

Changing Roles and Cognitive Dissonance of the Guided Tour Bus Drivers in Taiwan

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The tour bus driver plays a vital role in providing tour participants' satisfaction and safety in a guided bus tour. Regrettably their wellbeing and job stress had not initiated much attention from the government and practitioners until a series of bus accidents occurred. This study aims to examine the role of the bus drivers on guided bus tours. Their work cognition and income satisfaction is also investigated. The qualitative method was adopted for exploration of this research. Semi-structured interviews with tour bus drivers were conducted. This study found that the guided tour bus drivers played a dominant role when on a tour in the past but their current role has is changing. Recognizing their evolving roles has caused them to consider themselves a vulnerable group. The cognitive dissonance theory explains that individuals tend to seek consistency among their cognitions and when there is dissonance, an inconsistency, individuals try to eliminate this dissonance. This study provides a comprehensive background of the evolving role of tour bus drivers. The results may contribute to the tourism industry and decrease the gaps between bus drivers and the others with whom they interact.

Keywords: Tour bus driver, income, cognitive dissonance, satisfaction, role

Introduction

Guided package bus tours have been popular with Taiwanese residents and other Asians traveling in Taiwan. Among all the service providers, the tour bus drivers are often neglected although they play an important role in the success of the guided package bus tour. He/she is also a key person responsible for the comfort and safety of the journey. Although there is no concrete evidence to indicate that the job of tour bus drivers in Taiwan is perceived as labor intensive with low income; they tend to work long hours due to the intensive travel itineraries. Some even argue that drivers can take long breaks while the tour participants are sight-seeing. Empirical research shows that tour bus drivers perceive tips and shopping commissions as important sources of income. They also experience many stressors which may include physical fatigue, psychological burdens, and financial pressure. A report from the Directorate General of Highways revealed that many accidents are related to tour bus drivers' physical and psychological exhaustion (cited from Apple Daily, 2017). For example, an incident in 2017 caused the deaths of 33 Taiwanese tourists and injuries to 11 due to the driving fatigue and speed of the driver. In 2016 another incident caused the death of 26 mainland Chinese tourists when a tour bus driver committed suicide by setting fire to the bus (Apple Daily, 2017). Apple Daily (2015) reported that an angry tour bus driver kicked all the Taiwanese tourists because he thought they were too noisy.

Prior to the 1970s, domestic guided bus tours in Taiwan were mainly operated by bus drivers/bus operators rather than travel agencies. Tour bus drivers have played a significant role with the guided bus tours since tour participants or tour guides have to consult the bus drivers with regard to the planned itinerary before starting the journey. Customarily, the tour bus drivers have a female tour escort who provides all kinds of support services including in-bus cleaning, customer entertaining, on tour interpreting, and guiding service in scenic areas. It is interesting to note that many bus drivers and female tour escorts develop a strong working relationship. In practice, the tour bus driver will insist on stopping at shopping outlets or performing art centers in order to get commissions and kickbacks. However, because these activities take time, more pressure is put on the planned itinerary. Many tour participants feel that they are forced to shop or buy something they do not need.

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Along with the demands of service quality, and the government's regulations which state that only travel agencies have a legal right to organize tourism business, the tour bus driver no longer has the authority to plan or change the tour. Perceptions and expectations of the bus driver's role are changing. This research considers some of the more recent role changes of the tour bus driver and attempts to consolidate the service quality and their work income. This study aims to examine the role of the bus drivers on guided bus tours. Their work cognition and income satisfaction will also be investigated. This study focuses only on bus companies and bus drivers who are hired for the guided bus tours.

Literature Review

Role attributes

Role theory concerns important features of one's social life and characteristic behavior patterns and suggests that human behavior is directed by expectations held by both the individual and others (Biddle, 1986). Roles will correspond to behaviors and have an impact on one's beliefs and attitudes. The individual will change his/her beliefs and attitudes to correspond with his/her role. Katz and Kahn (1966) define role into three categories: role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload. Role conflict arises when there are different expectations from different people and the individual feels the uncertainty of the role. Because he/she may be subjected to stress, he/she may attempt to resolve the problem by adopting some form of coping behavior. As a result, both the individual and the system will be disturbed in ways such as through poor job performance, lower commitment to the organization, and higher rates of resignation (Biddle, 1986). Role ambiguity is related to a lack of the clarity of expectations for the role caused by insufficient information or lack of understanding. This is similar to role confusion, a situation where an individual has trouble determining which role he/she should undertake. Role ambiguity is mainly experienced in four circumstances: (a) new roles in an organization; (b) roles in expanding or contracting organizations; (c) frequent changes of demands on the role in organizations; (d) roles concerned with process (Kahn and Quinn, 1970; Vijayashree and Mund, 2011). Role overload occurs when a person feels the expectations from others are too high, giving him/her too much to do or is given too much accountability in the role (Marshall and Cooper, 1979). A sense of being overburdened will develop and subsequently lead to work struggles when the level of demand exceeds a person's available resources. Idris (2011) and Karimi, Omar, Alipour, and Karimi (2014) proposed that these four circumstances are directly related to stress.

Based on the role theory, individuals will make decisions regarding roles that require adjustments and bargaining (Goode, 1960). Goode (1960) assumes that people will over-perform at work and under-perform in other roles due to the value hierarchy that is stipulated by society. Because roles change, it becomes vital to transform the role to better fit the environment. This prediction can be applied to tour bus drivers who constantly face the predicament of dominance. Coping strategies may be formed to reduce changing role dilemma in organizations. Tour bus drivers in Taiwan suffer from role strain and may find it difficult to fulfil certain aspects of their role obligations. Tension may form between two competing expectations. Role overload (overtime work and expectations from shareholders) is salient among tour bus drivers in Taiwan due to the lack of consistent work environment regulations (Chang, 2017). Idris (2011) reveals that an optimum level of job demands will encourage individuals to endeavor the challenging tasks. Perhaps, offering promising incentives may be more a positive approach. Taiwanese tour bus drivers may encounter role conflict due to their changing role and customers' expectations. Hall (1972) illustrates three types of response to role conflicts: negotiating with others to change their expectations; restructuring one's views so that the problem is less worrisome; and adjusting one's behavior.

Cognitive differences

An employee in an insecure and changing environment may suffer a psychic cost of uncertainty, discouragement and fear and may switch careers. Conflict in a workplace may arise from cognitive differences due to the changing times. Cognitive dissonance is an uncomfortable experience caused by concurrently holding two contradictory ideas which illustrates the inconsistency between belief and behavior. This dissonance might be experienced as guilt, anger, frustration, or even embarrassment. Dissonance can also lead to confirmation bias, the denial of disconfirming evidence, and other ego defense mechanisms (Festinger, 1962). The cognitive dissonance theory proposes that people have a motivational drive to reduce dissonance by justifying their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, or by rationalizing them.

To reduce the dissonance, people tend to rationalize their behavior by criticizing the nature of the event or convince others to assent it. Rabin (1994) states that people will feel pressure to convince themselves that immoral activities are in fact moral and rational people may engage in less immoral activity for material self-interest. If each person's beliefs affect the beliefs of others, this action may cause members of society to believe that immoral activities are morally acceptable, and society will engage in more of such activities (Rabin. 1994).

Rationalizing one's behavior does not solve the predicament in the workplace or the expectations from stakeholders. Accepting the reality and learning how people think, behave, and interact in the process may reduce the dissonance. Dechawatanapaisal and Siengthai (2006) specify that psychological anxiety is a condition that blocks people from obtaining evidence and learning new knowledge during a transformation period. They consider that effective human resources are likely to moderate individuals' inconsistent attitudes and unpleasant psychological states in addition to enable their learning work behavior. The role of the bus driver is crucial for both the passengers' travel satisfaction and their safety. Their psychological and physiological conditions should not be neglected. The role of the tour bus drivers in Taiwan has been weakened due to the demands for service quality and the rise of consumer awareness which may cause the tour bus drivers to suffer from psychological imbalance and/or job dissatisfaction. Their cognition in the work environment and towards service improvement should be modernized.

Tour bus drivers in Taiwan

Tour bus drivers' work tasks differ from other vehicle drivers in many ways. They are subject to experiencing more pressure and receiving less gratification in their work environment. Raggatt (1991) identifies job stressors for coach drivers: working overtime; passenger complaints; quality of bus maintenance; and physical fatigue caused by long distance driving. Other external tensions may include the relationships with the company bosses, tour guides, and clients. Because of this socioeconomic tension and their subordinate social status, tour bus drivers in Taiwan face a very unusual situation in their work environment.

Tour bus drivers in certain countries are perceived as low-paid and commission sensitive; they tend to work long hours due to the intensive travel itineraries of package tours (see Chang, 2014). A report from Commonwealth Magazine, a leading Taiwanese magazine, indicated that the average age of tour bus drivers is near 49 and the industry is facing aging problems. Their accident rate is only less than that of public bus driver, and the average monthly salary for the tour bus drivers is less than US\$ 1,300 (Gu, 2016). Physical exhaustion, caused by missed rest pauses and missed meal breaks, is likely to fuel feelings of fatigue (Brown, 1994), and is one of the principle causes of accidents for bus drivers. Fatigue may be seen as a psycho-physiological signal related to bus drivers' well-being. Tour bus drivers in Taiwan face a similar situation due to price competition primarily from mainland Chinese tours. According to Ma (2016), the 8-day and 7-night cruise around the island of Taiwan is a common itinerary for many mainland Chinese package tours. This gives the tour bus drivers an average of 200 kilometers of driving per day which can cause fatigue. They perceive themselves to be unfairly treated and feel that they are not respected.

Traditionally, tour bus drivers in Taiwan have been stereotyped as being hot-tempered people who gamble, chew betel nuts, smoke heavily, and drink. They are said to have explosive personalities and disrespectful behavior. For professional drivers, smoking is attributed to releasing feelings of stress and physical fatigue. Accordingly, their notorious reputation in the past has caused many public organizations to set up a code of conduct to regulate their performance and behavior. Nowadays, smoking is banned in many places in Taiwan and stakeholders have anti-smoking and anti-chewing betel nuts policies in place for bus drivers.

Furthermore, this negative stereotype is reinforced by frequently heard reports of tour bus drivers soliciting commissions and exhibiting unenthusiastic service behavior. They perceive both tips and sales commissions as important sources of income and customarily get commissions from tourism related business. The amounts of the commission vary and depend on who is in charge of the package tour and the levels of the hotels/restaurants they are serving. It is also customary for the employers to offer service fees to tour bus drivers.

In conclusion, the physical and psychological health of the bus driver has a crucial impact on both driving performance and job satisfaction. Any impairment to bus drivers can have undesirable consequences for passengers and travel agencies alike. Research supports the notion that organizational policies and procedures are perceived by bus drivers as important factors for job satisfaction (Zohar and Luria, 2005). Mearns and Hope (2005) indicate that if management manifests a genuine desire to take care of their workers in terms of physical and psychological health, workers, in turn, will exhibit greater organizational commitment, which can be of benefit to the companies.

At this time, tour bus drivers and bus companies in Taiwan have not reached a working consensus. In practice, the role of tour bus drivers should be viewed as a job with self-esteem, but tour bus drivers in Taiwan are being seen as a threat to the quality of a tour. Along with the evolution of the environment change, the conflict arising from the changing role of tour bus drivers is worth further investigation and significant role changes can be anticipated.

Research Methods

The guided package tour is a popular travel mode for Asian tourists and numerous studies have focused on tour leaders'/guiders' performance but few on the role that bus drivers' play and their job satisfaction. The performance of tour bus drivers has caught social attention, but their inner voice is rarely heard or understood. To better understand tour bus drivers' perceptions toward self-positioning and job satisfaction, this research undertook the qualitative approach for exploration.

Based on convenience and purposive sample selection, a pilot interview with 11 tour bus drivers/managers was conducted to ensure the reliability of interview questions as well as the internal validity of their responses. Some interview questions and interview procedures were modified for the formal interviews: for example, redefine the tips from service fees (a fixed fee to cover the service); distinguish the differences between the tour guide (certified license) and the domestic tour guide (uncertified license). In addition, to ensure the integrity of collected data, several practical measures from the pilot interview were adopted: (1) this study used only female graduate students for interviewers since most bus drivers are older males and may be more open to responding to them as it is believed that bus drivers will treat young females with courtesy and thus tend to provide deeper information; (2) the locations for interviews were designed at well-known tourism destinations to ensure that the tour bus drivers would stay long enough since the process of interviews would take about 40-50 minutes; (3) only the tour buses which had posted a tour logo would be approached; (4) due to the time constraint (to avoid interruption by the early return of customers), the interviewer would ask the tour bus drivers first how long she/he plans to stay, and the interviews would take place on the bus to avoid interruption by passing pedestrians. All the respondents were asked for permission to be recorded. Finally, the semi-structured interviews with 25 bus drivers were completed (including six bus drivers who also own buses) for formal interviews from five tourism destinations including north, middle and south of Taiwan. For further confirmation, a general manager from a major inbound travel agency was interviewed. The interview questions for the tour bus drivers are as follows:

1. What types of the guided package tour have you served/operated? (Taiwanese tours, mainland Chinese tours? Others)? Which one do you prefer?
2. Have you ever arranged bus tours for your clients? If yes, have you gotten any commissions? What are the differences between bus tours arranged by the travel agency and the bus company/driver?
3. What were your opinions regarding your job position (role) in the past and what are they now? And what do you expect from the tour guide when on the tour?
4. What is your opinion regarding the regulations/codes of conduct imposed on you by stakeholders?
5. What is your opinion regarding the tips/commissions?
6. Are you satisfied with your current income?

Analysis began with the identification of the themes emerging from the raw data, a process sometimes referred to as "open coding" (Strauss and Corbin, 1990). The process of coding was based on the transcribed raw data and the responses to each interview question. Open coding was performed by analyzing a whole paragraph, sentence, or each individual word, and the results were used to create other research questions. The coding was then allied to each theme used in the literature for the investigation. Because tips and sales commissions involve sensitive subjects they were rarely discussed. If a new theme was found, it was seen as a relevant issue and would be further verified with other responses or literature to ensure each item's validity.

Findings

Guided package tours in Taiwan can be categorized into three different groups: mainland Chinese, international tourist groups, and Taiwanese. The number of the mainland Chinese groups, which have triggered price competition among tour operators, has increased rapidly in the past few years but slowed down in year of 2016 due to the changing political environment. Most of the tour bus drivers who were interviewed had served mainland Chinese groups.

The majority of respondents indicated their preference for Taiwanese groups because they are easy to serve and communicate with and their itineraries are shorter and less rushed. Numerous respondents considered that mainland Chinese groups have a rushed itinerary and a lower standard of hospitality service. Chinese groups are perceived to be noisy, less tidy, and more demanding. However, two respondents indicated that they prefer to service the mainland Chinese tours because they receive better tips and commissions. In addition, one respondent said that he prefers to serve overseas Chinese tours because they are more likely to tip the drivers. This shows that tour bus drivers are highly concerned about their physical and mental loadings. Earning extra income is crucial for tour bus drivers. They were asked if they had ever arranged bus tours for customers, and, if so, what were the differences when tours were managed by them? One respondent stated,

Yes I did. Government regulations had mandated that only the travel agency could operate bus tours, but many bus drivers and bus companies did not actually follow the rule.

All the respondents acknowledged that although government prohibited them from arranging bus tours for customers, they took the risks for business reasons. Only two respondents indicated that they had not done this because they were employed by the bus company and had no chance to do so. Moreover, they all admitted that they receive more commissions from shops and other service providers if the bus tours are arranged by them. It is interesting to note that only one respondent considered that the package tours should be operated by travel agencies for professional reasons. They indicated three effects when bus tours are managed by them: the price of the bus tour will be lower; the itinerary will be better planned; the drivers will receive higher commissions. Traditional images of bus drivers do not favor them in many aspects. However, this situation is changing and the bus drivers are now seen as service providers. They were asked what roles they play on the bus tour. Overall, their responses were quite negative. A few senior bus drivers indicated that nowadays the bus drivers have less control over the tour than in the past. One respondent who also owns a bus company and is the Chairman of National Joint Association of Bus for Tourist of R.O.C. illustrated the phenomenon:

Between 1960 and 1989, there were not many travel agencies handling domestic tourism business and Taiwanese travelers tended to depend upon the tour bus company for their itinerary arrangements. The bus driver was the boss at that time when on the tour and would have a female escort to assist. At that time, the bus had no air-conditioner and the female tour escort would provide the bus driver with towels. We decided where to stop during the tour, but now situations have changed.

The rise of consumer rights has caused bus drivers to recognize the fact that the one who hires the bus governs the itinerary. One respondent who had served mainly on mainland Chinese tours described his feeling: "We are in the service business and we do what they want us to do. I am just a bus driver and being a bus driver is considered to be petty and I am treated as a second-class citizen." Other helpless responses are as follows:

Due to the change of travel patterns and social structure, bus drivers nowadays do not have as much control over the itinerary as before. For the mainland Chinese tour, the tour guide is dominant but for the Taiwanese tour, the domestic tour guide has more authority. The bus driver only plays a supporting role if the itinerary is arranged by the travel agency. It used to be the driver who controlled the itinerary but now it is the tour guide because the tour guide is more knowledgeable than the driver.

I had been doing this job for a very long time. In the past, once the domestic tour guide or customers saw me, they would get me the red envelope first and ask me if I needed betel nuts or cigarettes. But it is changed now. Now, the customer is king since he pays me and I have to see their face. Otherwise I get less payment.

Times change: In the past the domestic tour guide listened to us, but now we follow their instructions. Communication is needed for the planned itinerary. But I am fine if they do not listen to me since the status of bus driver is getting lower and being the bus driver is getting difficult.

However, not all the tour bus drivers have chosen to comprise. The interviewed general manager stated, "Generally speaking, Taiwanese bus drivers have low education and bad temper, and are difficult to get along with. Some will bully the tour guides." One interviewed bus driver who had served more on international tours stated the following:

We (tour guides and drivers) should have mutual respect. I do not think they can control me. If they insist on what it should be, I will give them a hard time. I think they should listen to me. Bus drivers who also own bus companies seem to be more resolute since they have more flexibility in their business opportunities. One of those said, Travel agencies may not plan a good itinerary, so I will discuss the itinerary with them. I will reject the business next time if they do not listen to my propositions. Since my company does not own many buses, I select my clients and will not take business from those who are difficult to communicate with. Particularly, I will reject clients who ask for long working hours in order to ensure the health of my bus drivers.

In regard to what they expect from the tour guides, their responses indicated that mutual respect from each other is their primary goal. However, many of them seem to look down on tour guides and do not trust them. One respondent described, I feel that the tour guides are academically inadequate and are less prepared for their work. There is a gap between us; they tend to be customer-oriented and play a role of liaison. But they do not do the job well.

Another said, "I do not like the tour guide to change the itinerary without thoughtfully thinking. It is unacceptable to make unreasonable requests. For example, asking for illegally parking on behalf of tour participants where you may get a traffic violation tickets is not reasonable.

In terms of the code of conduct imposed on the bus driver, a few of respondents thought that it would be better not to impose any rules on the drivers because this might aggravate their job stress. One complained that the regulations were too customer-oriented and ignored the bus drivers' rights. He thought that incidents should be judged by considering both the driver and the customer, not merely customer-centric. However, the majority of respondents expressed their willingness to comply with the requests as long as those demands were reasonable. Based on their responses, it seems that most tour bus companies have implemented dress codes. One respondent, who also owns a bus company, emphasized that the bus drivers are also responsible for hygiene inside the bus and they should wear proper shoes, not flip-flops, during working hours. In fact, most of respondents agreed that the requests for proper dress and appearance are reasonable and important. Furthermore, one respondent stated that his company asked drivers to be polite, wear uniforms, not to smoke, and not to drink alcohol within ten hours before work. It is interesting to note one respondent's statement: "We know wearing a uniform is reasonable, but some of my colleagues just do not like it, so there is a penalty if they are caught." Only one respondent revealed that his company does not make any rules, and said that how various situations are dealt with totally depends on the requests of the clients.

In reality, the dress code is not the major consideration of general tour participants; of greater concern is the use of alcohol, tobacco, betel nuts and swearing. Interviewees' responses showed that a small number of tour bus drivers have difficulties complying with these demands. One senior tour bus driver responded, "Although it is important to be aware of personal hygiene. I smoke and chew betel nuts in order to refresh myself. I would not be able to drive if I stopped smoking and chewing betel nuts." Another respondent seems to be reluctant to accept those requests and stated, "I only take orders from my company; if the customer has any requests, talk to my company. I do not need to listen to them."

Tour bus drivers anticipate two extra sources of income: service fees (tips) and commissions. In practice, the service fees and the tips are different (tips can be referred to as red envelopes in Taiwan). All the interviewed tour bus drivers indicated that they receive a fixed daily service fee when on the tour. Some revealed that they had received tips but not much and believe that tips are based on providing good service. Two indicated that they had never received tips and another two indicated that Taiwanese travelers do not tip. One mentioned he got more tips from mainland Chinese tourists than Taiwanese travelers. It is interesting to note one interviewees' response: "I got a tip before. I had gotten NTD 3,000 (USD 10.00) in a red envelope from a mainland Chinese tour. I was not satisfied with the amount since it was an 8-day tour with long hours each day." However, the interviewed general manager stated that his company (business focusing on international tourists) will tip USD1.00 per-passenger per-day to bus drivers for their hard work including unloading/loading the luggage.

Although the concept of the shopping commission is not a secret for the general public in Taiwan, it still remains a mystery in many aspects. The issue of sales commissions is considered to be a sensitive subject by some of the tour bus drivers who were interviewed. Two interviewees asked not to be recorded for this subject and one refused to respond saying that it is a business secret.

To conclude their responses, sources of sales commission include shopping stores, hotels, restaurants, optional tours, and amusement parks were discovered. One respondent who had served primarily on Taiwanese tours stated, Receiving shopping commissions is not a secret. The main portion of the commissions comes from tour participants' shopping, consumption in restaurants, and hotels. We also get commissions from optional tours, such as water activities and bicycling, in which the domestic tour guide shares half of the commissions with us. I am satisfied if we are all following the rules. However, I know that some domestic tour guides will lie to us and take a larger proportion of the commission.

Indeed, the interviewed general manager revealed that some senior tour guides treat the bus drivers impolitely because their commissions are dependent upon the arrangement determined by the tour guides. In terms of their satisfaction/disatisfaction with their total income, it is interesting that more than half of the respondents indicated that they were satisfied with their total income. Their reasons included the freedom to work, being retired and working for personal pleasure, as well as a situation better than other vehicle drivers. However, some were pessimistic. One statement follows:

I am not satisfied with the total income. We earn much less than before. Customarily we played a dominant role, and the tourism service suppliers tended to work around us. Now we are being constrained and the income and welfare cannot be compared with our previous situation. A large number of respondents blamed the consequences on the selfish departmentalism of travel agencies, the government's fragmentary regulations and tour participants' demands. A few complained that their income and physical load (working overtime) were unbalanced. It seems that a perceptual gap exists between the tour bus driver and stakeholders.

Discussion

Changing roles

The changing role of the tour bus driver is reinforced by a shifting conception: from being supplier-oriented to being customer-oriented (Blackwell et al., 2012). The notion of customer is king (Blackwell et. al., 2012) may not be universally achieved but it is being articulated due to business competition and the rise of consumer rights. This approach is also fostered by the government's policies to endorse professional specialization. The revolution of travel patterns has also advanced and encouraged the changing role of the tour bus drivers. To coordinate the needs of tour participants, the tour guide is empowered to take the initiative to create a smooth itinerary. The results show that nowadays the tour bus drivers do not play a dominant role on the tour and suffer from emotional dissatisfaction. The hired tour bus drivers tend to feel more helpless than those who also own a bus and have more bargaining choices. However, they do have other options such as, working for budget groups or senior groups, who are less demanding. Matthews (2001) posited the cognitive processes of appraisal and coping as mediators of personality and environmental effects on stress outcomes. But the inevitable role changes may result in cognitive dissonance and place the blame on customers for irrationality and on tour guides for unfairness. The expression, "I am just a bus driver," indicates their feelings of helplessness. Their negative feelings and job related depression ultimately intensify their job dissatisfaction.

The changing roles of bus drivers bring concerns about one's social life and role perception: role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload (Katz and Kahn, 1966). Both role ambiguity and role overload should not apply to tour bus drivers since the nature and expectations of their work tasks is quite clear. However, role conflict is found to exist for some tour bus drivers. Monitoring the itinerary as it should be is the obligation of the tour guide and this may go against the interests of the tour bus drivers who tend to intervene in the itinerary. In practice, the tour bus drivers should be more familiar with road conditions and the travel itinerary. A few respondents revealed their contempt of the tour guides thus disclosing their psychological jealousy. Role theory (Biddle, 1986) suggests that human behavior is directed by significant others and individuals will modify their attitudes to correspond with their role. Their psychological unbalance and role conflict (Katz and Kahn, 1966) depend on the verbal courtesy of tour guides to bridge the gap which may smooth the negative feelings of being tour bus drivers.

Commission sensitivity

Although it is an open secret to the general public that bus drivers will be awarded with bonuses from the shopping stops, the general public may not appreciate the fact that other tourism suppliers such as restaurants also pay them a commission. Some tour bus drivers are reluctant to reveal these details for fear of business competition and customer antipathy. The results showed that their sources of commissions are diversified and they can be from any consumption their clients participate in. This extra income is crucial and provides a compensation package to bus drivers. These practices can be examined from many tour bus drivers experiences who self-confessed that they had broken government regulations by arranging guided bus tours for their clients.

While drivers would prefer to offer a better quality tour, their low salary has given them no choice other than to work overtime. The mainland Chinese tour is not a favored option but it offers better service fees, sales commissions, and tips perhaps. An emotional conflict between the choice of physical exhaustion and financial satisfaction often takes place among tour bus drivers. Furthermore, the issue of sales commission also causes a serious partnership break between the bus driver and the tour guide since some drivers suspect that the tour guides are unfair. Perhaps, one of these suspicions is triggered by the government's provisions which request inbound tours, including mainland Chinese tours, to shop only at certified stores to avoid selling disputes. To protect consumers' rights and shopping quality, the tour bus driver faces more severe challenges in the issue of sales commissions.

Codes of conduct

Blue-collar Taiwanese are more likely to dress casually, smoke, drink alcohol, and chew betel nuts than white-collar Taiwanese do. Bus drivers in Taiwan tend to have similar habits for numerous reasons (United Daily News, 2017). General public may not be very concerned about the dress of the bus drivers but student groups and some public institutions are uncomfortable with it. There is a Chinese saying, "Apparel makes the man just as fine feathers make fine birds." It is believed that appropriate clothing helps establish self-esteem and build customer confidence. Faced with changes in the current market, more bus companies are introducing dress codes for business reasons and the tour bus drivers have realized the necessity of this and many have accepted these changes.

Apart from dress codes, tour participants perceive other habits such as smoking, drinking, and chewing betel nuts as less acceptable for health, hygiene and safety reasons. These changing attitudes inconvenience the bus drivers who are forced to change their habits or continue to use behind the scenes. Based on the researcher's observation and received travel proposals (the researcher is one of the reviewers for the public high schools' field trips and the public institutions' travel events), the public schools/institutions will sign a travel contract with travel agencies to ensure that the hired bus drivers will not do the following when on the job: smoke, gamble, drink alcohol, chew betel nuts, use a mobile phone, use offensive language, and dress unsuitably. They will be investigated if they are convicted of a criminal offence and will be required to take alcohol tests before starting the tour. Roads and Maritime Services (2015), a NSW Government agency, requests their bus driver must not tout or solicit for passengers; smoke, eat and drink in the bus, and use a mobile phone inappropriately. They must be clean and tidy; be properly attired; and wear enclosed shoes. The results showed that bus companies will take this matter seriously and will require bus drivers to comply with these requests. Based on the findings, some tour bus drivers are still displeased with these requests and are unwilling to compromise/change/adapts their behaviors for two possible reasons: independent drivers who own their own buses have more choices; hired drivers who has serve individual travel groups only. It is reasonable to believe that many tour bus drivers are still smoking and chewing betel nuts when on the duty. But it is an irreversible trend that tour bus drivers will encounter further challenges from their clients and authorities in the future. According to Goode's (1960) assumption, developing a coping strategy may be an effective way to reduce this role change dilemma.

Cognitive dissonance

It is an undeniable that the general public's impression of bus drivers is improving and the bus drivers' positive attitude in customer service is anticipated by stakeholders. In practice, because the bus drivers play a significant role in tour safety they should be highly respected. Regrettably, they are concerned about being treated as an invisible service provider, or being considered as merely "a driver". The phenomenon of role changing - from a dominant to a defensive role - is an inevitable trend for Taiwanese tour bus drivers but their reactions toward the change are considerably ineffective. Studies have revealed their psychological anxiety during the transformation period.

The expectancy theory suggests that an individual will behave in a certain way since they are motivated to choose a specific based on what they expect to get (Vroom, 1964). Cognitive dissonance is formed and tour bus drivers blame their clients for these rigorous requirements and the tour guides for their incompetence which may give rise to psychosomatic symptoms (Meijman and Kompier, 1998). Kim (2011) advocates that individuals will be more likely to experience cognitive dissonance once they are greatly involved in the service purchase. The psychological state of being cognitively dissonant drives an individual to modify his/her behavior as a strategy to reduce cognitive dissonance (Kim, 2011). The presence of cognitive dissonance and feelings of depression in Taiwanese tour bus drivers are not entirely based on who is the master of the package tour since they have recognized that the one who pays for the tour is the boss. Instead, it is more likely to be derived from receiving lower commissions which causes this feeling of not being respected.

Emotional labor is becoming a prevalent result of work experience and requires greater attention than ever before (Leidner, 1999). Tour bus drivers are front-line service workers and are in frontline service contact with their clients. Over-demanding clients often generate bus drivers' emotional dissonance. Likewise, preconceived ideas of bus drivers have an impact on tour participants' sense of trust. Taiwanese bus drivers do not pay much attention to their deportment or demeanor. Tourism-based service providers are subject to negative stress and outcomes associated with the performance of emotional labor (Van Dijk and Kirk, 2007). Dechawatanapaisal and Siengthai (2006) suggest that effective human resource practices can help avoid dissonance and inconsistent attitudes, and induce learning behavior in the workplace. Organizational support as perceived by frontline employees mitigates the impact of emotional dissonance on disengagement which helps establish trust between frontline employees and the organization (Karatepe, 2011). To lessen the cognitive dissonance, the bus company needs to construct an innovative mechanism on behalf of tour bus drivers.

Conclusion and Implications

Supply and demand is a transaction model of price indication in a marketplace. It hypothesizes that in a competitive market, the unit price for a specific labor will vary based on the quantity demanded and the quantity supplied. Domestic tourism in Taiwan is considerably competitive. The tour bus driver is losing ground in the contest and no longer holds the traditionally dominant role due to government policies which focus on the consumers' protection. Many tour bus drivers consider themselves to be a vulnerable group and doing humble work. Psychological abuse, which is designed to intimidate another person, appears to be used occasionally to maintain a steady position. Inevitably, emotional blackmail (Susan and Donna, 1998) was often used by tour bus drivers to promote their own interests within the appraisal and coping process which generated stress outcomes or discomfort symptoms to tour guides or tour participants (see Chang, 2014). The tour guides, who serve as a mediator between bus drivers and customers, often find themselves working in a tense atmosphere with the tour bus drivers. This study concludes that a code of conduct will not influence tour bus drivers' job satisfaction in the long run since it is rational; however tour guides and irrational customers may remain to be a threat to their job satisfaction. The tension between them will not be eliminated in the near future. The existence of perception difference and role conflict of the tour bus driver will remain intact. In response to Hall's (1972) role conflict theory, this study suggests that adjusting one's behavior will be a better fit into the situation than negotiating with others to change their expectations. A plea for mutual respect, particularly verbal courtesy, among drivers, tour guides, and tour participants helps minimize the conflict.

Rather than volunteering, bus drivers are often forced to abide by stakeholders' demands. For example, a code of conduct which may seem to be reasonable but is illegal, such as parking on the roadside for tour participants' convenience which is not rational, since the driver may get an illegal parking ticket. Their perception of inferior interactions may have a negative impact on service quality and job satisfaction. Duffy and McGoldrick (1990) reveal that, compared to similar careers, bus drivers have a lower level of job satisfaction and unfavorable mental health indices due to their job-associated stressors. This study examines whether the existence of cognitive dissonance is sometimes caused by the anxiety of sales commissions. The presence of dissonance can also cause ego resistance and confirmation bias (Festinger, 1962). To reduce the effect of cognitive dissonance, justifying the behavior with a positive response seems to be a more effective way than to deny the evidence of those based on conflicts with existing beliefs.

Typical guided bus tours in Taiwan are organized by travel agencies who have created structured itineraries. However, many bus tours, which have been organized by private organizations/institutions, are more casually planned. The casual itineraries tend to be flexible and the group stays in hotels that are more favorable to the tour bus drivers. From the financial perspective, tour bus drivers receive more income from mainland Chinese groups than from Taiwanese groups. On the other hand, mainland Chinese groups are more physically demanding than Taiwanese groups. Both have advantages and disadvantages depending on the individual tour bus drivers' personal preferences. Their indication of satisfaction with the total income and the preference of quality tours seem to be contradictory to their intention for sales commission. There are two possible explanations for the contradiction. Firstly, most of interviewees are senior drivers who have less financial responsibility. Secondly, in comparison with other bus drivers, tour bus drivers are better provided for.

The relationship between rights and responsibilities is not always positive. The job of being the driver emphasizes the responsibility. It seems that the current workplace environment and public expectations do not favor tour bus drivers who also consider their work to have less dignity in a psychological sense. Dignity recognition in the workplace may be a critical factor in sustaining development of healthy workplaces (Lawless and Moss, 2007). The value of dignity in the work-life of tour bus drivers has not been explored and there is a critical need for further consideration. Mindful attention to tour bus drivers' dignity may benefit the achievement of both tour bus drivers and organizational goals. Tour bus drivers consider themselves a vulnerable group and are doing a humble job. The position of tour bus driver, in terms of work equality and human rights, has received little attention. This research highlights tour bus driver workplace environment and work-life quality, and provides a comprehensive background of the changing role of tour bus drivers. The results may contribute to the practice of the tourism industry and draw attention to the well-being of tour bus drivers.

This study used the qualitative approach with small sample of interviewed subjects. The process of interviews took place at well-known tourism destinations; the results might be different if interviews were to take place at local tourism areas because of the characteristics of Taiwanese group tours. The interviewed respondents of this study tended to be older. Young tour bus drivers might not share the same perceptions due to different perspectives. In addition, this study focused on tour bus drivers who are hired by the travel agencies. Their responses should not entirely apply to bus drivers who are not hired by the travel agencies. Therefore, a further quantitative study is recommended to fill this gap. Creating a respectful and spiritual workplace is a meaningful aim since the issue has received worldwide attention. Apart from the evolving role, the role of the tour bus driver, a guardian for travel safety, deserves to be treated as an honourable profession. This study recommends that future study focuses on tour bus drivers' professional dignity and health.

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