

Conceptualizing person-environment fit and the meaning of work for tourist guides in Malaysia during and post covid-19 pandemic

ABSTRACT

This paper aims to conceptualizes the influence of person-environment fit (P-E fit) towards the meaning of work (MoW) for tourist guides (TGs) in Malaysia during and post-COVID-19 pandemic. TGs are key frontline workers whose employment is affected by the pandemic. A multilevel construct of P-E fit is adopted (person-organizational fit, person-job fit, and person-group fit) conceptualized as a correlation towards the tripartite work orientation of the MoW (job, career and calling). Four propositions emerge. Junior TGs view their work as a job and/or career; senior TGs perceive their work as a calling. Secondly, person-organizational fit and person-group fit has no influence with 'job', while person-job fit could partially influence 'job' where demands-abilities has no influence on 'job' but need-supplies fit influences 'job'. Next, person-organization fit and person-job fit correlate with guides' 'career' but not with person-group fit. Finally, all three fits relate to 'calling'. TGs with a 'job' relationship possess low meaning of work; 'career' has moderate meaning of work, and 'calling' experience high meaning of work. Practitioners benefit from knowledge of levels of correlations between constructs; useful for implementing resilience strategies for post crisis and beyond. A thorough understanding among TGs to remain engaged and motivated is useful for training courses.