The impact of employee delayed retirement on university performance towards job crafting and management policy in China educational institutions

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ABSTRACT

The objectives of this study investigate how delayed retirement influences university management policy and performance towards job crafting among employees and lecturers at China University. 751 participants were recruited for an online survey study. Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to test the research hypotheses. Delayed retirement has a positive and significant effect on job crafting, allowing employees and lecturers to redefine their roles in the workplace and university management policy. It includes engaging in mentorship, seeking autonomy, and fostering reciprocity. University management policy plays an important role in mediating the relationship between predictor variables (e.g., delayed retirement and job crafting) and university management policy. Delayed retirement significantly impacts employees' job crafting, enabling them to redefine their roles in the workplace. This means that experienced workers actively design positions to fit changing demands and capabilities to advance their careers. Stakeholders such as the government and university leaders need to collaborate to enhance university performance. The results of this study contribute to human resource literature and the educational context based on self-determination theory. These findings also highlight the importance of strategic management policies in enhancing organizational performance in both private and public organizations.

Contribution/ Originality: The roles of senior lecturers and employees are essential for organizational transformation and university performance. The government and university stakeholders should foster a workplace environment that encourages collaboration across generations. It emphasizes the critical role of employees' knowledge and skills as vital human resources for the university.

1. INTRODUCTION

Delayed retirement has become a significant issue in higher education worldwide, impacting university performance in various ways [1, 2]. Globally, some countries and universities are experiencing aging faculty populations, leading to both opportunities and challenges. The delayed retirement allows institutions to retain experienced professors, maintain academic excellence, and promote knowledge transfer between senior and junior faculty members. Some universities in developed nations, such as China, the United States, and European countries, are addressing the aging population by implementing flexible work schedules, encouraging mentorship roles, and enacting phased retirement plans. These measures serve as strategies to support institutional renewal and retain

experienced staff [3, 4]. However, China's government policies and demographic changes make postponed retirement more complicated [5, 6]. It appears that when colleges fail to fill positions for younger faculty members, it impedes innovation and career advancement. Delaying retirement also decreases productivity for employees or lecturers due to deteriorating physical or cognitive capacities.

Although some Chinese colleges depend on elderly professors for leadership and research, postponed retirement also reduces the prospects for young academics seeking jobs and career development [7, 8]. Workforce planning is more challenging in China due to its strict retirement laws and hierarchical systems. Therefore, expanding research collaboration between senior and junior faculty members and post-retirement advisory roles has become a crucial solution [9, 10]. Hence, maintaining long-term university performance in China requires more effort and a compromise between seasoned academics and encouraging academic development for the next generation. However, younger workers face increased competition for jobs as the number of older people rises [11, 12]. University leaders find this decision challenging because postponed retirement has become a significant determinant of job design, university management practices, and overall institutional success.

Senior staff or lecturers at universities who want to stay involved and productive frequently modify their job duties according to their interests and skills [13, 14]. It is necessary to carefully consider how postponed retirement affects job design, institutional governance, and performance in order to address a balance between experience retention, productivity, and innovation in higher education. The impact of postponed retirement on job crafting is one of its main consequences. It involves taking on more advisory or mentoring responsibilities and lowering the workload of teachers. Therefore, senior lecturers can stay motivated and make a significant contribution to university life through job crafting [15, 16]. Therefore, implement structured policies that facilitate role adaptation without hindering opportunities for early-career scholars and employees. University management policies are also impacted by delayed retirement, which suggests creating plans to strike a balance between faculty succession, workforce planning, and financial sustainability [17, 18]. It can help manage faculty transitions effectively.

Effective management practices should ensure that postponing retirement is the best course of action for both the university and its employees [19, 20]. Universities can optimize institutional performance by effectively combining dynamic faculty development programs with deferred retirement regulations. They can maintain academic excellence, encourage intergenerational cooperation, foster lifelong learning, and develop organized retirement transition plans [21]. However, some gaps remain unfilled despite the growing body of research on delayed retirement and its effects on job crafting, university management strategies, and institutional performance [22]. Previous research emphasizes the advantages of retaining experienced faculty; however, it has paid less attention to the potential drawbacks of postponing retirement, including intergenerational friction, career stagnation among younger scholars, and institutional resistance to change. Therefore, further study is necessary to determine how colleges can balance providing opportunities for early-career scholars with retaining senior academics. Additionally, cross-cultural comparisons of postponed retirement policies in higher education have not received sufficient attention.

Some scholars exploring how different cultural and policy environments impact delayed retirement, job crafting, and university performance could provide deeper insights into best practices for workforce planning in academia [23, 24]. Finally, most studies on job crafting and delayed retirement focus on faculty members, with little consideration of how administrative and support staff adapt to extended careers. The long-term impact of delayed retirement on research productivity, teaching quality, and institutional reputation remains underexplored, requiring longitudinal studies to assess its effects over time. For instance, how does delayed retirement influence job crafting among employees and lecturers, and what strategies can be implemented to maximize engagement and productivity? What are the effects of delayed retirement on university workforce planning, and how can management policies balance faculty retention with opportunities for younger academics and employees? How do cultural and policy differences affect the employment and outcomes of delayed retirement in higher education institutions worldwide?

This study contributes to the existing body of knowledge by examining how job crafting, university management practices, and institutional performance are influenced by postponed retirement. It enhances theoretical understanding by integrating concepts from job crafting, workforce aging, and higher education management. The findings offer insights into a fixed career endpoint, highlighting the dynamic nature of extended employment. Additionally, the study provides practical guidance for university administrators and policymakers by identifying strategies to balance faculty retention with career opportunities for younger academics. It also emphasizes the importance of adapting workforce planning to prevent generational conflicts and support sustainable academic development. Furthermore, the research offers a comparative perspective on delayed retirement by considering cultural and policy differences across global higher education institutions. Overall, the findings contribute to understanding best practices and innovative policies, providing valuable guidance for universities aiming to optimize faculty engagement and long-term institutional performance.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Self-Determinant Theory (SDT)

The Self-Determination Theory (SDT) offers a helpful framework for understanding how postponed retirement affects academic achievement. According to SDT, people are motivated by three basic psychological needs: relatedness, competence, and autonomy [25]. Furthermore, SDT contends that because their jobs satisfy these fundamental psychological demands, faculty members who stay on after the customary retirement age continue to contribute effectively [26, 27]. University employees and lecturers can conduct fruitful research, provide mentorship, and implement flexible teaching schedules when they have autonomy in using their experience, contribute to the body of knowledge, and maintain intellectual stimulation. Competence is strengthened [28, 29]. Professional relationships with coworkers, students, and intellectual networks help to preserve relatedness. These internal incentives lead to increased levels of involvement and output, which eventually improve academic achievement. Universities can improve faculty retention, knowledge transfer, and institutional prestige by providing flexible work schedules and research opportunities that encourage autonomy-driven delayed retirement [30, 31]. Consequently, incorporating SDT principles into university labor policy can optimize the benefits of postponed retirement on the overall success of the institution.

2.2. Delayed Retirement

The term "delayed retirement" describes when workers choose to continue working past the conventional retirement age, either willingly or as a result of organizational, personal, or financial circumstances [32, 33]. Retirement has traditionally been viewed as a definitive professional endpoint, but an increasing number of individuals are opting to work beyond the typical retirement age due to demographic shifts, longer life expectancy, and financial considerations [33, 34]. Some university employees and lecturers continue working due to a passion for research, teaching, and financial security. Therefore, employees and lecturers who delay retirement play an important role in job crafting and become an essential mechanism that allows them to align work with personal strengths, interests, and evolving capabilities. The delayed retirement and job crafting are interconnected in three primary ways: task crafting, which facilitates older employees and lecturers who delay retirement to reshape responsibilities—focusing more on research, mentoring, or advisory roles instead of high-intensity teaching or administrative duties, thereby remaining engaged while reducing work-related stress [35]. Universities also benefit from retaining experienced faculty members to assume additional responsibilities, relational crafting to support employees and lecturers who continue working beyond retirement age, often seeking meaningful interactions through mentoring students, collaborating on research projects, and contributing to institutional governance to enhance employees' and lecturers' motivation [1, 26]. It also shifts in mindset foster greater job satisfaction and motivation, leading to sustained

engagement. Universities can create an environment where delayed retirement enhances faculty well-being, promotes knowledge transfer, and strengthens institutional performance regarding delayed retirement.

H₁: Delaying retirement has a positive effect on job crafting among employees and lecturers.

University management policies play a crucial role in shaping how delayed retirement is handled within higher education institutions [28, 36]. The delayed retirement and management policies can be analyzed in three key areas: workforce planning, faculty succession, and institutional efficiency. They affect workforce planning by influencing faculty retention and hiring practices. Therefore, universities must balance the need to retain experienced faculty members while ensuring career opportunities for younger academics. Management policies that provide flexible retirement options, phased retirement programs, and part-time faculty roles help accommodate senior professors while maintaining a dynamic workforce [37]. However, one of the major challenges of delayed retirement is its impact on faculty succession and career progression. For instance, when senior faculty members remain in their positions longer, younger academics may experience delays in promotions and tenure-track advancements. University management must implement policies that allow for mentorship programs, leadership transitions, and research collaborations to facilitate knowledge transfer between generations. Structured policies that encourage senior faculty to mentor junior faculty members can help alleviate the negative effects of delayed retirement on career progression [5, 34]. Managing delayed retirement also has financial implications for universities. Therefore, university management policies should include financial incentives for voluntary retirement, post-retirement contracts, and advisory roles that enable senior faculty to contribute without occupying full-time positions.

H₂: Delaying retirement has a positive effect on university management policy.

2.3. Job Crafting and University Management Policy

Job crafting is the process through which workers deliberately alter their jobs, responsibilities, and interpersonal interactions to improve motivation and job satisfaction [38]. The proactive process of "job crafting" involves employees reshaping work positions, duties, and relationships to increase personal individual motivations, interests, and strengths [39, 40]. The goal of job crafting is to improve job happiness, engagement, and productivity in three important areas: task crafting, as opposed to standard job redesign, which is led by management [41, 42] where employees modify the scope or type of work, they perform; relational crafting, where employees can adjust social communication and interactions; and cognitive crafting to facilitate employees' view transformation and job's performance. The job crafting used to restructure teaching, research, and administrative responsibilities among employees and lecturers in the education context. It also shifts their focus toward mentoring students, collaborating on interdisciplinary research, or reducing administrative tasks to maintain work-life balance [11, 43]. Hence, the university leaders can actively reshape employee roles, faculty members can remain motivated, avoid burnout, and contribute more effectively to university objectives.

University management policies play a critical role in either supporting or hindering job crafting [12]. Institutions that encourage flexibility and autonomy allow faculty members to outline roles and enhance engagement and institutional performance. The job crafting and university management policy can be analyzed in three main areas: faculty autonomy, performance management, and institutional adaptation [15, 44]. One of the key factors influencing university management towards job crafting is structuring their work. Institutions with rigid policies that strictly define teaching loads, research output, and administrative duties may limit faculty members' ability to participate in meaningful job crafting [14]. Employees' job crafting influences university management policies on faculty evaluation and promotion. Hence, employees and lecturers who actively reshape their roles can help universities remain agile and responsive to evolving academic and industry needs. It proves that job crafting is an essential process that enhances faculty motivation, engagement, and institutional effectiveness. Universities that implement management policies promoting autonomy, flexible performance metrics, and institutional adaptability

create an environment where job crafting can thrive. By supporting faculty-driven role adjustments, university leaders can optimize workforce planning, improve job satisfaction, and drive academic excellence.

H₃: Job crafting has a positive effect on university management policy.

University management policy refers to the set of rules, strategies, and frameworks implemented by higher education institutions to govern academic, administrative, financial, and human resource functions [45, 46]. These policies guide decision-making processes related to faculty management, student affairs, research funding, infrastructure development, and institutional governance. Effective management policies ensure that universities operate efficiently, uphold academic integrity, and maintain high standards of education and research. University management policies typically cover areas such as faculty recruitment and retention, curriculum development, research funding, financial planning, student admissions, and performance evaluation. Well-structured management policies contribute to institutional stability, innovation, and global competitiveness in higher education in various ways, affecting faculty productivity, student outcomes, and overall organizational efficiency [23]. The management policies and university performance can be analyzed in three key areas: faculty and staff effectiveness, research output and innovation, and student success and institutional reputation.

University management policies directly impact faculty motivation, engagement, and job satisfaction. Policies that promote fair recruitment, career development, workload balance, and incentives for research and teaching excellence lead to higher faculty retention and productivity [36, 47]. Universities that provide opportunities for job crafting, flexible work arrangements, and professional development can attract employees and lecturers to their strengths, leading to enhanced teaching quality and academic output [8, 24, 48]. Effective university management policies contribute to student success by ensuring high-quality curriculum design, academic support systems, and career services [49, 50]. University management policies serve as the foundation for institutional success, influencing faculty performance, research productivity, and student outcomes. Well-structured policies foster a positive academic environment, drive innovation, and enhance institutional competitiveness [11, 51]. To maintain long-term success, universities must continuously adapt their policies to evolving educational, technological, and societal trends.

H₄: Management policy has a significant effect on university performance.

This research model framework, which is based on the theoretical background and relevant literature, is illustrated in Figure 1 of the research framework.
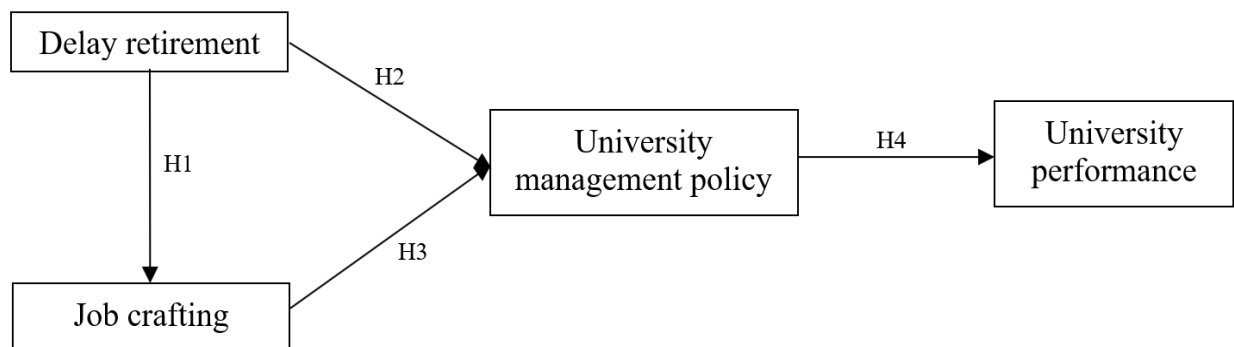

Figure 1. Research framework.

3. METHODOLOGY

A pretest and pilot test were applied to determine whether the participants understood the questions, and revised diction was used to avoid single-source bias [52]. The pre-testing suggested the deletion and modification of specific statements to ensure they were fully understood within the context of Chinese education. The questionnaire was designed to collect general information about respondents, including age, gender, job title, salary, job satisfaction, and promotion prospects. It also focused on management policies, such as retirement age and reemployment policies for seniors, as well as human resource policies related to promotion opportunities for both young and senior

employees from universities in Southwest China. This study was conducted from July 1 to September 30, 2024, as it is an effective method for addressing complex decision-making problems that require the consideration of multiple factors simultaneously. A total of 384 participants completed the questionnaires. The participants in this study are employees in the Chinese education sector who requested to complete the survey. Furthermore, Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) was used to examine the research hypotheses. The questionnaire encompasses a seven-point Likert scale anchored between 1 ("strongly disagree") and 7 ("strongly agree") for all scale items. Delay retirement, adapted from Hu and Yang [4], job crafting refers to Moreira et al. [11], education management policy from Yuan and Tang [8], and university performance adapted from Limpo and Junaidi [21].

4. RESULT

4.1. Research Design

The validity of the questionnaire was ensured by confirming that the targeted respondents had limited availability due to their teaching and administrative responsibilities. The reliability of the design was affected by these constraints. The questionnaire was designed to be completed within a reasonable amount of time to ensure high response rates and accurate data collection. The target population consisted of qualified employees in the higher education industry, aged 26 to 65, encompassing both genders. Table 1 presents the descriptive statistics of the study's participants.

Table 1. Respondent demographics.

Demographic items	Frequency	Percentile (%)
Gender		
Male	362	48.2
Female	389	51.8
Age		
18-35 years old	295	39.3
36-55 years old	216	28.8
Over 55 years old	240	31.9
Education		
Bachelor	185	24.6
Master	271	36.1
PhD	295	39.3
Time period as employee and lecturer		
Below 10 years	205	27.2
11-25 years	130	17.3
26-30 years	248	33.1
Over 30 years	168	22.4

The research was approved by the ethics committee of Rajamangala University of Technology Krungthep, Thailand (letter number R 205/2024) and Universitas Muhammadiyah Palopo, in accordance with ethical research standards in April 2024. Following the ethical standards outlined in the 1964 Declaration of Helsinki, as well as ethical principles and the code of conduct, participation in this study was voluntary. Informed consent was obtained from all participants who agreed to participate in this research and to publish their data in publications. This consent was provided through an online survey. Table 2 shows that the means and standard deviations were used in the recent study to confirm the subjective data and to compare the variables primarily observed in the first step [52]. As a result, bivariate correlation analyses were conducted to generate Pearson correlation coefficients used to measure the direction and magnitude of the relationships between the variables investigated.

Table 2. Correlation matrix for measurement scales.

Constructs	Mean	SD	DR	JB	MP	UP
DR	5.30	1.28	**0.806**			
JB	5.39	1.21	0.564**	**0.725**		
MP	5.65	1.23	0.415**	0.439**	**0.761**	
UP	5.73	1.15	0.562**	0.527**	0.663**	**0.768**

Note: **Note:** DR: Delay retirement, JB: Job crafting, MP: Management policy, UP: University performance.
SD: Standard Deviation.
Diagonal elements are the square roots of the AVE for each construct.
Pearson correlations are shown below the diagonal.
Significant at **: p<0.01.

4.2. Measurement Result

The evaluation of the measurement model (outer model) indicated that the constructs meet the reliability and validity criteria. The convergent validity results demonstrated that all indicators had factor loadings greater than 0.70, signifying strong correlations with their respective constructs and confirming their appropriateness for measuring the underlying concepts. Discriminant validity was also confirmed using the Fornell-Larcker criterion, indicating that each construct was distinct from others, achieving clear differentiation in measurement. The reliability of the constructs was evaluated through Composite Reliability and Cronbach's Alpha, with all constructs exhibiting values greater than 0.70. This confirmed that the measurement items were consistent and reliable for capturing the intended variables. Table 3 presents the model evaluation, including reliability and adequate discriminant validity.

Table 3. Measurement results.

Constructs	MLE estimates factor loading	Composite reliability (CR)	Average of variance extracted (AVE)	Cronbach's α
Delay retirement		0.832	0.661	0.828
My current position and its duties demand that I continue to hone my skills.	0.821			
My work-related experience has given me the opportunity to grow or learn new skills.	0.816			
I can learn more from my job	0.861			
My job enables me to reach the limits of my capabilities.	0.867			
I am able to further develop my talents because of my job.	0.829			
I can fully utilize my skills in my job.	0.778			
Job crafting		0.838	0.575	0.842
I actively change aspects of my job tasks to make my work more engaging and meaningful.	0.768			
I seek out opportunities to use my strengths and skills in my daily work tasks.	0.778			
I take initiative to modify how I perform my tasks to better fit my preferences and abilities.	0.718			
I intentionally build relationships with colleagues to enhance job performance.	0.737			
I try to align my work with my personal values to enhance job satisfaction.	0.741			
I look for ways to learn new skills to improve my work performance.	0.677			

Constructs	MLE estimates factor loading	Composite reliability (CR)	Average of variance extracted (AVE)	Cronbach's α
I adjust my work methods or schedule to better balance my job demands with my personal life.	0.758			
Management Policy	0.836	0.753	0.862	
The university's management policies are clearly communicated and easy to understand.	0.855			
Management policies are applied fairly and consistently across all employees.	0.863			
Employees have the opportunity to provide input on management policies that affect their work.	0.772			
The current management policies effectively support the university's goals and employee well-being.	0.832			
University leadership ensures that management policies are properly implemented and followed.	0.756			
Management policies are flexible enough to accommodate the diverse needs of university staff.	0.687			
University performance		0.815	0.681	0.834
The university provides high-quality education that meets academic and industry standards.	0.792			
The university actively supports research, innovation, and knowledge creation among faculty and students.	0.781			
The university's management and administrative processes are efficient and responsive to the needs of staff and students.	0.776			
Both students and faculty are satisfied with the university's academic environment, facilities, and resources.	0.795			
The university collaborates effectively with industries and communities to enhance learning, research, and social impact.	0.755			

Note: Model fit: $\chi^2/df = 3.451$, GFI = 0.956, NFI = 0.958, CFI = 0.958, IFI = 0.958, and RMSEA= 0.046.

4.3. Structural Result

The model fit for the data was adequate $\chi^2 = 958.75$, df =268, $\chi^2/df = 3.577$, GFI = 0.860, NFI = 0.925, CFI = 0.945, IFI = 0.945, and RMSEA= 0.075. The summary in Figure 2 shows a strong effect of delay retirement on job crafting among employee and lecturer in the university (0.112; $p < 0.05$), which supports H1. Similarly, H2 is supported, indicating a positive effect of delay retirement on university management policy (0.365; $p < 0.001$). The same result occurred how job crafting has a positive and significant effect on university management policy (0.362, $p < 0.001$) and also how university influencing organization performance (0.226; $p < 0.01$). Hence, H3 and H4 are supported.
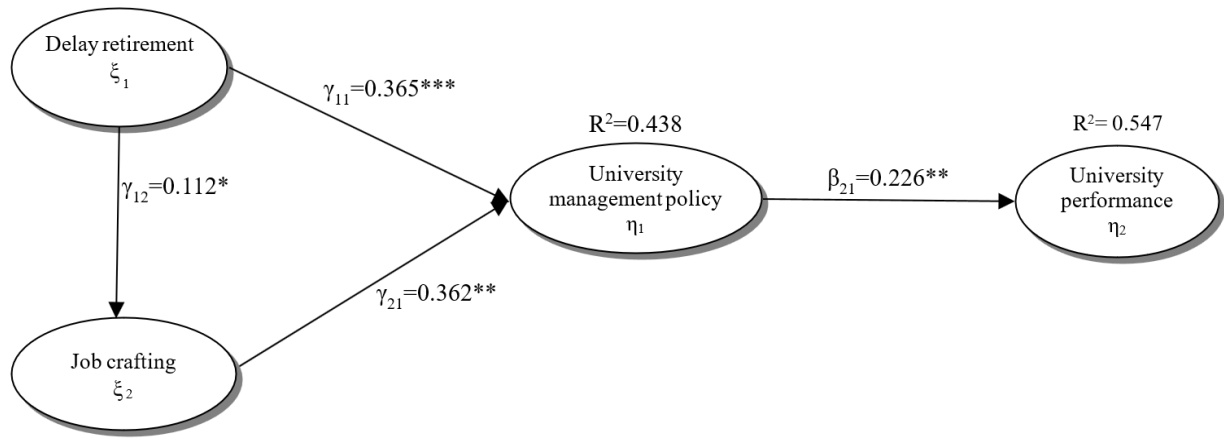
Figure 2. Structural model result.

Note: Model fit: $\chi^2/df = 2.755$, GFI = 0.948, NFI = 0.952, CFI = 0.953, IFI = 0.953, and RMSEA= 0.051.
***$p<0.001$, **$p<0.01$, *$p<0.05$.

5. KEY FINDING

The study's findings have important theoretical and practical implications. Theoretically, the results support the integration of Human Capital Theory and Self-Determination Theory based on the education field and the dynamics of an aging workforce. Practically, the findings suggest that organizations should develop and implement management policies that effectively balance the retention of experienced employees with the promotion of younger talent. This balance is essential for maintaining organizational performance and fostering a supportive work environment.

5.1. Discussion

Delayed retirement significantly influences employees' job crafting and also facilitates redefining their roles in the workplace towards adapting tasks, engaging in mentorship, seeking autonomy, and fostering reciprocity regarding their professionalism. This result also supports preliminary studies which found that organizations that support job crafting for senior employees can harness their experience, enhance workplace culture, and sustain the organization [12-14]. It also demonstrates that delayed retirement has become an increasing trend across various industries, particularly in academic and professional settings where experienced employees opt to extend their careers. This decision can significantly influence job crafting by encouraging employees to proactively shape their roles. The concepts of delayed retirement and job crafting highlight the dynamic nature of work, allowing employees to meet their evolving needs and abilities [17]. The employees' delay in retirement may involve engaging in job crafting to maintain productivity and accommodate physical and cognitive changes. However, senior employees who delay retirement often adjust job tasks to their evolving capabilities, delegate physically demanding tasks, and focus on strategic planning or advisory roles that align with their expertise and interests. This approach enables employees to continue contributing effectively while minimizing burnout. Senior employees who delay retirement often take on mentorship roles, guiding younger colleagues and passing down institutional knowledge [16, 35]. It proves that employees job crafting success actively employees' professional interactions, fostering collaborative work environments that benefit both the employees and the organization.

The delayed retirement also plays an important role in enhancing universities' management policies. It has become a tool for knowledge transfer, helping to bridge generational gaps and improve overall organizational effectiveness. With years of experience, employees who extend their careers often seek greater autonomy over their work. Engagement among employees in cognitive crafting shifts focus towards fulfillment, such as research, consulting, or teaching specialized courses. This self-directed approach allows employees to remain engaged while tailoring their roles to match organizational performance and their personal preferences [4, 5]. As employees delay retirement, senior employees also strengthen workplace relationships, creating a sense of belonging. Particularly in

academic institutions, where senior professors establish meaningful connections with students, faculty, and administrators, it also enhances job satisfaction and contributes to a positive organizational culture and better work-life balance. Hence, universities must recognize the importance of job crafting among employees to delay retirement and implement policies that support flexible roles and mentorship opportunities in China and globally [6, 18, 34]. The university also can maximize the contributions of senior employees experienced in maintaining a motivated workforce. This suggests that university policies play a crucial role in influencing employees' decisions to continue working beyond retirement age, including employment benefits, flexible work arrangements, and retirement incentives.

The statistical findings confirm that job crafting significantly influences management policies. It indicates a strong and meaningful relationship. Management rules must change to reflect the evolving nature of work as employees construct their jobs, encouraging a flexible, creative, and employee-focused workplace. It implies that management rules will probably modify and adapt to accommodate job crafting by employees, leading to a more dynamic and employee-centered workplace that also improves or changes in response. Job crafting has a direct influence on the rules governing organizational structures and procedures, in addition to being advantageous for workers' individual job satisfaction and performance, according to this relationship. Organizations that support job crafting may also need to update or improve their rules to support a more adaptable and employee-driven workplace [15, 17, 47]. Personalized work schedules, flexible job positions, and remote work options are some examples of how to better match employees' interests and strengths.

Employee engagement and productivity increase when workers take responsibility for their work and reinterpret jobs to fit their skills and interests. Policies may shift toward empowering employees, promoting mentorship programs, and encouraging collaborative decision-making [3, 15, 18]. It tailors employees' roles towards job crafting and management policies to adapt and offer personalized career progression paths among employees. Organizations may introduce individualized training programs, mentorship opportunities, and specialized job roles to accommodate employees' evolving career goals. Job crafting often involves employees adjusting roles to better fit their personal strengths and work preferences. Hence, management policies develop strategies that prioritize inclusivity, workplace well-being, and support systems for diverse employees, ultimately fostering a more positive and accommodating work culture.

The management policies have also become a valuable tool in influencing university performance. University management policies that provide financial security, professional development, and an inclusive work environment contribute to employees' decisions to extend their careers. This means that universities should offer part-time positions, reduced workloads, or phased retirement programs to enable employees to transition gradually into retirement. The findings confirm that management policies significantly influence organizational performance, reduce burnout, and make it easier for older employees to balance work and personal commitments. These results support preliminary studies which found that organizational policies reduce burnout and facilitate better work-life balance for older employees [49, 51]. A well-structured pension system and financial benefits encourage employees to extend their careers. Universities that offer continued health insurance, retirement bonuses, or salary increases for late-career professionals create a more attractive work environment for senior staff. When universities invest in professional development and recognize the contributions of older faculty and staff, employees feel valued and are more likely to delay retirement. Opportunities for mentorship, leadership roles, and research funding also play a crucial role in retaining senior employees. A positive work environment that promotes inclusivity and respect for aging employees can significantly influence their decision to remain in the workforce. Support systems such as ergonomic workplace adjustments, wellness programs, and peer networks further encourage delayed retirement.

As a mediator, variables and management policies also play an important role in mediating the relationship between predictor variables (e.g., delay in retirement and job crafting) and university performance. Hence, universities and other institutions must prioritize effective policy-making to drive long-term growth and success. This suggests

that well-structured management policies can lead to better institutional outcomes, improved employee engagement, and overall operational efficiency. Effective management policies also create a structured work environment, clarify roles and responsibilities, and ensure consistency in decision-making, all of which contribute to better institutional functioning. This confirms prior studies which revealed that clear and well-implemented management policies help streamline operations by setting standardized procedures for decision-making, resource allocation, and workflow management [11, 43, 48]. This reduces inefficiencies, minimizes confusion, and ensures that employees can focus on their tasks with clarity and direction. Policies that prioritize employee well-being, professional development, and work-life balance contribute to a more engaged workforce.

Employees who feel supported by organizational policies are more motivated, productive, and committed to achieving institutional goals. Strong management policies ensure that the organization adheres to legal regulations, industry standards, and ethical guidelines. Compliance with these standards reduces the risk of financial penalties, legal disputes, and reputational damage, all of which can negatively impact organizational performance. Management policies that encourage creativity, continuous learning, and adaptability enable organizations to respond effectively to changing industry trends and competitive pressures [36, 46, 50]. Policies that support research, technological advancements, and strategic planning help institutions maintain a competitive edge. Well-defined policies provide leaders with a framework for making informed decisions that align with the organization's vision and objectives. Policies related to leadership development, accountability, and communication help create a strong governance structure, leading to improved organizational performance. A positive work culture, driven by fair and transparent policies, fosters employee loyalty and reduces turnover rates. Organizations that invest in policies promoting diversity, equity, and inclusion create a workplace where employees feel valued, leading to higher morale and performance.

5.2. Theoretical Implications

The connection between job crafting and postponed retirement has important theoretical implications for theories of career development. Conventional career models, such as career development, advise workers to follow a straight path from hiring to retirement. This shift necessitates a reassessment of older workers' work habits, focusing on the role of job crafting in maintaining motivation and productivity. It provides a useful foundation for understanding how workers actively modify their workplaces to balance resources and needs. Personalized work experiences are becoming increasingly significant as lecturers and employees continue their careers to gain more autonomy in defining their responsibilities. Additionally, it suggests that people find meaning in their work, and postponing retirement allows workers to continue contributing through cognitive crafting and reframing. Managing an aging workforce requires transformational leadership that emphasizes role customization and employee empowerment. Mentorship programs and opportunities for ongoing professional development enable leaders and organizations to foster an environment that supports job crafting and flexible work schedules. Furthermore, considering postponed retirement, the concept of the psychological contract theory, which posits unspoken expectations between employers and employees, needs to be reexamined.

5.3. Practical Implications

The growing trend of postponed retirement has significant real-world implications for businesses, particularly in how they manage work responsibilities and regulations concerning an aging workforce. One important aspect is the need for flexible work schedules that enable senior staff members to participate effectively in job crafting. Employers could offer senior staff options such as part-time work, reduced workloads, or phased retirement plans to facilitate a smooth transition while allowing them to continue making valuable contributions. Providing choices like remote work or altered job duties enables staff members to customize their roles according to their preferences and strengths. This adaptability enhances institutional knowledge sharing and continuity, in addition to retaining

experienced workers. Organizational leaders should receive training on the importance of job design and be motivated to encourage staff to modify their roles to maximize engagement. Offering mentorship positions, professional development opportunities, and cross-functional partnerships that leverage the experience of senior employees are effective strategies. Therefore, organizations should not only focus on traditional productivity metrics but also adjust performance evaluation criteria to reflect the evolving contributions of senior employees, recognizing the value of knowledge transfer, strategic insight, and mentorship.

Employees who postpone retirement must be supported with regard to workplace well-being initiatives. Teamwork and information sharing among employees and lecturers can be improved by cultivating an age-inclusive culture that encourages intergenerational collaboration. This policy has the potential to transform postponed retirement into an opportunity for greater productivity, innovation, and long-term workforce sustainability. To understand faculty and staff preferences regarding retirement planning and to make necessary policy adjustments, organizations and universities should regularly conduct assessments. The adoption of age-friendly management practices could help colleges maintain high academic and research standards, retain experienced staff, and improve institutional knowledge. Universities can enhance overall organizational performance and the well-being of individual employees by incorporating job crafting into strategic planning. Maintaining strong academic standards, encouraging excellence in research, and improving student outcomes all depend on this. To adapt to changing administrative and academic demands, universities should continuously review and improve their policies.

5.4. Conclusion

Job crafting and postponed retirement have significant implications for both businesses and employees. One effective technique that enables older personnel to perform their tasks is job crafting. Postponing retirement allows employees to continue their professional development and helps redefine their roles, rather than merely extending their working hours. Additionally, traditional theories of professional growth that assume a linear career path culminating in retirement are challenged by delayed retirement. By adjusting their responsibilities, mentoring younger colleagues, and focusing on areas aligned with their expertise, senior employees can stay motivated. Employees can tailor their jobs to improve job satisfaction and organizational outcomes with support from leadership, phased retirement options, and flexible work arrangements. The workplace culture must evolve to become inclusive of all ages and foster intergenerational collaboration. This presents organizations with a unique opportunity to reconsider how work is structured for an aging workforce as retirement is postponed. Through flexible policies, supportive leadership, and promoting inclusivity, organizations can fully leverage the potential of senior employees. Job crafting is a valuable tool that helps employees and organizations navigate career stages in a manner that is both fulfilling and sustainable.

5.5. Limitations and Future Study Directions

Despite the most hypotheses being accepted, this study has some limitations. First, this study primarily focuses on the positive aspects of job crafting among older employees, potentially overlooking challenges such as resistance to change, declining physical or cognitive abilities, and workplace discrimination against aging workers. Future studies should investigate delayed retirement and job crafting across different industries and organizations. Second, this study applied cross-sectional data, which may not fully capture the long-term effects of delayed retirement on job crafting. Future studies need to use a longitudinal approach to provide a more comprehensive understanding of how job crafting behaviors evolve over time and how they influence both employee well-being and organizational outcomes. Furthermore, future studies should also explore the role of organizational policies and leadership styles in facilitating or hindering job crafting for older employees. In addition, investigating how different management approaches, such as transformational leadership or participative decision-making, influence job crafting among employees who delay retirement would provide valuable insights for public and private organizations. Third, future

studies should examine the psychological and emotional aspects of delayed retirement, including stress levels, work-life balance, and career satisfaction. Comparative research across different cultural settings and industries could also shed light on how job crafting varies globally and identify best practices for supporting aging employees. Finally, incorporating employee perspectives through qualitative or mixed methods would provide a deeper understanding of job crafting.

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