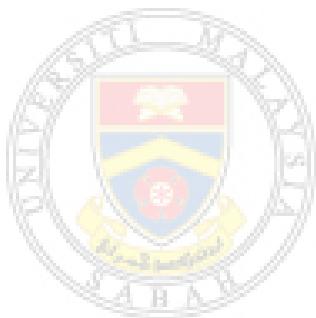


AN ENRICHED MEANING OF WORK MIXED METHODS STUDY ON TOURIST GUIDES



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**FACULTY OF BUSINESS, ECONOMICS AND
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material in this thesis is my own except for quotations, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

20 September 2023

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20 September 2023

ABSTRACT

Meaning of work (MoW) acts as a lens through which individuals interpret and react to their work. The initial dimensions of MoW orientation are job, career and calling. However, several scholars indicated that the MoW instrument was outdated and had not been improved for years. Thus, this study was motivated by the need to enrich the MoW instrument in the context of tourist guides. Tourist guides' professions were chosen as the scope of the study due to the unique nature of the profession, which has taken on a different work meaning worth studying. Hence, the MoW instrument may not capture the whole range of meanings tourist guides assign to their work and might be beyond the existing work orientation. The study utilised a pragmatic mixed-methods approach by adopting a two-phase, exploratory sequential research design. In Phase 1, the qualitative study explored and enriched MoW dimensions by conducting semi-structured interviews with 20 tourist guides. Through thematic analysis, findings of this phase discovered three emerging variables: working atmosphere, professional contentment, and job freedom. The qualitative findings guided the development of MoW items and scales for the survey instrument. In Phase 2, 153 tourist guides participated in a quantitative study to validate the enriched MoW instrument by assessing model fit, reliability, and validity of the measurement model and structural model using Structural Equation Modelling of AMOS. The quantitative study indicated two enriched MoW dimensions, namely (i) professional contentment and (ii) job freedom were found to fit the MoW model. A total of 11 enriched measurement items emerged to represent these two dimensions, with an example of measurement items for; (i) professional contentment (6 items) is '*I feel my job is meaningful when tourists are satisfied with my services*' and (ii) job freedom (5 items), '*I am satisfied with the freedom to manage my job*'. This study provides four contributions to knowledge. First, the expanded and enriched MoW dimensions by extending the tripartite work orientation to six dimensions for tourism industry employees. Secondly, the study expanded the MoW instrument with the inclusion of two emerging variables (mentioned earlier). This instrument may be adapted and adopted for other tourism and hospitality studies. Next, the integration of Self-Determination Theory and Person-Environment Fit Theory to explain the enriched MoW dimensions. Finally, the study applied Attribution Theory to produce a tourist guides career spectrum to distinguish and explain MoW for different career stages using five main stages. The practitioner's contributions highlight the importance of the protection of meaningful jobs and livelihoods; propose comprehensive human resource strategies and policies to improve employee attraction and retention.

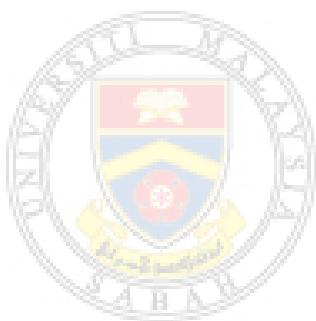
Keywords: enriched meaning of work, tourist guides, professional contentment, job freedom

ABSTRAK

MAKNA KERJA YANG DIPERKAYAKAN KAE DAH KAJIAN CAMPURAN MENGENAI PEMANDU PELANCONG

Makna kerja (MK) bertindak sebagai lensa di mana individu mentafsir dan bertindak balas terhadap kerja mereka. Dimensi awal orientasi MK ialah pekerjaan, kerjaya dan panggilan. Walau bagaimanapun, beberapa cendekiawan menunjukkan bahawa instrumen MK sudah lapuk dan tidak diperbaiki selama bertahun-tahun. Justeru, kajian ini didorong oleh keperluan untuk memperkayakan instrumen MK dalam konteks pemandu pelancong. Profesional pemandu pelancong dipilih sebagai skop kajian kerana sifat unik profesion yang telah mengambil MK yang berbeza patut dipelajari. Oleh itu, instrumen MK mungkin tidak menangkap keseluruhan julat makna yang diberikan oleh pemandu pelancong kepada kerja mereka dan mungkin di luar orientasi kerja sedia ada. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kaedah campuran pragmatik dengan menggunakan pakai reka bentuk penyelidikan berjujukan penerokaan dua fasa. Dalam Fasa 1, kajian kualitatif meneroka dan memperkayakan dimensi MK dengan menjalankan temu bual separa berstruktur dengan 20 pemandu pelancong. Melalui analisis tematik, penemuan fasa ini menemui tiga pembolehubah yang muncul: suasana kerja, kepuasan profesion, dan kebebasan kerja. Penemuan kualitatif membimbang pembangunan item MK dan skala untuk instrumen tinjauan. Dalam Fasa 2, 153 pemandu pelancong telah mengambil bahagian dalam kajian kuantitatif untuk mengesahkan instrumen MK yang diperkaya dengan menilai kesesuaian model, kebolehpercayaan dan kesahan model pengukuran dan model struktur menggunakan Pemodelan Persamaan Struktur AMOS. Kajian kuantitatif menunjukkan dua dimensi MK yang diperkaya, iaitu (i) kepuasan profesion dan (ii) kebebasan pekerjaan didapati sesuai dengan model MK. Sebanyak 11 item ukuran diperkaya muncul untuk mewakili kedua-dua dimensi ini, dengan contoh item ukuran untuk; (i) kepuasan profesion (6 item) ialah 'Saya berasa pekerjaan saya bermakna apabila pelancong berpuas hati dengan perkhidmatan saya' dan (ii) kebebasan pekerjaan (5 item), 'Saya berpuas hati dengan kebebasan mengurus pekerjaan saya'. Kajian ini memberikan empat sumbangan kepada pengetahuan. Pertama, dimensi MK diperluaskan dan diperkayakan dengan memperluaskan orientasi kerja tiga pihak kepada enam dimensi untuk pekerja industri pelancongan. Kedua, kajian memperluaskan instrumen MK dengan memasukkan dua pembolehubah yang muncul (disebutkan sebelum ini). Instrumen ini boleh disesuaikan dan diterima pakai untuk kajian pelancongan dan hospitaliti lain. Seterusnya, penyepaduan Teori Penentuan Kendiri dan Teori Kesesuaian Persekitaran Orang untuk menerangkan dimensi MK yang diperkaya. Akhir sekali, kajian menggunakan Teori Atribusi untuk menghasilkan spektrum kerjaya pemandu pelancong untuk membezakan dan menerangkan MK bagi peringkat kerjaya yang berbeza menggunakan lima peringkat utama. Sumbangan pengamal menekankan kepentingan perlindungan pekerjaan dan mata pencarian bermakna; mencadangkan strategi dan dasar sumber manusia yang komprehensif untuk meningkatkan daya tarikan dan pengekalan pekerja.

Kata kunci: memperkaya makna kerja, pemandu pelancong, kepuasan profesional,
kebebasan kerja



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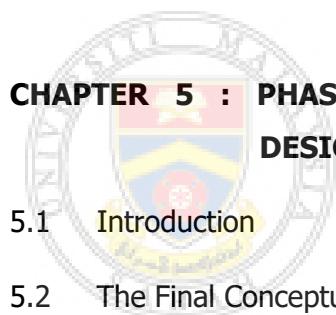
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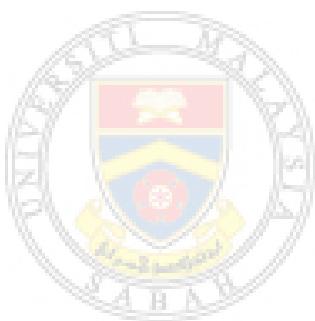
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