2000). This approach is also aligned with the relevant literature (MacKenzie *et al.*, 1999). We targeted flight attendants as our sample because prior research suggests that job crafting interventions are particularly pivotal in a service industry that requires multi-task abilities to deal with heavy customer demands (Kim *et al.*, 2009). Flight attendants play an important role in building relationships with customers, dealing with customer complaints, and transforming aggrieved customers into satisfied ones (Babakus *et al.*, 2003; Gilly and Hansen, 1985). However, the nature of flight attendants' jobs (e.g. boundary spanning jobs) involves excessive workloads, role stress, and burnout (Karatepe *et al.*, 2012; Karatepe and Sokmen, 2006). Therefore, flight attendants who craft and customize their own jobs proactively (e.g. handling unexpected needs and aggressive customers), instead of relying on supervisor support, are more likely to enhance customer service quality and also their job engagement (Chen *et al.*, 2014). As such, flight attendants have been a common research target in the literature on task crafting and therefore a particularly appropriate sampling choice for testing the current research model.

We contacted the human resource managers of the sponsoring company to obtain permission to collect data. The human resource managers were in charge of survey administration. They contacted all of the company's flight attendants and provided them with a packet containing a cover letter, self-administered questionnaire, and stamped pre-addressed envelope. To increase the response rate, we provided a gift voucher for each completed questionnaire. Respondents were guaranteed voluntary and anonymous participation. To ensure confidentiality, the respondents were instructed to seal the completed questionnaires in the pre-addressed envelopes and return them directly to the researchers by mail. Of the 273 questionnaires distributed to the flight attendants, a total of 175 usable questionnaires (response rate = 64.1 percent) were obtained after discarding two questionnaires collected from two employees who had worked in the company for less than three months, it being felt that such a short amount of time would prevent those employees from developing perceptions of organizational virtuousness and a sense of organizational identification. Of the 175 respondents, 89.1 percent were female. Respondents' education levels

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were graduate school (6.9 percent), four-year university (83.4 percent), and two-year vocational college (8.0 percent). The average age and work experience of the respondents were 28.5 years (SD = 3.9) and 3.8 years (SD = 2.3), respectively.

Measurement scales

Following Brislin's (1970) back-translation procedure, we first translated the original survey items into Korean and then asked two bilingual individuals to translate them into English. Four management scholars reviewed this translation to ensure the equivalence of the measurement scales. Five-point Likert-type scales were used to measure our study variables (see Table I).

Employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness were measured using 15 items (five sub-dimensions: optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity) adapted from the scales of Cameron *et al.* (2004) and Rego *et al.* (2011). In line with prior research (e.g. Rego *et al.*, 2010, 2011), a confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was performed to test the second-order factor model, with the five dimensions being indicators of the same underlying construct.

Organizational identification was assessed with five items adapted from the scales of Mael and Ashforth (1992) and Ahearne *et al.* (2013). As a measure of work engagement, the nine-item Utrecht Work Engagement Scale was adopted (Schaufeli *et al.*, 2006). This scale consists of three subscales of vigor, dedication, and absorption. Finally, we measured task crafting using four items from the scale by Slemp and Vella-Brodrick (2013).

We controlled for age, gender, and work experience in all analyses. These variables were controlled because they affect levels of task crafting (e.g. Lin *et al.*, 2017), organizational identification (e.g. Brammer *et al.*, 2015; Carmeli *et al.*, 2007), and work engagement (e.g. Langelaan *et al.*, 2006; Sonnentag, 2003).

Data analysis and results

Tests of reliability, validity, and common method variance (CMV)

We assessed the reliability of the measurement scales using Cronbach's α coefficients (see Table II). The reliability coefficients for the scales ranged from 0.82 to 0.87, which indicate sufficient levels of reliability (Nunnally, 1978). CFA with M-plus 7.4 software was performed to test the convergent and discriminant validity of the measurement scales. As reported in Table III, the hypothesized four-factor model (i.e. organizational virtuousness, organizational identification, work engagement, and job crafting) exhibited a good fit in an absolute sense ($\chi^2_{(481)} = 809.66$; $p < 0.05$, comparative fit index (CFI) = 0.91, Tucker Lewis index (TLI) = 0.90, root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA) = 0.06, and standardized root mean square residual (SRMR) = 0.08), and significantly fitted data better than any other alternative measurement model. The factor and item loadings in the measurement model all exceeded 0.54, with all *t*-values greater than 2.58, which confirms the convergent validity of our study measures (see Table I). All measures exhibited a sufficient level of reliability, with composite reliabilities ranging from 0.84 to 0.90 (see Table II). We further evaluated the discriminant validity of the measures based on Fornell and Larcker's (1981) procedure. We found that all average variance extracted was higher than the squared correlation between the target construct and any of the others (see Table II). Overall, our constructs exhibited sound measurement properties.

Because we used self-reported data, we needed to check for potential biases resulting from CMV. Following Podsakoff *et al.* (2012), we protected respondent anonymity, reduced evaluation apprehension biases, improved item wordings, and separated the measurement of the predictor and outcome variables in survey construction to reduce CMV. Furthermore, we conducted Harman's one-factor analysis as a statistical remedy (Podsakoff *et al.*, 2012). The results of CFA showed that the one-factor model ($\chi^2_{(495)} = 2{,}467.27$; $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.46, TLI = 0.42, RMSEA = 0.15, and SRMR = 0.13) exhibited a worse fit than our

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Construct		λ^c
Optimism[a]	We are optimistic that we will succeed, even when faced with major challenges	0.78
	In this organization, we are dedicated to doing good in addition to doing well	0.72
	A sense of profound purpose is associated with what we do here	0.73
Forgiveness[a]	We have very high standards of performance, yet we forgive mistakes when they are acknowledged and corrected	0.82
	We try to learn from our mistakes here. Consequently, missteps are quickly forgiven	0.83
	This is a forgiving, compassionate organization in which to work	0.78
Trust[a]	Employees trust one another in this organization	0.70
	People are treated with courtesy, consideration, and respect in this organization	0.68
	People trust the leadership of this organization	0.76
Compassion[a]	Acts of compassion are common here	0.92
	This organization is characterized by many acts of concern and caring for other people	0.92
	Many stories of compassion and concern circulate among organization members	0.86
Integrity[a]	This organization demonstrates the highest levels of integrity	0.84
	This organization would be described as virtuous and honorable	0.88
	Honesty and trustworthiness are hallmarks of this organization	0.81
Organizational virtuousness perceptions	Optimism	0.71
	Forgiveness	0.69
	Trust	0.94
	Compassion	0.78
	Integrity	0.84
Organizational identification[a]	When someone criticizes this organization, it feels like a personal insult	0.69
	I am very interested in what others think about this organization	0.73
	When I talk about this organization, I usually say "we" rather than "they"	0.75
	This company's successes are my successes	0.82
	When someone praises this company, it feels like a personal compliment	0.79
Vigor[a]	I feel bursting with energy	0.95
	I feel strong and vigorous at my job	0.92
	When I got up this morning, I felt like going to work	0.64
Dedication[a]	I am enthusiastic about my job	0.87
	My job inspires me	0.87
	I am proud of the work that I do	0.76
Absorption[a]	I feel happy when I am working intensely	0.75
	I am immersed in my work	0.92
	I get carried away when I am working	0.67
Work engagement	Vigor	0.78
	Dedication	0.97
	Absorption	0.75
Task crafting[b]	Introduce new approaches to improve your work	0.87
	Change the scope or types of tasks that you complete at work	0.86
	Introduce new work tasks that you think better suit your skills or interests	0.69
	Choose to take on additional tasks at work	0.54

Notes: $\chi^2_{(481)} = 809.66$; $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.91, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.08. [a]Items measured on a scale ranging from 1 "strongly disagree" to 5 "strongly agree"; [b]items measured on a scale ranging from 1 "hardly ever" to 5 "very often"; [c]all factor loadings were significant ($p < 0.01$)

Table I.
CFA results of measurement items

measurement model. In addition, we introduced an additional latent common method factor (LCMF) on which each item in the baseline model was allowed to load, in addition to loading on its respective construct. LCMF accounted for 18.50 percent of the total variance, which was considerably lower than the median method variance (25 percent) observed in research that used self-reported responses (Williams *et al.*, 1989). Taken together, these results suggest that CMV was not a serious threat to our data.

	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1. Gender	–						
2. Age	0.12	–					
3. Work experience	−0.03	0.65**	–				
4. Organizational virtuousness perceptions	0.13*	−0.03	0.08	*0.64*			
5. Organizational identification	0.08	−0.06	−0.13*	0.48	*0.57*		
6. Work engagement	0.31**	0.05	−0.08	0.44	0.54**	*0.70*	
7. Task crafting	0.27**	0.01	0.01	0.27**	0.22**	0.46**	*0.57*
Mean	0.11	28.54	3.80	3.10	3.44	3.18	3.11
SD	0.31	3.87	2.33	0.53	0.68	0.64	0.62
Cronbach's α	–	–	–	0.85	0.87	0.86	0.82
CR	–	–	–	0.90	0.87	0.88	0.84

Notes: CR, composite reliability. The numbers in the diagonal are the average variance extracted (AVE). *$p < 0.10$; **$p < 0.01$

Table II.
Means, standard deviations, and correlations

Measurement models	χ^2	df	$\Delta\chi^2$	Δdf	CFI	RMSEA
1. Hypothesized four-factor model	806.66**	481	–	–	0.91	0.06
2. Three-factor model: combining organizational identification, work engagement, and job crafting	1,829.91**	494	1,023.25**	13	0.63	0.12
3. Two-factor model: combining organizational virtuousness and organizational identification, and collapsing work engagement, and job crafting	1,929.37**	494	1,120.71**	13	0.60	0.13
4. One-factor model: a single-factor model combining all measures	2,467.27**	495	1,660.61**	14	0.46	0.15

Notes: All models were compared with model 1. **$p < 0.01$

Table III.
Comparison of factor structures

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Hypothesis testing

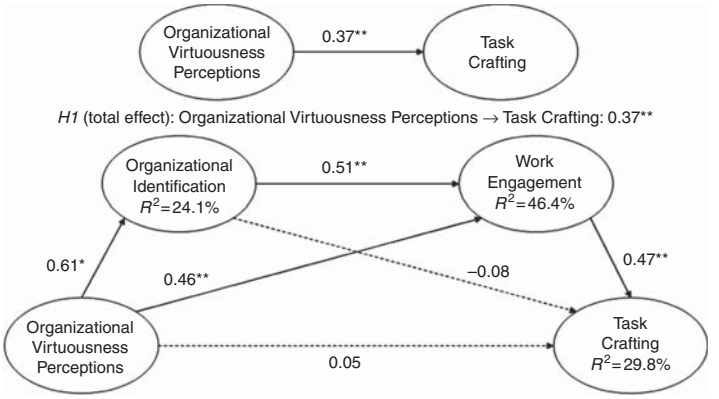
We estimated path coefficients in our structural model. The results of structural equation modeling (SEM) are reported in the upper section of Table IV. We specified and tested a multiple sequential mediation model (Lau and Cheung, 2010; Macho and Ledermann, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2008). The advantage of this approach is that we could isolate and estimate the indirect effect of the two mediators (Lau and Cheung, 2010; Macho and Ledermann, 2011; Taylor *et al.*, 2008). Figure 1 illustrates the results of the sequential mediation model. The hypothesized model demonstrated an acceptable fit to the data ($\chi^2_{(568)} = 908.94$; $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.06, and SRMR = 0.07) and accounted for 24.1 percent of the variance in organizational identification, 46.4 percent of the variance in work engagement, and 29.8 percent of the variance in task crafting.

We additionally conducted a three-step analysis to test our hypotheses. First, as shown in Figure 1, employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness were positively related to task crafting ($b = 0.37$, $p < 0.01$), which supports *H1*. Second, *H2-H4* were tested by including the proposed mediation paths between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting. Third, we estimated these indirect effects, along with the symmetric and 95 percent bias corrected bootstrapped confidence intervals for our path estimates ($n = 5{,}000$; Hayes, 2013; Shrout and Bolger, 2002) (see Table IV). The indirect effect of organizational virtuousness perceptions on task crafting via organization identification was very small, and the bootstrapped estimate of the indirect effect indicated a non-significant effect ($b = -0.05$, 95% CI [−0.26, 0.14]). Therefore, *H2* was rejected. The indirect effect of organizational virtuousness perceptions on task crafting through work engagement

From → To (*b*)	OV	OI	WE	TC
Gender		0.04	0.42**	0.38**
Age		0.00	0.01	−0.01
Work experience		−0.02	−0.01	0.04
Organizational virtuousness perceptions		0.61**	0.46**	0.05
Organizational identification			0.51**	−0.08
Work engagement				0.47**
Task crafting				
Effect	*b*	CI_{low}	CI_{high}	
Total effect				
H1: OV → TC	0.37	0.03	0.67	
Indirect effect				
H2: OV → OI → TC	−0.05	−0.26	0.14	
H3: OV → WE → TC	0.22	0.07	0.51	
H4: OV → OI → WE → TC	0.15	0.04	0.38	
Direct effect				
OV → TC	0.05	−0.39	0.45	
R^2				
Organizational identification	24.1%			
Work engagement	46.4%			
Task crafting	29.8%			

Table IV.
Path coefficients and indirect effects for mediation models

Notes: $\chi^2_{(568)} = 908.94$; $p < 0.05$, CFI = 0.90, TLI = 0.90, RMSEA = 0.06, SRMR = 0.07. CI, 95% confidence level; OV, organizational virtuousness perceptions; OI, organizational identification; WE, work engagement; TC, task crafting; *b*, unstandardized coefficient. Tests of path coefficients are two-tailed tests. $^{**}p < 0.01$



H2: Organizational Virtuousness Perceptions → Organizational Identification → Task Crafting: −0.05
H3: Organizational Virtuousness Perceptions → Work Engagement → Task Crafting: 0.22*
H4: Organizational Virtuousness Perceptions → Organizational Identification → Work Engagement → Task Crafting: 0.15*

Notes: $^{*}p<0.05$; $^{**}p<0.01$

Figure 1.
Research model

(*H3*) was supported ($b = 0.22$, 95% CI [0.07, 0.51]). Finally, to test *H4*, we estimated a sequential multiple mediation by adding a path from organizational identification and work engagement. As predicted, the indirect effect of organizational virtuousness perceptions on task crafting through employees' organization identification and work engagement was statistically significant ($b = 0.15$, 95% CI [0.04, 0.38]), supporting *H4*. Furthermore, after

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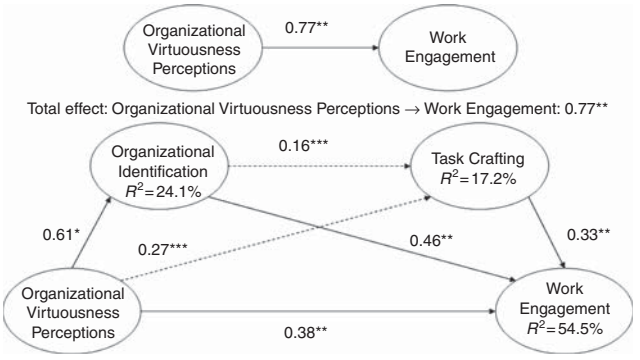
controlling for the two mediators, organizational virtuousness perceptions were no longer significantly related to task crafting ($b = 0.05$, 95% CI [−0.39, 0.44]). In sum, these findings indicate that the positive relationship between employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness and task crafting was fully and sequentially mediated by organization identification and work engagement.

Post hoc analysis

Because we found support for the proposed sequential mediation but not for *H2*, it was necessary to explore the possibility that organizational identification and work engagement simultaneously play joint mediating roles in the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting. Thus, we assessed a parallel mediation model by removing the direct path from organizational identification to work engagement. The SEM results revealed that the proposed sequential mediation model demonstrated a significantly better fit than the parallel mediation model ($\chi^2_{(\triangle \mathrm{df}=1)} = 23.48$, $p < 0.001$). Additionally, we explored potential reverse causality by setting two alternative models. Figure 2 shows the results of the first alternative model (organizational virtuousness perceptions → organizational identification → task crafting → work engagement). In Figure 2, only the indirect effect of organizational virtuousness perceptions on work engagement through organizational identification was significant ($b = 0.28$, 95% CI [0.12, 0.54]), and task crafting was associated only with work engagement ($b = 0.33$, $p < 0.01$). Figure 3 depicts the results of the second alternative model (organizational virtuousness perceptions → work engagement → organizational identification → task crafting). In this model, only the indirect effect of organizational virtuousness perceptions on task crafting through work engagement was significant ($b = 0.36$, 95% CI [0.16, 0.65]). Moreover, the two alternative models did not demonstrate any significant sequential mediation between the four constructs. Therefore, we concluded that the proposed causal relationships were more plausible than these alternative relationships.

Discussion

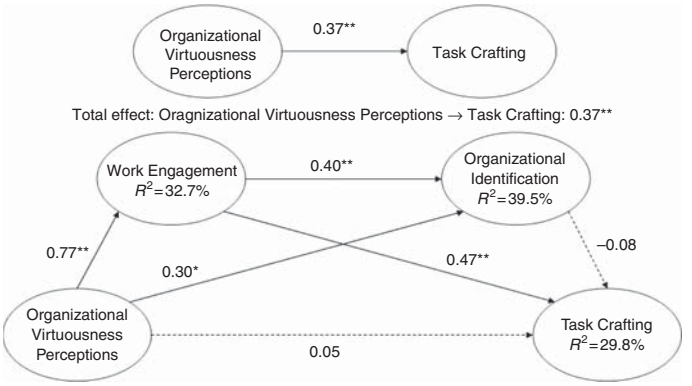
Beyond investigating the direct link between employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness and task crafting, our research revealed the underlying sequential mediation mechanism by which organizational virtuousness perceptions relate to task crafting. As predicted, employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness were positively associated



Notes: *$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$; ***$p<0.10$

Figure 2.
Alternative model 1

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Organizational Virtuousness Perceptions → Work Engagement → Task Crafting: 0.36 [0.16, 0.65]
Organizational Virtuousness Perceptions → Organizational Identification→ Task Crafting: –0.02 [–0.19, 0.06]
Organizational Virtuousness Perceptions → Work Engagement → Organizational Identification → Task Crafting: –0.02 [–0.15, 06]

Notes: *$p<0.05$; **$p<0.01$

Figure 3.
Alternative model 2

with task crafting. While organizational identification was not solely responsible for mediating this relationship, it did intervene in the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting through the intermediary process of work engagement. The *post hoc* results confirm this sequential mediation by ruling out alternative causal relationships. The results of this study extend previous research on organizational virtuousness and job crafting by suggesting reciprocity and social identity-based motivation as key underlying mechanisms of task crafting.

Theoretical implications

Our research provides novel insights for the positive organizational psychology literature by exploring the undiscovered path between organizational virtuousness and task crafting. Although a growing body of research has examined the role of organizational virtuousness in organizational and employee outcomes, prior research has mainly focused on prosocial or extra-role behaviors (e.g. organizational citizenship behavior) as a consequence of organizational virtuousness (e.g. Rego *et al.*, 2010). Our study is the first to demonstrate the positive ramifications of organizational virtuousness on employees' in-role task behaviors from the social exchange and reciprocity perspective. Complementing the extant body of research on organizational virtuousness, our findings suggest that moral or desirable virtues pursued by organizations play a pivotal role in eliciting reciprocity motivation, thereby shaping task-related behaviors as well as extra-role behaviors. By thus demonstrating the significance of organizational virtuousness as an important contextual factor affecting employees' critical task activities, our study enriches the knowledge of the relationship between organizational virtuousness and employee outcomes.

Another theoretical contribution lies in the exploration of the intermediary processes involving organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting. The sequential mediation of organizational identification and work engagement validates social identity theory and the social identity-based model of motivation as pertinent frameworks for explaining how organizational virtuousness perceptions relate to task crafting. As postulated by social identity theory, employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness are positively associated with engagement in their work by strengthening their identification with the organization. Furthermore, as predicted by the social identity-based model of motivation (Tyler, 1999), perceived organizational virtuousness and the associated feelings of esteem and

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pride from organizational membership engender the vigor, dedication, and absorption that employees experience in their work, thereby encouraging them to actively craft their tasks. By thus presenting and validating relevant frameworks for the mediating mechanisms of the organizational virtuousness – task crafting relationship, our study makes theoretical contributions to research on organizational virtuousness and job crafting.

Contrary to our expectation, the independent mediating effect of organizational identification was not supported. This was due to the non-significant path between organizational identification and task crafting. As pointed out earlier, job-related outcomes tend to be more strongly affected by proximal than distal antecedents. The results of our study are consistent with prior findings indicating a stronger link between proximal than distal antecedents and job outcomes (e.g. Shalley *et al.*, 2000). Even though employees' attitudes toward the organization did not directly affect their task crafting, they were linked to task crafting by being transformed into attitudes toward work. Additional support for this unexpected finding is provided by the social identity-based model of motivation (Tyler, 1999; Tyler and Blader, 2000). According to this framework, positive organizational characteristics strengthen employees' identification with the organization, which in turn drives proactive work behaviors by shaping work attitudes and motivation. These theoretical and empirical accounts, together with the context-attitude-behavior framework (Martin and Cullen, 2006), imply that organizational identification itself may not impact task crafting without eliciting the psychological state of work engagement. Although we detected a significant direct relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and work engagement, the *post hoc* results demonstrated that the proposed sequential mediation model was superior to alternative causal models. Therefore, it can be concluded that instead of solely mediating the relationship between organizational virtuousness perceptions and task crafting, work engagement intervenes in this relationship by being affected by organizational identification. These findings significantly advance job crafting research by providing a sophisticated understanding of how organizational virtuousness perceptions relate to task crafting.

Practical implications

Our findings clearly suggest that organizational optimism, forgiveness, trust, compassion, and integrity are desirable directions for organizations to pursue. Managers striving to promote employees' task crafting should pay attention to the role of organizational virtuousness as a critical contextual factor fostering task crafting. In particular, given the increasing evidence that employees' perceptions of organizational virtuousness have positive ramifications on their attitudes and behaviors (e.g. Rego *et al.*, 2010, 2011), managers need to care about employees' perceptions of their organization. Scholars provide several suggestions for boosting perceptions of organizational virtuousness and cultivating a virtuous psychological climate (Rego *et al.*, 2010). First, managers should provide a sense of purpose in their decisions, policies, and practices to help employees perceive the virtues endorsed by the organization. Second, organizations should create an optimistic work environment by increasing the capacity to pursue optimism even when faced with challenges and difficulties. Third, organizations need to foster respectful, trustful, courteous, and compassionate behaviors among employees. Fourth, organizations should have a clear orientation for integrity and honesty in organizational policies, procedures, and practices. Developing an ethical and fair work climate can elevate organizational integrity. Finally, it is necessary to create a culture in which mistakes and errors are forgiven and used for future learning and development.

Based on the finding that organizational identification and work engagement are central mediators of the organizational virtuousness – task crafting relationship, managers are also advised to enhance employees' organizational identification and work engagement as means

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of motivating task crafting. More specifically, given that leaders play an influential role in creating a sense of "we-ness" (Steffens *et al.*, 2014), they need to fortify employees' organizational identities through formal human resource management systems. According to the job crafting literature, although heightened identification and engagement can foster job crafting, job crafting itself can have a positive impact on identification and engagement (Cartwright and Holmes, 2006). Because identification, engagement, and task crafting form a positive spiral affecting one another, designing meaningful jobs and allowing greater autonomy can increase employees' loyalty to the organization and engagement in their work (Cartwright and Holmes, 2006).

Limitations and future research

The contributions of our research should be qualified by the following limitations. First, the use of self-reported, cross-sectional data poses a limitation on the causal conclusion among the variables. As pointed out earlier, scholars have acknowledged a reciprocal causal relationship between work engagement and job crafting (Tims *et al.*, 2015). Although our *post hoc* analysis provides stronger evidence for the work engagement-task crafting link than for the opposite, we recommend that future researchers need to use a longitudinal design to better determine the causality among organizational virtuousness, organizational identification, work engagement, and task crafting. In addition, obtaining a measure of task crafting from the target person's supervisors or peers could help reduce biases resulting from CMV and social desirability.

Second, although organizational virtuousness is an organizational-level property, we measured it through employee perceptions. For this reason, we were unable to capture how virtuousness at the organizational level affected employees' task crafting. Although we observed an acceptable level of variance among employees' responses regarding organizational virtuousness, shared perceptions of organizational virtuousness can better represent phenomena taking place at the organizational level. Therefore, future research should explore multi-level or cross relationships between organizational-level virtuousness and task crafting by collecting data from multiple organizations.

Third, for the sake of model parsimony, we did not specify boundary conditions at the organizational or individual level that may influence the organizational virtuousness – task crafting relationship. In particular, organizational characteristics or context (e.g. leadership and organizational culture) can be potential moderators that strengthen or weaken the association between organizational virtuousness and employee outcomes. Future work could explore such moderators and test moderating relationships at different levels of organizations.

Fourth, it should be noted that our sample consisted only of South Korean flight attendants. Although we assume that the proposed relationships among organizational virtuousness, organizational identification, work engagement, and task crafting are generalizable across different cultures, industries, and firms, the results of our study need to be replicated in other cultures and samples to confirm its external validity. In addition, the majority of our sample was female employees. Although this represents the typical gender composition of flight attendants (e.g. Hur *et al.*, 2016), future research may need to collect data and replicate the current findings in a more gender-balanced sample.

Finally, it might be valuable to investigate how organizational virtuousness perceptions may influence the other two forms of job crafting (i.e. relational and cognitive crafting). Although task crafting has been studied as a primary form of job crafting for individual service employees (Leana *et al.*, 2009; Lin *et al.*, 2017), relational crafting may become more significant when a team of service providers actively coordinate the quality or amount of interactions with each other. Likewise, service employees may engage in cognitive crafting by reinterpreting the significance or meaning of their jobs to the extent that their

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organizational membership detracts from a sense of pride and esteem (e.g. Elsbach and Kramer, 1996). Future research might usefully identify boundary conditions in which certain types of job crafting become more salient than others.

In conclusion, our study makes meaningful contributions to the theory and research by shedding light on organizational virtuousness perceptions as a motivational basis of task crafting and elucidating exploratory mechanisms underlying such a relationship. It further addresses the call to deepen our understanding of how virtuousness at the organizational level influences behavior at the individual level (Cameron, 2003). Future investigations into the distinct and relative roles of the five aspects of organizational virtuousness in predicting different forms of job crafting can expand the horizon of the organizational virtuousness and job crafting research.

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