



We are in the same boat: Tourist citizenship behaviors



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HIGHLIGHTS

- Extending citizenship behavior research into a group package tour context.
- Utilizing a qualitative approach to investigate tourist citizenship behaviors (TCB).
- Three categories of TCB: assisting tour management, members, and service providers.
- Contributing to the current knowledge of both citizenship and tour group dynamics.

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ABSTRACT

This paper applies the concept of customer organizational citizenship behaviors (CCB) to the behaviors of tour participants. Tourist citizenship behaviors (TCB) are discretionary and altruistic while efficiently promoting the effective functioning of a tour. This study aims to explore TCB. A qualitative approach and content analysis were conducted, resulting in three categories of TCB: (1) facilitating communication and management to bring harmony and conviviality to the tour; (2) displaying benevolent acts toward fellow tour members; and (3) motivating and supporting service providers. This research contributes to the current knowledge of both citizenship and tour group dynamics. Future research could develop a scale of TCB and explore the antecedents of TCB.

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1. Introduction

The ease and comfort of group package tours makes them very popular (Wong & Kwong, 2004). Such packages appeal to all ages in Asian countries such as Taiwan, Japan, and China (Wang, Hsieh, & Huan, 2000). A group package tour consists of pre-arranged transportation, accommodation, attractions, and services (Middleton, 1991; Wang et al., 2000). A tour leader, also known as a tour manager, executes an itinerary and gives local practical information to the tour members throughout the tour, while a tour guide interprets the cultural and natural heritage of a particular area and guides visitors using the language of choice (World Federation of Tourist Guide Associations, 2003). Package tour members can thus relax.

Classical management theory portrays customers as passive recipients of goods and services (Bowen, 1986). However, Vargo and Lusch (2008) argue that thinking of customers as targets to be

served limits the interpreting of the exchange process between customers and companies. They propose a service-dominant logic considering customers as operant resources within the service chain (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Service customers are viewed as partial employees participating in both the production and consumption of service (Kelley, Donnelly, & Skinner, 1990). Namasivayam (2003) further argues that service customers can be conceptualized as transient employees because they enter organizational boundaries during the production and consumption and then depart. In order to better meet customers' needs, organizations should recognize customers as co-producers and optimize their involvement in customization (Vargo & Lusch, 2004). Thus, customers are no longer viewed as merely service recipients, but as potential human resources to assist with various organizational activities (Yi, Natarajan, & Gong, 2011) such as participating in and providing feedback on the firm's activities and assisting other customers (Bove, Pervan, Beatty, & Shiu, 2009; Groth, 2005). These altruistic behaviors, known as customer citizenship behaviors (CCB), refer to voluntary customer behaviors that benefit the organization but are not required for service delivery (Groth, 2005). Intended to effectively and efficiently improve organizational performance, these behaviors enhance positive dynamics among

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service encounter participants. For example, Rosenbaum and Massiah (2009) prove that inter-customer support brings out customer citizenship and care behaviors. Yi et al. (2011) further show that CCB have a direct and positive impact on employee performance and commitment.

While this research stream has discovered CCB manifested toward organizations in the retail service context, little research has focused on citizenship during service delivery, particularly during a prolonged service encounter featuring limited service representatives (Harris & Baron, 2004). In contrast to most service encounters, group customers tend to frequently interact with each other, and may even compete for service resources. Previous customer citizenship research, however, does not sufficiently explain citizenship behaviors within this context of interaction among group customers and the contact personnel.

Group package tours are led by one tour leader serving many tour members (Wang et al., 2000). Tour members differ from typical retail customers in a number of aspects. First, tour members travel for a period of time, from a few days to several weeks. They interact intensely in an environmental bubble (Cohen, 1972) as a tribal organization on the move. Their enjoyment of the tour is subject to various external and internal factors such as illness and compatibility with tour members (Bowie & Chang, 2005), which in turn affects them to a greater extent than in retail settings.

Secondly, tour leaders experience work pressure from the multiple roles they are required to play (Bowie & Chang, 2005; Cohen, 1985; Schuchat, 1983). A tour leader is in charge of tour tasks and caring for tour members while creating a positive group climate (Wong & Lee, 2012). Giving special consideration to one member might require neglecting another, causing jealousy and dissatisfaction among tour members. Finally, package tours are subject to potentially heterogeneous contingencies, such as transportation, communication, and document loss (Wang, Jao, Chan, & Chung, 2010). Overcoming such circumstances requires collaboration from the entire group since it often causes delays with downstream consequences.

Bowen (2001) contends that tour group members significantly affect tour performance. Quiroga (1990) shows that three-fourths of the tour members claim that they contribute to the group and 89% claim they assist their tour companions. Tour member-focused research tends to examine pre-tour decision-making (Heung & Chu, 2000), travel motivation (Chang, 2007), customer-to-customer interaction (Wu, 2007), tour satisfaction and quality (Bowen, 2001, 2008, 2009; Bowie & Chang, 2005, 2006), and the comforts of group tours (Schuchat, 1983). Extant research has yet to address the question: How do tour members contribute to tour management by performing citizenship behaviors? In order to fill this gap, this study investigates TCB.

During the tour, tour members are like rowers in a rowboat for whom citizenship behaviors are indispensable. By engaging in TCB, tour members steer their boat on the right course, reaching the desired outcomes. Tour leaders who understand TCB have an advantage in solving problems. Findings from the current research contribute to current knowledge by expanding understanding of citizenship behaviors on tour. The current study defines TCB as discretionary and altruistic behaviors demonstrated by tour members during group package tours that sustain effective functioning of the tour. This study aims to lay a foundation for theoretical development by identifying TCB performed by tour members.

2. Literature review

2.1. Organizational citizenship behaviors

Contrary to employee deviant behaviors which violate organizational norms while threatening the well-being of organizations

or its members (Robinson & Bennett, 1995), organizational citizenship behaviors are spontaneous and benefit the organization (Organ, 1988). These positive acts are critical because they are a social lubricant, smoothing out many unforeseen contingencies (Smith, Organ, & Near, 1983) while enhancing the social and psychological context that supports task performance (Organ, 1997). Organ (1988) identifies the following five dimensions of organizational citizenship behaviors (OCB): (1) Altruism represents acts helping a specific person without expectation of reward; (2) conscientiousness comprises attendance, cleanliness, and punctuality that are beyond requirements; (3) sportsmanship is characterized by toleration of less than desirable circumstances without complaint; (4) courtesy includes efforts to prevent problems with others; (5) civic virtue refers to responsible participation in the political life of the organization.

Various factorial sets of OCB have been explored since Organ's study. For example, focusing on the immediate beneficiaries of OCB, Williams and Anderson (1991) propose two categories of OCB. The first, OCBO, refers to behaviors that focus on and benefit the organization. The second, OCBI, pertains to the behaviors that directly benefit particular individuals and indirectly contribute to the organization. Furthermore, promotive/affiliative and promotive/challenging dimensions may examine OCB. Promotive/affiliative OCB describes behaviors such as helping that intend to prompt something to occur and enhance a relationship. On the other hand, promotive/challenging OCB denotes those behaviors, such as voicing, which tend to change the status quo for improvement but are challenging for the relationship (Choi, 2007; Mackenzie, Podsakoff, & Podsakoff, 2011; Van Dyne, Cummings, & Parks, 1995). From these analytical perspectives, the antecedents of OCB can be examined in greater detail.

Research into OCB suggests three categories of antecedents: affective state, individual characteristics, and situational factors (Van Dyne et al., 1995). Affective states such as satisfaction, low alienation, and positive emotion can result in OCB performance (Spector & Fox, 2002; Van Dyne et al., 1995). Personal characteristics such as agreeableness, need for affiliation, empathetic concern, and relationship orientation can contribute to expressions of OCB (Van Dyne et al., 1995). Situational factors involving cohesiveness, leader-member exchange (LMX), team orientation, and organizational climate also impact OCB (Kidwell, Mossholder, & Bennett, 1997; Tepper, Duffy, Hoobler, & Ensley, 2004; Van Dyne et al., 1995; Werner, 2000).

The extended view of OCB shows these behaviors may stem from self-serving motives such as impression management (Bolino, Turnley, & Niehoff, 2004; Bolino, Varela, Bande, & Turnley, 2006) and circumstantial pressure (Bolino et al., 2004). Arguably, OCB may be the outcome of poor management and insufficient staff (Bolino et al., 2004). If this is the case, some employees may feel pressure to perform OCB—citizenship pressure (Bolino, Turnley, Gilstrap, & Suazo, 2010).

The current research focuses on citizenship behaviors of tour group members (clients rather than employees). There is a parallel between the circumstances in which OCB and TCB occur. There is a social context for group dynamics to develop within a tour group, since customers are active participants in the service production process. We propose group dynamics may affect both types of citizenship behaviors.

2.2. Customer organizational citizenship behaviors

Bettencourt (1997) describes *customer voluntary performance* as including loyalty, cooperation, and participation. Later, Groth (2005) identifies recommendation, providing feedback to the organization, and helping other customers as constituting three

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