Learning in the workplace: evidence on the role of behavioural job crafting on fostering self-perceived employability

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Abstract

Purpose – Given the instability and volatility of the labour market and the global talent scarcity, placing more attention on job employability is fundamental. In this context, the literature has already extensively examined employability as a crucial individual aspect, identifying some significant antecedents, including the applicability of training on the job. The present study aims to examine the impact that teaching employees to craft their job may have on the levels of applicability of training and if, in turn, this improves self-perceived employability.

Design/methodology/approach – The authors involved three private organizations that followed three workshops on job crafting behaviour. To empirically assess the intervention, the authors asked participants of the workshop to complete four quantitative diaries on a weekly basis, i.e. one per week, one before the intervention and three after the intervention. The diaries comprised measures of job crafting behaviours, applicability of training and self-perceived employability.

Findings – Multi-level analysis of data collected provided support to the positive associations between job crafting behaviour and self-perceived employability with the mediating effect of applicability of training. Notably, the applicability of training improves when individuals search for challenges, which indirectly affects perceived employability in terms of organizational sense.

Research limitations/implications – In the present study, no control group was used with which the results of our intervention could be compared. However, this does not affect the overall results, given the amount of intraindividual variability.

Originality/value – The paper proposes initial avenues for promoting employability at work via the use of behavioural job crafting intervention.

Keywords Employability, Applicability of training, Job crafting, Intervention,
Multi-level modelling

Paper type Research paper

1. Introduction

Researchers and practitioners have been devoting attention to how to foster employability in the workplace, given the constant changes in the work environment (Akkermans and Kubasch, 2017; Baruch, 2001; Van der Baan, 2022). Employees should be supported to develop job-specific (pro)active adaptability to the working context to enable themselves to achieve career development and opportunities (Fugate *et al.*, 2004, p. 16). For example, organizations are even adapting novel ways of working in view of the automation and digitalization of work. In this sense, employees should be capable to expand their competencies with organizations looking for possible interventions to foster employees' chances for "continuous fulfilling, acquiring, creating of work through the[ier] optimal use of competencies" (2019, p. 453) (Forrier and Sels, 2003).

Various studies have reported how fostering and enhancing self-perceived employability can have positive effects in supporting organizations and institutions that want to keep up with changes in society (Dascalu *et al.*, 2016; Irfan and Qadeer, 2020; Sartori *et al.*, 2021). Empirical investigations on the antecedents of employees' self-perceived employability have taken into account individual factors such as volition, support for career, skill development, job-related skills, willingness to change jobs, self-efficacy and applicability of training on the job (Wittekind *et al.*, 2010; Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2016; Ngo *et al.*, 2017; Drange *et al.*, 2018). Despite this, learning at work and the applicability of training seem to be the most promising individual dimension on which drawing training interventions (Le Blanc *et al.*, 2019). This led researchers to examine different types of interventions with the aim of increasing the applicability of training at work (Costantini *et al.*, 2020). However, the literature is scant in terms of empirical evidence of training interventions meant for such dimensions.

Scholarly authors introduced the potential of behavioural job crafting intervention for supporting the applicability of training at work and indirectly affecting employees' self-perceived employability (Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2016). Job crafting interventions would support individuals' motivational processes to proactively adjust and craft their work, apply to learn at work and adapt better to changing circumstances. Accordingly, seeking challenges strategies (one of the three dimensions of job crafting) can indirectly lead to applying new practices at work, affecting their sense of capability and organizational belonging (Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2016). Reducing job demands and enhancing job resources can be seen as behavioural strategies which can directly promote practical knowledge (i.e. know-how) and its applicability, which in turn may lead to higher levels of perceived employability among employees. Showed that behavioural job crafting was positively related to perceived employability, indicating that the expansion of job resources and/or demands stimulates personal development and the ability to cope with change. Similarly, Van Emmerik *et al.* (2012) reported that employees who encountered more resources in their job also experienced more external job opportunities and, as a result, felt more employable. These findings suggest that employees who seek feedback, ways to develop themselves and new challenges can accumulate a greater pool of job resources. These enable them to learn and develop relevant professional skills and, in turn, increase their self-perceived

employability. The involvement of interventions aimed at promoting proactive job crafting behaviours can be promising in encouraging the applicability of training at work because job crafting intervenes by encouraging workers to actively redesign the tasks and relationships that characterize their work (Van Wingerden *et al.*, 2017).

In the present paper, we sought to improve the knowledge on fostering self-perceived employability by the use of behavioural job crafting intervention to support the applicability of training at work. Despite the potential of job crafting intervention to support employees' applicability of training at work, there is no existing evidence on the longitudinal level. Questions on the use of behavioural job crafting intervention in regard to the promotion of employee employability in organizations remain unanswered. As proactive behaviours, what is the role of job crafting in supporting the positive perception of one's employability? What is the effect of job crafting intervention on the support of the applicability of training and, in turn, of self-perceived employability on a longitudinal basis? Answering these questions has a number of implications both for theory and research. For example, empirically investigating the role of job crafting intervention can represent a relevant aspect for scholars and practitioners who are trying to support employees' employability. Moreover, while evidence of such association can explain the cognitive and behavioural antecedents of employability, this can provide indications for devising training interventions.

In this study, we conducted a literature review and developed our training intervention grounding on the literature on employability. Second, we assumed the positive associations between the applicability of training at work and self-perceived employability dimensions. As such, the applicability of training at work mediates the association between job crafting dimensions and self-perceived employability. To test these hypotheses, we offered a series of workshops on behavioural job crafting to employees from three private organizations. Then, we measured their dimensions of job crafting, applicability of training and employability via a weekly-diary study research design. Data analysis was run via multi-level modelling to test the viability of our hypotheses.

2. Theoretical background and state of research

2.1 Job crafting fostering employability

Self-perceived employability is a permanent process of acquisition and fulfilment of employment that reflects a general sense of being employable. This is operationalized into five broad dimensions (Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006), namely:

(1) *Occupational expertise*, i.e. the expertise needed to perform the various tasks and responsibilities of a job adequately.

(2) *Anticipation and optimization*, i.e. preparing for and adapting to future changes in a personal and creative manner, and striving for the best possible results.

(3) *Personal flexibility*, i.e. the capacity to easily adapt to all kinds of changes in the internal and external labour market that do not pertain to one's immediate job domain.

(4) *Corporate sense*, i.e. the participation and performance in different workgroups, including organizations, teams, occupational communities and other networks, which involves sharing responsibilities, knowledge, experiences, feelings, credits, failures and goals.

(5) *Balance*, i.e. compromising between opposing employers' interests as well as one's own opposing work, career and private interests (employee) and between employers' and employees' interests.

Following this seminal operationalization of self-perceived employability by Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden (2006), behavioural job crafting intervention can represent a possible answer to the organizational quest for employable employees. Behavioural job crafting is a construct that represents the proactive role of the employee in modifying and redesigning activities, tasks and work to adapt them to their personal characteristics and attitudes (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001; Costantini *et al.*, 2021). Wrzesniewski and Dutton (2001) initially introduced the concept of job crafting as an agency-based response to working conditions. Individuals respond with the modification of their working conditions and their experience and perception of them by rendering their work more subjectively meaningful. In the subsequent revisitation of the conceptualization, job crafting was deemed to be a proactive organizational behaviour that can be promoted via interventions (see, for example, Demerouti, 2014). In these terms, job crafting behaviour can be promoted via interventions in an organization to support well-desired outcomes, such as self-perceived employability. For example, this intervention may allow employees to foster their self-perceived employability by applying their competencies and skills at work. Creating resources and challenges on a daily basis via job crafting behaviour may stimulate the development of relevant knowledge, skills and relationships that help employees be adaptable and facilitate personal development, and enhance the possibility of growth. Likewise, overall job crafting behaviour can enhance the experience and perception of meaning at work; thus, this may affect participation in organizational tasks and life (i.e. corporate sense).

Demonstrated that behavioural job crafting was positively related to self-perceived employability in the workplace, with employees taking the initiative for professional self-development feeling more employable and performative. These authors indicate that the expansion of job resources and/or challenges stimulates personal development and the ability to cope with change (Plomp *et al.*, 2019). Another study based on the job demands and resources model examined the underlying potential motivational process of career competencies, as personal resources enhance career success through expansive job crafting. Findings showed that behavioural job crafting mediated the positive relationship between career competencies and perceived employability in the workplace. On the whole, these initial reflections and pieces of evidence lead us to make the following hypothesis:

H1. Behavioural job crafting intervention fosters individuals' self-perceived employability.

2.2 The mediating role of applicability
Referring to the traditional literature on self-perceived employability, scholarly authors agree on the role of applicability of training as the relative most important antecedent of self-perceived employability. Indeed, it is the positive transfer of training to the job – meaning the extent to which the learning that results from training could be applied to the job – that leads to meaningful changes in employees' self-perception of competence (Blume *et al.*, 2010; Sartori *et al.*, 2021). Adequate transfer of newly learned knowledge, attitudes and skills stimulates an employee to become an autonomous learner. This helps them to deal with new tasks and unfamiliar problem situations and to develop adaptive expertise (see also Ford and Schmidt, 2000). All in all, the applicability of training turns into potential self-perceived employability. Competencies that are newly acquired in training need to be fully and appropriately transferred to and applied in job-related activities to actually further develop workers' employability. In other words, the applicability of newly acquired competencies in the practice of one's job is central to the process that increases their actual use and for enhancing workers' career potential (De Vos *et al.*, 2011; Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006). Given these premises, we hypothesize that applicability positively mediates

the relation between job crafting behaviours and self-perceived employability, namely, that job crafting behaviours predict self-perceived employability:

H2. Applicability of training fosters individuals' self-perceived employability.

Interviewing these dimensions, applicability may function as a mediator of the positive association between job crafting behaviour and self-perceived employability. Applicability can be the application of the training received on job crafting. Therefore, an increase in easily acquired skills concerning modifying the working environment to make it more suitable for personal characteristics, consequently, makes employees self-perceiving more employable. In this sense, the applicability covers the role of mediator between job crafting behaviours and self-perceived employability due to the fact that it is only through the application of what has been learned on job crafting behaviours that the skills become effective and really expendable and can thus increase the perceived sense of being employable. With this rationale, we make the following hypothesis:

H3. Applicability positively mediates the positive association between behavioural job crafting dimensions and self-perceived employability.

3. Materials and methods

3.1 Participants and procedure

To test the viability of our hypothesized associations, we devised a weekly job-crafting behaviour intervention. Participants from three different private organizations operating took part in the intervention, which consisted of three different workshops. The first workshop focused on fostering participants' behaviours aimed at seeking resources in their workplace. The second was meant to foster participants' behaviours for reducing demands in their workplace. The last workshop was devoted to fostering participants' behaviours of seeking challenges in the workplace. Simultaneously, we used a weekly diary study design for data collection (Muthén, 1994). After a pre-intervention questionnaire (T0), the recruited participants had to fill in one questionnaire each subsequent three weeks of the training (T1–T3). These questionnaires contained measures regarding behavioural job crafting dimensions, the applicability of training on the job and self-perceived employability dimensions.

Prior to the intervention, participants were informed about the scope of the training program and the assessment procedure. Then, they provided their informed consent for participation. Anonymity was guaranteed by the respondent's insertion of a nine-letter identification code.

Authors 3 and 4 advertised via email our workshop. One hundred forty-two employees across three Italian private healthcare organizations volunteered to participate. In Italy, employees from private organizations in the healthcare sectors are required to follow continuing training. Promoting the applicability of training and, in turn, self-perceived employability appears to be a fundamental aspect both for employers and employees. The formers are interested in the promotion of competencies and performance of employees. Employees need to be supported in the application of newly acquired knowledge and to perceive themselves as competent and employable. Of the volunteers, only 73.23% completed the weekly diary study. At the beginning of the study, $N = 104$ filled in the questionnaire (T0, 74.04%, $n = 77$ female, average age 35.82 years, $SD = 9.48$). At time 1, the sample reduced to $n = 103$ (74.76%, $n = 77$ female, average age 35.82 years, $SD = 9.48$) and at T2–T3 to $n = 102$ (73.53%, $n = 75$ female, average age 35.79 years $SD = 9.55$).

3.2 Intervention

The intervention program is based on the advancements of the job crafting theory (Wrzesniewski and Dutton, 2001) and empirical examinations of training aimed at fostering job crafting (Chen *et al.*, 2014). Particularly, our workshop consisted of three 120-min training sessions (one per week) conducted by the first author. The training sessions were held in a room at the worksite during working hours in each company. Each participant received a notebook for a job crafting exercise to be used during the sessions. In the first session, participants learned the concept of seeking job resources from a case study (40 min) and shared their personal seeking resources strategies in their own working lives (40 min). Then, the first author moderated the last part of the session, during which they supported participants to make their own individual seeking resources plans for the following days (40 min). The following sessions (second and third) repeated the same structure as the first session. Session number two concerned how to reduce job demands, while session number three was meant to support employees to find resources in their job setting. Finally, Author 1 closed the workshop by encompassing previous activities and plans at the end of the third session. There was no incentive offered for participation in the program.

3.3 Measures

3.3.1 Job crafting. Behavioural job crafting was measured with the Italian adaptation (Costantini *et al.*, 2021) of the job crafting scale developed by Petrou *et al.* (2012), consisting of four items for seeking job resources (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.60–0.94), four items for seeking challenges (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.63–0.71) and four items for reducing job demands (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.63–0.87). In the weekly diary study, all items were rephrased to measure job crafting behaviours on a weekly basis; that is, respondents indicated how often they engaged in every behaviour during the past week using a scale ranging from 1 = never to 5 = often. Sample items include "In the past week I have [. . .]", "asked my colleagues for advice" (seeking resources), "asked for more responsibilities" (seeking challenges) and "tried to ensure that my work is emotionally less intense" (decreasing demands).

3.3.2 Applicability of training. To measure the applicability of training, we used the Italian-adapted version of Van der Heijden *et al.* (2016)'s applicability of training and development scale. This scale resulted to be efficient to assess the applicability of training in relation to employability dimensions (Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2016). The applicability of training and development scale comprises three questions, namely:

Q1. Are you able to apply for the training courses in your current expertise/job area that you participated in over the past year, in your job?

Q2. Are you able to apply for the training courses in an adjacent expertise/job area that you participated in over the past year in your job?

Q3. Are you able to apply for the training courses in a completely different or new expertise/job area, that you participated in over the past year in your job?

Scale anchors comprised: (a) yes, immediately, and without any difficulty; (b) yes, but not without any difficulty; and (c) no. For the analyses, scores were dichotomized. More precisely, scale anchor (a) was coded 3, indicating "high applicability"; scale anchor (b) was coded 2, indicating "low applicability" and (c) was coded 1, indicating "No applicability". Cronbach's α ranged between 0.70 and 0.85.

3.3.3 Self-perceived employability. Self-perceived employability was assessed with an Italian version of Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden's (2006) self-perceived employability instrument (Van der Heijden and Bakker, 2011). The instrument includes five scales measuring:

(1) occupational expertise (15 items);
(2) corporate sense (7 items);
(3) personal flexibility (8 items);
(4) anticipation and optimization (8 items); and
(5) balance (9 items).

Items are all scored on a six-point rating scale. Example items are: "I consider myself competent to engage in in-depth, specialist discussions in my job domain" (Occupational expertise). Answers ranged from "not at all" to "extremely" (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.61–0.78); "I am involved in achieving my organization's/department's mission." (Corporate sense). Answers ranged from "very little" to "a very great deal" (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.76–0.79); "How easily would you say you can adapt to changes in your workplace?" (personal flexibility). Answers ranged from "very badly" to "very well" (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.76–0.81); "I take responsibility for maintaining my labor market value." (Anticipation and optimization). Answers ranged from "not at all" to "a considerable degree" (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.69–0.79); and "My work and private life are evenly balanced." (balance). Answers ranged from "not at all" to "a considerable degree" (Cronbach's α range T0–T3 = 0.88–0.94). Validation studies (Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006; De Lange, *et al.*, 2009) indicated that the five dimensions represent correlated aspects of employability (oblique factor structure). The distinctive power of the different scales is satisfactory, given the high intra-scale correlations, the outcomes of an elaborate multi-trait-multimethod analysis and a confirmatory second-order factor analysis. Elaborate tests of psychometric aspects, that is, reliability and validity, of the employability instrument, with emphasis on convergent, discriminant and predictive validity (for career success), have yielded very promising results (Van der Heijde and Van Der Heijden, 2005). Moreover, the ingredients of the employability dimensions are actually discussed in yearly performance appraisals in The Netherlands, and many of the items are, in fact, visible at the workplace in terms of concrete behaviour and output.

3.4 Data analytic plan

The statistical analyses were conducted using the Rstudio program, specifically the nlme (Pinheiro *et al.*, 2017), the lme4 (Bates, 2014) and the mediate packages (Tingley *et al.*, 2014). We applied multi-level mediation analysis on the lower level to determine the path of weekly behavioural job crafting, self-perceived employability and applicability of training, and we tested both an intercept-only (null model) and intercept-slope (hypothesized) model for each analysis, the latter allowing for week-level variation of the relationships. We determined the interclass correlation coefficients (ICC) to confirm that multi-level mediation was an appropriate method of analysis. Maximum likelihood estimation was used to estimate the multi-level model because the data were normally distributed (Harrington, 2009). Goodness-of-fit indices were obtained, namely, the chi-square (χ^2), comparative fit index (CFI), Tucker Lewis index (TLI) and root mean square error of approximation (RMSEA), standard root mean residual (SRMR) (Hair *et al.*, 2010). Regarding the RMSEA, a value of 0.05 indicates an appropriate fit, values between 0.05 and 0.08 indicate a reasonable fit, whereas scores over 0.10 suggest a poor fit. For the TLI and CFI, values greater than

roughly 0.90 are deemed appropriate. Regarding the SRMR, values less than 0.10 are considered favourable. Using the Mediate function in Rstudio, we determined the indirect effects of Y on X through M (Preacher *et al.*, 2007) on the week-level using Bootstrap confidence intervals to determine the multi-level mediation effects through Monte Carlo simulations (Tingley *et al.*, 2014).

4. Results

We examined the ICC of the involved measures', which ranged between 0.46 and 0.65, indicating that multi-level analysis was suitable for this study (Table 1).

4.1 Multi-level modelling

Our main hypothesis assumes that behavioural job crafting intervention can indirectly foster self-perceived employability via the mediation of applicability (see *H1–H3*). To test the viability of our model, we initially tested the predictive role of behavioural job crafting of applicability (Table 2). Results show that seeking challenges positively predicts applicability ($t = 2.996$; $p = 0.01$), while this does not happen for reducing demands and increasing resources. Accordingly, reducing demands and increasing resources appear as unrelated to the applicability of new knowledge while seeking challenges would activate motivational processes that foster individual intentions to learn and apply new pieces of knowledge.

Afterwards, we wanted to see whether behavioural job crafting intervention fosters individuals' self-perceived employability. In general, we found that the dimensions of job crafting were related to most of the dimensions of self-perceived employability per each wave of data collection. In particular, occupational expertise is positively predicted by increasing job resources at T0 and T1 ($z = 2.765$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 2.861$, $p = 0.01$), whereas seeking job challenges positively predicts occupational expertise both at T2 and T3 ($z = 3.650$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 2.758$, $p = 0.01$). Moreover, anticipation and optimization showed to be positively predicted by seeking job challenges and increasing job resources at T0 ($z = 6.501$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 4.122$, $p = 0.01$), T1 ($z = 3.271$, $p = 0.01$); ($z = 4.709$, $p = 0.01$), T2 ($z = 4.614$, $p = 0.01$); ($z = 4.371$, $p = 0.01$) and T3 ($z = 3.395$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 2.821$, $p = 0.01$). Likewise, personal flexibility is positively predicted by seeking job challenges and increasing job resources at T0 ($z = 3.204$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 3.979$, $p = 0.01$), T1 ($z = 2.623$, $p = 0.009$; $z = 4.444$, $p = 0.01$), T2 ($z = 4.616$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 4.215$, $p = 0.01$) and T3 ($z = 4.303$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 3.657$, $p = 0.01$). Corporate sense is as well predicted positively by seeking job challenges and increasing job

Dimension	ICC	Δ–2×log(1)
OE_CBES	0.653	205.6***
AO_CBES	0.465	98.761***
PF_CBES	0.618	182.08***
CS_CBES	0.539	135.79***
B_CBES	0.623	185.52***
Appl	0.332	48.654***
Increasing_JR	0.501	115.1***
Decreasing_JD	0.613	178.85***
Increasing_JS	0.611	177.41***

Table 1.
Intraclass
correlations for daily
measures

Notes: *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$; OE_CBES = occupational expertise; AO_CBES = anticipation and optimization; PF_CBES = personal flexibility; CS_CBES = corporate sense; C_CBES = balance
Source: Authors' own work

resources at T0 ($z = 4.707$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 4.572$, $p = 0.01$), T1 ($z = 3.456$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 4.000$, $p = 0.01$), T2 ($z = 4.594$, $p = 0.001$; $z = 4.594$, $p = 0.01$) and T3 ($z = 3.776$, $p = 0.01$; $z = 4.351$, $p = 0.001$). Finally, the dimension of balance showed to be positively predicted only by seeking challenges at T0 ($z = 2.024$, $p = 0.04$), T2 ($z = 2.369$, $p = 0.02$) and T3 ($z = 3.435$, $p = 0.01$). These findings gave support to our assumed relationships between job crafting and self-perceived employability, indicating the effectiveness of job crafting intervention.

Considering these pieces of evidence, we tested the mediation of applicability between the association of job crafting and self-perceived employability. Results of mediation testing showed that occupational expertise is predicted positively by applicability at T1 ($z = 2.045$, $p = 0.041$). Likewise, the corporate sense seems to be positively predicted by applicability only at T3 ($z = -2.686$, $p = 0.01$), and applicability positively mediates the positive association between seeking challenges and corporate sense at T3 ($z = -1.967$, $p = 0.05$), which provides a partial confirmation of *H3* on the mediating role of applicability between job crafting intervention and self-perceived employability.

5. Discussion
In this study, we tested the potential of behavioural crafting intervention in fostering employability in the workplace via the improvement of the applicability of training. We followed the imperative for providing organizations and practitioners with evidence-based knowledge on training interventions for the promotion of self-perceived employability. That is, the current labour market requires even more employees and organizations to be adapted and flexible with sufficient knowledge and competencies (Aberg, 2001; Fugate *et al.*, 2004). In this spirit, the literature on behavioural job crafting informs those interventions targeting pro-active behaviour can be a feasible and effective way for promoting applicability of training, which in turn fosters self-perceived employability (Blume *et al.*, 2010; Sartori *et al.*, 2021). Therefore, we offered a series of three workshops to employees from three private organizations. Data collected via the weekly diary study method allowed us to test the viability of the hypothesized associations. Analysis of the data provides the theoretical literature with an initial understanding of these dimensions.

Of the results of the multi-level modelling, only seeking challenges positively predicts applicability, while this does not happen for reducing demands and increasing resources. This indicates that those who proactively implement measures aimed at increasing their work resources will be more likely to apply their work the knowledge acquired. Moreover, this suggests that fostering seeking challenges proactive behaviours via behavioural job

| Dimension | Applicability (L1) | | |
	Estimate	SE	t
Intercept	1.867	0.141	13.249***
General measure	0.212	0.074	2.853***
Increasing_JR	0.081	0.047	1.705, $p = 0.090$
Decreasing_JD	−0.041	0.029	−1.394
Increasing_JS	0.107	0.036	2.996**
Job crafting variance (within)	0.047	0.005	
R^2 marginal	0.076		
R^2 conditional	0.728		

Notes: *$p < 0.05$; **$p < 0.01$; ***$p < 0.001$; JR = job resources; JD = job demands; JS = seeking challenges
Source: Authors' own work

Table 2.
Regression of behavioural job crafting on applicability

crafting interventions may significantly enhance the application of the content of training at work, thus promoting the organizational citizenship behaviours put in place (i.e. participation in different workgroups, working teams, the occupational community and other networks, Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2016). Conversely, the cognitive-motivational processes involved in reducing demands and increasing resources seem to lead to different mechanisms from the applicability of training. Notwithstanding this, we found very relevant associations between the variables involved.

With respect to the associations with behavioural job crafting and self-perceived employability, the results showed that occupational expertise is positively predicted by increasing job resources at T0 and T1 and by seeking challenges at T2 and T3, indicating that adopting proactive behaviours aimed at increasing work resources and looking for challenges puts employees in the position to feel they have the necessary competences to perform well in their work. Anticipation and optimization also showed to be positively predicted by seeking job challenges and increasing job resources at every time. This indicates that searching proactively for further resources and challenges in their work may enhance the sense of being able to understand which factors can favour their employability and also being able to invest in a targeted manner on actions to strengthen their employability. Personal flexibility showed to be as well positively predicted by seeking job challenges and increasing job resources at every time, indicating that proactively seeking job resources and challenges put employees in the position to easily adapt to all kinds of changes in the internal and external labour. Corporate sense showed to be as well positively predicted by seeking job challenges and increasing job resources at every time, indicating that those who proactively search for resources and challenges in their work are more inclined to assume organizational citizenship behaviours. In conclusion, balance showed to be positively predicted by seeking challenges at T0, T2 and T3, designating that those who proactively search for further resources and challenges feel more flexible in balancing personal needs with those of the organization (Van Dam and Thierry, 2000; Van Emmerik *et al.*, 2012).

With respect to the association with applicability, results showed that occupational expertise is predicted positively by applicability at T1, suggesting that those who apply the content of training in their work tend to feel they have the necessary competencies to perform well in their work. Also, corporate sense showed to be positively predicted by applicability at T3, indicating that applying the content of training fosters organizational citizenship behaviours, including participation in different workgroups, working teams, the occupational community and other networks (Nasurdin *et al.*, 2015; Van der Heijden *et al.*, 2016).

5.1 Practical implications
This study offers initial indications to practitioners and organizations targeting self-perceived employability when devising training interventions. In particular, our results indicate that behavioural job crafting interventions with a specific focus on seeking challenges can improve the applicability of training, which in turn leads to higher levels of corporate sense. On the one hand, self-perceived employability can represent one of the ultimate outcomes of a training intervention for the promotion of organizational productivity (Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006). This is notable in the extent of employability because it refers to employees feeling more capable and competent at their work. On the other hand, self-perceived employability covers the level of corporate sense, which is associated with a higher level of well-being, job performance and proactive behaviours (De Cuyper *et al.*, 2014; Vanhercke *et al.*, 2016).

The rapid and exponential evolution of organizations and public administrations calls employers, organizations and institutions to put efforts into how to sustain employees' training and competencies. Considering this, our study is part of those efforts made by scholars to understand how to realize interventions in the workplace. Particularly, the present study makes a step forward on the subject of employability because it represents a core domain of research on training and interventions in the workplace. Accordingly, the intervention that we proposed can be used out of the context of private organizations. Employers and practitioners can sustain employees' employability by combining job crafting intervention with formal training in the workplace. Our findings showed that promoting interventions aimed at fostering seeking challenges behaviours may support individuals to apply recently acquired knowledge, leading to meaningful changes in individual employability and job performance (Blume *et al.*, 2010). Improving job crafting among employees can facilitate the effectiveness of the applicability of training by improving employee's personal resources (Fugate *et al.*, 2004; McArdle *et al.*, 2007), subjective career success (Fugate *et al.*, 2004; Hall, 2002; Van der Heijde and Van der Heijden, 2006), i.e. the accomplishment of desirable work-related outcomes at any point in a person's work experiences over time (Arthur *et al.*, 2005; Spurk *et al.*, 2019). Furthermore, our intervention can be used in the public administration context as a tool for supporting employees in the ability to support them in designing of active policies for individual work placement (McArdle *et al.*, 2007).

The benefit of actively intervening in individual employees' seeking challenges can also increase a sense of belonging in corporations, which represents one of the main gaps in the workplace (Hogan *et al.*, 2013). Organizations and practitioners can pay particular attention to creating the conditions for employees to apply training, which can also represent a challenge. This, in turn, can support their wish for meaning in the organization (Tommasi *et al.*, 2020).

5.2 Limitations and future studies

Despite this, our results must be taken with caution, as this study has a number of limitations that we have to acknowledge. Firstly, the present research did not involve a control group to compare the results of our intervention. This limits our study in the extent to which we are not able to ascertain if these variables had increased independently of the intervention. However, this does not affect the general results, given the proportion of intra-individual variability. Secondly, we only limited our sample to a specific type of employees from the private sector, and future studies may want to involve different occupations and sectors. Moreover, our interventions were limited to three weeks to reduce time fatigue. This can limit our findings to the specific experimental setting. Future studies might consider collecting more data in the subsequent period of the workshop to verify the longitudinal effects of the training.

6. Conclusion

Self-perceived employability in organizations, broadly defined as the positive perception of one's employability in their work, has become a fundamental dimension for organizations as an antecedent of proactive organizational behaviour and performance. In our study, we aimed to respond to the call for evidence-based interventions for the enchantment of self-perceived employability. Then, we referred to the behavioural job crafting intervention as the means to support the applicability of training and, in turn, self-perceived employability. We provided empirical evidence of the effectiveness of such intervention by presenting the results of a longitudinal assessment via the use of a diary study. In these terms, our study presents an original piece of empirical knowledge that contributes to both researchers and practitioners in the area of education and training in organizations.

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