

The Effect of Customer Orientation on Tour Guide Task Performance: Based on Bootstrapping Method

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Abstract. In order to improve the task performance of tour guides, this study explored the mediating mechanism and boundary conditions of the influence of customer orientation on task performance of tour guides, and constructed a relationship model among customer orientation, adaptive selling, task performance, and social support. This study uses the nonparametric percentile bootstrapping method with deviation correction by AMOS software and SPSS software to analyze the data. The results showed that customer orientation positively affected task performance of tour guides, and social support strengthened this relationship; adaptive selling played a full mediating role between customer orientation and task performance of tour guides. That is to say, travel agencies can improve the task performance of tour guides by creating a supportive climate, promoting a customer-oriented culture, and strengthening the training about adaptive selling ability.

Keywords: customer orientation; adaptive selling; task performance; social support

1 Introduction

With the development of China's economy, the tourism industry has also developed vigorously. In the process of the continuous development of the tourism industry, the management problems of tour guides emerge in endlessly. Management problems such as service quality and performance management of tour guides have not been solved perfectly. In recent years, domestic and foreign scholars' research on tour guide performance management is mainly in the following two levels: first, the research from the level of individual influencing factors. Li Yue studies from the perspective of individual factors of tour guides, through the investigation and analysis of tour guides, the main factors that affect the task performance of tour guides are moral sentiment, coordination ability, self-initiative, empirical learning ability, self-recognition, team recognition and interpersonal relationship [1]. Second, the research from the situational level. Tsaour et al. believe that different types of customers will affect the performance of tour guides. Li Zefeng found that in different regions, especially across ethnic groups and regions, the performance of tour guides will be affected by local ethnic knowledge and other related factors, thus forming different performance results [3]. Luo et al. believe that tour guide performance can be defined from the reputation of travel agencies [4]. Generally speaking, although domestic and foreign scholars have done some research on the individual and situational factors affecting tour guide performance, the research on the antecedent variables of tour guide task performance is not enough. Therefore, this study proposes to study the performance of tour guides from the perspective of customer orientation, adaptive selling and social support, and further improve the relevant theory of how to improve the performance of tour guides from the individual and situational level.

2 Theoretical basis

2.1 Customer orientation and Tour Guide Task performance

Customer orientation refers to a psychological tendency or quality that employees can meet the needs of customers in the working environment [5]. Customer orientation shows consistency over a period of time, which can directly or indirectly affect the service concept of employees, and ultimately lead to the corresponding behavior and results [6]. Employees with high customer orientation can better understand their customers, thus improving personal performance, customer satisfaction and corporate performance [7]. There are two main behaviors of task performance: one is the behavior that can serve the core technology, and the other is directly related to service or production. Some studies have shown that the market orientation of enterprises is also realized through employees' customer orientation [8]. Empirical studies have shown that there is a correlation between the two: employees with a high degree of customer orientation have achieved a better level of job performance [9]. In summary, this study puts forward the hypothesis H1: customer orientation has a positive impact on the task performance of tour guides.

2.2 Mediating role of adaptive selling

Adaptive selling refers to the behavior that salespeople actively adapt to the environment and choose their own sales strategies [10-11]. The results of Singh & Das 's market survey in Turkey show that there is a positive relationship between customer orientation and adaptive selling behavior, and adaptive selling behavior can better predict customer orientation than job satisfaction [12].

Customer-oriented psychological motivation urges employees to take more active actions to meet customer needs. When tour guides find that their motivation can be satisfied by adaptive selling behavior, their probability of using adaptive selling behavior will increase. Adaptive selling behavior is an important internal condition to improve performance, because adaptive selling improve sales efficiency, thus improving task performance. Based on this, this paper puts forward the hypothesis H2: adaptive selling behavior plays a mediating role between customer orientation and tour guide task performance.

2.3 Customer orientation and adaptive selling: social support as a moderator

Social support refers to the support system in which individuals receive their relevant social relations [13]. Social support can have a beneficial impact on individual behavior, and the higher the degree of emotional and information support from the outside, the more it can help individuals improve their work input [14]. On the contrary, it will lead to job burnout, thus reducing job input. High social support means that employees receive an increase in emotional and information resources, and even reach a resource spillover. Individuals use the support resources they get to invest in the field of work. It performs better at work, which in turn helps employees form lasting resources [14]. Social support will affect the sense of meaning of individual work, thus affecting the intention of individuals to continue to work [15]. In summary, this paper puts forward the hypothesis H3a: emotional support promotes the influence of customer orientation on adaptive selling, that is, when tour guides perceive higher emotional support, adaptive selling behavior increases, and vice versa. hypothesis H3b: information support promotes the influence of customer orientation on adaptive selling behavior, that is, when tour guides perceive higher information

support, adaptive selling behavior increases, and vice versa.

3 Methods

3.1 Sample selection

The subjects of this study are tour guides in Huangshan, Hangzhou. In July 2020, the research team sent out a total of 204 questionnaires at the above locations and collected 204 questionnaires. After excluding invalid questionnaires, 192 questionnaires were valid. Table 1 shows the socio-demographic statistics of the sample in this study.

Table 1. Participants' profile (N = 192)

Socio-demographic Indicators	Category	N	(%)	S.D.
Gender	Male	93	48.44%	0.50
	Female	99	51.56%	
Age	20 and under	16	8.33%	0.99
	21~30	31	16.15%	
	31~40	43	22.40%	
	Above 40	102	53.13%	
Length of service	Less than 1 year	4	2.08%	1.17
	1-5 years	27	14.06%	
	6-10 years	15	7.81%	
	11~15 years	40	20.83%	
	More than 15 years	106	55.21%	
Degree	Senior high school and below	37	19.27%	0.58
	Junior college	106	55.21%	
	Undergraduate course	46	23.96%	
	Master's degree or above	3	1.56%	

3.2 Questionnaires and measurements

The questionnaire of this study consists of two parts, one is customer orientation, social support, adaptive selling and task performance scale, and the other is background information. The scale adopts Likert 5 points for scoring. The customer orientation scale uses six items developed by Homburg and Stock, and the representative items of the questionnaire include "I strive to help customers achieve their goals" [16] ($\alpha = 0.909$). The adaptive selling volume table uses a scale compiled by Jin et al., using a 6-item questionnaire on the extent to which salespeople tend to practice adaptive selling. The representative questions include "I am confident that I will change the sales method in the process of interacting with customers" [17]. After deleting the item with the lowest factor loading (0.43) (the ability to collect information about sales to promote adaptive behavior), the reliability of the scale is better ($\alpha = 0.925$). The social support scale is a 7-item scale compiled by Liang et al. The questionnaire includes emotional support (4 items) and information

support (3 items) [15]. The emotional support scale represents questions such as: "colleagues and friends will comfort and encourage me when I encounter difficulties" ($\alpha = 0.910$). The information support scale represents questions such as: "when I encounter difficulties, colleagues and friends will help me find out the reasons and give me advice" ($\alpha = 0.733$). The task performance scale uses the 5-item scale developed by Method et al. [18]. The representative questions of the questionnaire include: "I can fully fulfill the assigned responsibilities" and so on. Due to poor factor loading, the item with the lowest factor loading (0.39) was deleted (performing the duties specified in the job description). The final reliability of the task performance scale is 0.951.

4 Result analysis

4.1 Common method deviation test

In addition to using a series of measures to reduce the common method deviation in the questionnaire, this study also uses the Harman single factor test, and the results show that there are five factors with characteristic roots more than 1. The largest factor explained 39.14% of the variation, less than 50% of the critical standard. Therefore, there is no significant common method deviation in this study.

4.2 Reliability and validity test

In this study, confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to analyze five variables (customer orientation, adaptive selling, emotional support, information support, task performance). The measurement model is analyzed by amos23.0 software. The measurement results are as follows: $X^2 = 400.69$, $df = 199$, $X^2/df = 2.01$, $NFI = 0.89$, $IFI = 0.94$, $CFI = 0.94$, $RMSEA = 0.073$. The measurement results are in line with the recommended standards. In this study, the reliability of the scale was tested by combinatorial reliability (CR). As shown in Table 2, CR value, AVE value and factor loading of all items meet the standard. The reliability and validity of each scale in the measurement model have been tested.

Table 2. Results of the measurement model

Construct	Project	Factor loading	CR	AVE	Construct	Project	Factor loading	CR	AVE
Emotional support	ES1	0.79	0.91	0.72	Adaptive selling	A1	0.79	0.93	0.72
	ES2	0.86				A2	0.81		
	ES3	0.88				A3	0.90		
	ES4	0.87				A4	0.89		
	T1	0.97				A5	0.84		
Task performance	T2	0.96	0.95	0.83	Customer orientation	C1	0.61	0.90	0.65
	T3	0.91				C2	0.71		
	T4	0.80				C3	0.90		
	IS1	0.76				C4	0.88		
Information support	IS2	0.68	0.74	0.49		C5	0.90		
	IS3	0.65							
	IS4	0.71							

4.3 Descriptive statistics and hypothesis test

In this paper, the correlation of the questionnaire data is analyzed by SPSS 20.0 software. The mean value, standard deviation and correlation coefficient of each variable are shown in Table 3. There is a positive correlation between customer orientation and adaptive selling ($r = 0.632$, $p < 0.01$). There is a positive correlation between customer orientation and performance ($r = 0.487$, $p < 0.01$). There was a positive correlation between adaptive selling and performance ($r = 0.565$, $p < 0.01$). H1 was preliminarily verified.

Table 3. Correlation analysis

Construct	Mean	S.D.	AVE	1	2	3	4	5
1 CO	4.256	0.589	0.653	0.808				
2 AS	4.089	0.621	0.715	0.632**	0.846			
3 TP	4.211	0.663	0.834	0.487**	0.565**	0.913		
4 ES	2.680	0.606	0.721	0.125	0.171*	0.128	0.849	
5 IS	2.767	1.383	0.485	-0.177*	-0.232**	-0.280**	-0.069	0.696

Note: *: $p < 0.05$; **: $p < 0.01$; CO: customer orientation; AS: adaptive selling; TP: task performance; ES: emotional support; IS: information support.

In order to further verify the mediating effect, this study uses the nonparametric percentile bootstrapping method with deviation correction by AMOS software to test the mediating effect [19]. The system repeated sampling 2000 times and calculated 95% confidence interval. Table 4 shows the direct and indirect effect values. Adaptive selling plays a full mediation role between customer orientation and tour guide's task performance ($\beta = 0.528$, $p < 0.001$). So H2 is supported.

Table 4. Direct and mediating effects

Path	Coefficient	SE	Z	95% confidence interval of bootstrap percentile		Double tail significance
				Low	High	
CO→AS→SP (indirect effects)	0.528	0.174	3.034	0.249	0.948	<0.001
CO→SP (direct effects)	0.292	0.262	1.115	-0.086	0.912	0.160
Total effects (CO→SP)	0.820	0.308	2.66	0.316	1.517	<0.001

In this study, SPSS software and model 1 of Hayes'Processmacro (5000 bootstrapping) were used to test the moderating effect of social support on the relationship between customer orientation and employees' adaptive selling behavior. The positive role of emotional support and information support in the influence of customer orientation on adaptive selling behavior ($\beta = 0.109$, $p < 0.001$; $\beta = 0.286$, $p < 0.001$). The interaction drawn with ± 1 standard deviation of the average value of emotional support is shown in figure 1 and Table 5. When emotional support is high, customer orientation has a greater positive impact on adaptive selling behavior ($\beta = 0.803$, $P < 0.001$). When emotional support is low, customer orientation has less influence on adaptive selling behavior ($\beta = 0.503$, $P < 0.001$), which verifies the hypothesis H3a.

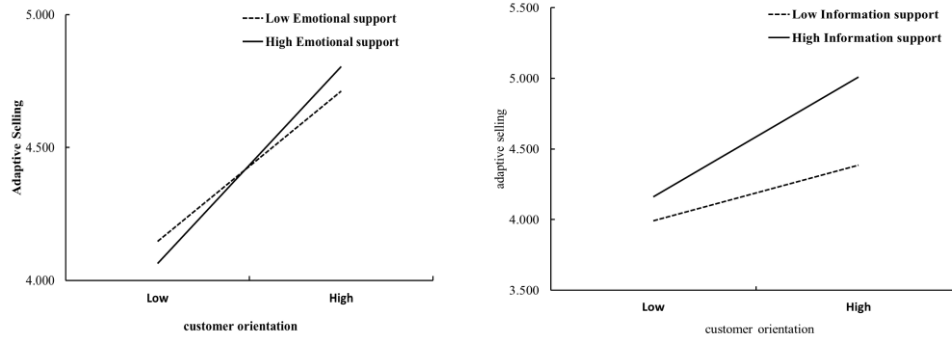


Fig. 1. The moderation role of emotional support and information support

Table 5. Hierarchical analysis of the moderating effect of emotional support

Project	Coefficient	Boot SE	LL	UL
Emotional support (-1 SD)	0.503	0.076	0.353	0.654
Emotional support (+1 SD)	0.803	0.081	0.644	0.962

The interaction plotted with ± 1 standard deviation of the average value supported by the information is shown in figure 1 and Table 6. When the information support is high, the customer orientation has a great positive influence on the adaptive selling behavior ($\beta = 0.795$, $p < 0.001$). When the information support is low, the influence of customer orientation on the adaptive selling behavior becomes smaller ($\beta = 0.448$, $p < 0.001$), which verifies the hypothesis H3b.

Table 6. Hierarchical analysis of the moderating effect of information support

Project	Coefficient	Boot SE	LL	UL
Information support (-1 SD)	0.448	0.088	0.274	0.622
Information support (+1 SD)	0.795	0.074	0.650	0.940

5 Conclusions and inspiration

5.1 Conclusions

First of all, the customer orientation of tour guides will promote the improvement of task performance. The guide's customer orientation makes them show a lasting willingness to meet the needs of customers, and this motivation will also make them actively serve customers and find ways to meet the needs of customers. It can even take the initiative to predict the possible future needs of customers [20] and take action. Secondly, customer orientation affects task performance through adaptive selling behavior, and adaptive selling plays a full mediation role. Customer-oriented tour guides have the consciousness of serving customers actively [20]. Therefore, while actively seeking methods (adaptive selling) to achieve task performance, it also meets the autonomy needs of customer-oriented tour guides. Finally, social support plays a moderating role between customer orientation and adaptive selling behavior. If the customer-oriented tour guide

obtains more emotional and information support resources from the surrounding environment, then the more investment can be transferred to the field of work, the higher the probability of the adaptive selling behavior adopted by the customer-oriented tour guide in the process of work.

5.2 Management revelation

According to the research results, customer-oriented tendency is an important factor affecting the performance of tour guides. Therefore, tourism agencies should strengthen the customer-oriented atmosphere and cultivate the customer-oriented consciousness of tour guides, so that tour guides can proceed from the needs of customers and adapt to customers dynamically. Similarly, for individual tour guides, customer orientation is also an inherent competency requirement to improve their task performance. Adaptive selling is a full mediation variable between customer orientation and task performance, which means that improving the adaptive selling behavior of tour guides is an important factor to improve task performance. Through emotional support, managers can enhance the tour guides' sense of the meaning of work, and then help tour guides feel more sense of mission, and the promotion of the sense of mission makes employees willing to increase the level of investment in their work [21]. In addition, travel agencies can also improve the information support ability of managers. When the tour guide encounters a problem, the manager can provide solutions and relevant information in a timely manner. With this support, tour guides can quickly transform their willingness to serve customers into specific adaptive selling behavior, so as to quickly improve the task performance of tour guides. It is believed that the task performance of tour guides can be improved through the above methods, so as to improve the performance and reputation of travel agencies.

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