Call for Papers

Theme: Careers of the Vulnerable Workforce

Submission Window: July 1-31, 2024

Details: http://tinyurl.com/JVB-Special-Issue-Call

Journal of Vocational Behavior

Careers of the Vulnerable Workforce

Overview

We live in an exceptionally volatile world besieged by vocational challenges, especially for those who are informally employed and vulnerable (International Labour Organization, 2018). The repercussions of inequality, one of the world's grand challenges (George et al., 2016), impact the working experiences of the world's most vulnerable people. A report from Gallup's basic needs vulnerability index (Esipova et al., 2020) suggests that 710 million people out of the world's total population of 750 million live in developing economies while only approximately 40 million individuals live in developed countries. More than 800 million live in extreme poverty (United Nations, 2015) with a large percentage of the population undernourished (Food and Agriculture Organizations of the United Nations, 2015) and exposed to multiple forms of abuse (e.g., precarious working conditions, subminimum wages, excessive working hours, and mistreatment; International Organization for Migration, 2015; Robertson et al., 2016).

These vocational realities continue to persist (Audenaert et al., 2020) and the significance of studying the plight of vulnerable workers reverberates in our field (Casper et al., 2011; Fouad, 2001; Restubog et al., 2023). Understanding the vocational experiences of vulnerable workers offers unique opportunities for vocational behavior and I/O psychology scholars to develop, test and refine theories since the experiences of vulnerable workers are not the same as those of the general workforce (Heinrich et al., 2010). The unique experiences of the vulnerable workforce will likely have important divergent influences on their working lives.

Guest editors:

Simon Lloyd D. Restubog
University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, USA
Email: simonldr@illinois.edu

Pauline Schilpzand
Oregon State University, USA
Email: pauline.schilpzand@bus.oregonstate.edu

Nadya Fouad
University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee, USA
Email: nadya@uwm.edu

Mindy Shoss
University of Central Florida, USA
Email: Mindy.Shoss@ucf.edu

Catherine Deen
University of New South Wales Canberra, Australia
Email: c.deen@unsw.edu.au

Special issue information:
The aim of this special issue is to encourage an interdisciplinary perspective in understanding the vocational experiences, in general, and the barriers and supports, in particular, as experienced by vulnerable workers, defined as "someone who is at risk of being abused, exploited or wounded either physically, psychologically, socially or a combination of these, at work" (Restubog et al., 2021, p. 3). Vulnerable workers comprise a broad group of people who have lower levels of human capital resulting from the vicious cycle of psychosocial constraints such as ill health (i.e., physical, mental), poverty, history of abuse, addiction, among other conditions (Audenaert et al., 2020).

Manuscript submission information:
We encourage submissions that offer novel and integrative insights that transcend disciplinary boundaries and focus on the vocational life of vulnerable workers, especially those who have been rarely examined in vocational behavior research (e.g., workers with chronic illness and/or mental illness, refugees, migrants, victims of violence; Restubog et al., 2021). From a pragmatic perspective, this special issue will be highly impactful as it offers policy-making initiatives and actionable recommendations directed toward supporting and empowering vulnerable workers. Potential research focus areas and questions that may be addressed through this special issue include the following.

- Understanding the vulnerable workforce:
    - Who are the vulnerable in the workforce? In what ways are they vulnerable?
    - Are there objective and subjective measures of vulnerability in the context of work? What and how are these conceptualized?
    - Are vulnerable workers aware of their vulnerability? Do they consider themselves as vulnerable?
    - How can scholars theoretically capture the concept of vulnerability in the context of career development? Is career development even a concern among vulnerable workers?
- Boundary and contextual conditions that impact the experiences of the vulnerable workforce:
    - How do aspects or features of one's vulnerability interact with contextual conditions at work to trigger further vulnerability and subsequently impact work-related behavior?
    - How do societal and family contexts facilitate positive career, work, and personal outcomes among vulnerable workers?
    - What are the various career hurdles vulnerable workers face and how do these impede career outcomes (e.g., retention, career advancement)?
    - How do vulnerable workers adjust to new work environments and the changing nature of work?
    - How may organizational HR systems and processes better help to accommodate and retain vulnerable workers?
    - What is the role of corporate social responsibility in relation to corporate practices and/or support systems for vulnerable workers?
- Motivational, cognitive, and emotional experiences of the vulnerable workforce:
    - What are the underlying motivations, cognitive and emotional experiences, and characteristics that enable vulnerable workers to succeed despite their adversities and career-related obstacles?

- What are the roles of positive emotions and grit in empowering vulnerable workers to thrive?
- How do vulnerable workers differ from non-vulnerable workers in terms of sources of motivation, work-related needs, work preferences, and career goals?
- Relational dynamics and the vulnerable workforce:
  - What supervisory behaviors may be helpful or harmful to vulnerable workers?
  - What work-related aspects can generate sources of fit or misfit for vulnerable workers?
  - How may coworkers treat and collaborate with vulnerable workers in helpful or unhelpful ways?
- Conducting research among the vulnerable workforce:
  - What are the barriers to research participation among vulnerable workers? How can these barriers be addressed?
  - What are the benefits and challenges of various research methods for studying vulnerable workers?
  - What are the methodological best practices when studying vulnerable workers?

This call is open and competitive. We are interested in submissions which are original, cutting-edge, and must not be under consideration by another journal or outlet. We are open to empirical (e.g., qualitative, quantitative, field, experimental, meta-analytic reviews) and conceptual (e.g., theory development and integrative reviews) contributions that stimulate discourse toward significantly contributing to the advancement of coherent bodies of knowledge and to provide clear and actionable recommendations to guide future scholarship about the careers of the vulnerable workforce.

Timeline for Authors:

Submission window: July 1-July 31, 2024
First decision sent to authors: October 31, 2024; 90 days allocated for revisions.
First revision due back: January 31, 2025
Second round decisions sent to authors: April 30, 2025
Second revision due back: July 15, 2025
Second decision sent to authors: September 30, 2025
Final decisions on manuscript: December 2025

References

Audenaert, M., Van der Heijden, B., Conway, N., Crucke, S., & Decramer, A. (2020). Vulnerable workers' employability competences: The role of establishing clear expectations, developmental inducements, and social organizational goals. *Journal of Business Ethics, 166*(3), 627-641. https://doi.org/10.1007/s10551-019-04140-9

Casper, W. J. & Swanberg, J. E. (2011). Career and work concerns of diverse and understudied workers introduction. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 79*(3), 611-612. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2011.05.006

Esipova, N., Pugliese, A., & Ray, J. (2020). Millions Vulnerable in Developing and Developed World. Gallup. https://news.gallup.com/poll/315851/millions-vulnerable-developing-developed-world.aspx

Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations. (2015). The state of food insecurity in the world. United Nations. https://www.fao.org/policy-support/tools-and-publications/resources-details/en/c/469455/

Fouad, N. A. (2001). The future of vocational psychology: Aiming high. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 59*(2), 183-191. https://doi.org/10.1006/jvbe.2001.1824

Fouad, N. A. (2022). Final Editorial: JVB 2015-2022 questions and reflections. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 137*, 103763. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2022.103763

George, G., Howard-Grenville, J., Joshi, A., & Tihanyi, L. (2016). Understanding and tackling societal grand challenges through management research. *Academy of Management Journal*, *59*(6). 1880-1895. https://doi.org/10.5465/amj.2016.4007

Henrich, J., Heine, S. J., & Norenzayan, A. (2010). Most people are not WEIRD. *Nature, 466*(7302), 29-29. https://doi.org/10.1038/466029a

International Labour Organization. (2018, April 30). More than 60 percent of the world's employed population are in the informal economy. https://www.ilo.org/global/about-the-ilo/newsroom/news/WCMS_627189/lang--en/index.htm

International Organization for Migration. (2015). The other migrant crisis: Protecting migrant workers against exploitation in the Middle East and North America. https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/other_migrant_crisis.pdf

Molloy, J. C., Ployhart, R. E., & Wright, P. M. (2011). The myth of "the" micro-macro divide: Bridging system-level and disciplinary divides. *Journal of Management, 37*(2), 581-609. https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206310365000

National Academy of Sciences. (2005). *Facilitating interdisciplinary research*. Washington, DC: National Academies Press.

Restubog, S. L. D., Deen, C. M., Decoste, A., & He, Y. (2021). From vocational scholars to social justice advocates: Challenges and opportunities for vocational psychology research on the vulnerable workforce. *Journal of Vocational Behavior, 126*, 103561. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jvb.2021.103561

Restubog, S. L. D., Schilpzand, P., Lyons, B., Deen, C. M., & He, Y. (2023). The vulnerable workforce: A call for research. *Journal of Management*. Advance online publication. https://doi.org/10.1177/01492063231177446

Robertson, R., Di, H., Brown, D., & Dehejia, R. (2016). Working conditions, work outcomes, and policy in Asian developing countries (Working Paper Series 497). https://www.adb.org/publications/working-conditions-outcomes-policy-asian-developing-countries

United Nations. (2015). Transforming our world: The 2030 agenda for sustainable development. https://sdgs.un.org/2030agenda