

角色壓力與性格會否影響領隊表現？

Do role stress and personality affect tour escort performance?

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引言

領隊是顧客最先接觸的人，也是把旅行社和顧客橋接起來的人。領隊與顧客廣泛接觸，因而對旅行團服務素質的影響十分關鍵，這已經是公認的事實。因此，很多顧客認為，旅行團的服務是否優越，團隊的旅遊經驗是否豐富，領隊要負上主要責任。既然領隊對旅行團的素質這麼重要，那麼他們所承受的工作壓力(假如有的話)，應該會關係到旅行團是否安排妥當，以及為顧客所提供服務的水平。

帶團是一門既具挑戰性而又充滿壓力的專業。領隊在帶團時，往往需要扮演多個角色，像領導人、項目組織者、評論員、娛樂節目表演者、活動幹事等。假如領隊只擅長為顧客安排食住行而拙於娛賓，那麼顧客未必會完全滿意他們的表現。更加重要的是，領隊不但要為團員排難解紛，又要調和各旅遊供應商之間互不相容的期望。舉例來說，



Introduction

Tour escorts are the first contact point for customers. They bridge the gap between the travel agency and the customer. It is generally recognised that through extensive contact with customers, tour escorts wield substantial influence over the quality of service of a tour. Hence, many customers hold tour escorts primarily responsible for the delivery of quality services and the enhancement of a tour group's experience. Considering the critical role that tour escorts play in delivering a quality tour, their job-related stress, if any, should have some bearing on how well a tour is arranged, and the quality of the services that are rendered to the customers.

Tour coordination is a challenging but stressful profession. Tour escorts often need to assume many roles on tour, including those of leader, event organiser, commentator, entertainer and activity facilitator. When tour escorts are only good at organising the necessities but not at entertaining, they do not obtain completely positive responses from customers. More importantly, tour escorts are expected to resolve conflicts in tour groups and to reconcile incompatible expectations amongst tourism suppliers. Some customers, for example, may want fewer shopping trips, but service partners such as local tour guides or coach drivers may prefer tours with more shopping activities because part of their income is derived from merchandise rebates. In this tug of war, tour escorts always find themselves under great pressure. They may find it difficult to satisfy customers' needs without disappointing others.

What is role stress?

All jobs are stressful to some extent, but where does the stress come from? Role Theory suggests that everyone has a role to play in their position in an organisation. In a role episode, the role sender holds certain expectations about what the role occupant should or should not do. The role occupant also has ideas about how they should behave. When the two are at odds, intra-role stress is evident. Similarly, inter-role stress arises when multiple role duties are requested. This happens either when

有些顧客希望購物活動不要那麼多，但服務夥伴如當地導遊或旅遊車司機卻喜歡購物活動多的旅行團，因為他們的部份收入來自商店的回扣。在這樣的角力賽中，領隊經常感到巨大壓力。他們可能覺得縱使能夠滿足一些顧客的需要，也難免會使另一些顧客失望。

甚麼是角色壓力？

可以這麼說，任何工作都是有壓力的；但壓力究竟來自甚麼地方？角色理論認為，每個人都會按照自己在組織中的地位而扮演相應的角色。在一個角色場景中，託付角色者(role sender)對於據有角色者(role occupant)應該做甚麼或不該做甚麼會有某些期望，而據有角色者對於自己應該做甚麼也會有一定的概念。當以上兩者不一致時，自然就產生角色內的壓力(intra-role stress)。同樣地，當需要同時達成多個角色的責任時，就會出現角色間的壓力(inter-role stress)。當有多個託付角色者，或者同一個託付角色者要求多個角色的責任時，角色間的壓力就會出現。旅行團一般都有十多個顧客，要照顧他們的需要，並且令他們人人都滿意，看來是不可能達成的工作。不管這些難以調協的情形是源自角色內還是角色間的處境，壓力會以下述兩種面貌的其中一種出現：角色混淆或角色衝突。

當託付角色者的期望不完整或不足以指導據有角色者的表演時，角色混淆就會出現。假如在某些處境中多個期望不能相容，但又必須同時滿足那些期望的話，衝突自然難以規避，那就會出現角色衝突。壓力的這兩種面貌可以在組織之內發生，也可以超出組織的範圍；可以與同一個託付角色者有關，也可以與不同的託付角色者有關。角色混淆和角色衝突的另一個區別特徵是，前者沒有明確的期望，而後者則有。

領隊普遍承受角色壓力

領隊之所以特別容易感到角色壓力，有幾個原因。首先，帶團和其他服務業的工作不同，往往要外國提供服務，可是旅行社卻在本國，因此，領隊從旅行社得到的即

there are multiple role senders or when the same role sender requests multiple role assignments. As a typical package tour consists of a dozen or more customers, attending to their requirements and satisfying every customer appear to be impossible. Irrespective of whether or not the incongruence emanates from intra-role or inter-role situations, stress can take one of two forms: role ambiguity or role conflict.

Role ambiguity occurs when the expectations of the role sender are incomplete or insufficient to guide the performance of the role occupant. Role conflict refers to situations in which multiple expectations are incompatible with each other, thus leading to conflict if one has to accomplish all expectations at once. Either type of role stress can occur within and beyond the organisation, and with the same role sender or between different role senders. Another characteristic that distinguishes the two is that explicit expectations are evident in role conflict but not in role ambiguity.



Role stress is particularly common amongst tour escorts

Tour escorts are particularly vulnerable to role stress for several reasons. First, unlike other service jobs, package tours are often delivered in foreign countries and tour escorts receive scant immediate support from travel agencies at home. The physical detachment and remoteness may make the information that is required to guide the performance of tour escorts less available or incomplete, thus compelling them to make decisions based on their own competence, experience and skills.

Second, tour escorts are described as boundary spanners whose job duties necessitate that they span across multiple boundaries both within and beyond their organisations. Inside the firm, stress comes from meeting the expectations of their

時支援極其有限。領隊身處外地，路途迢迢，他們需要用來指導工作的資訊要不是難以得到，就是並不全面，迫使他們下決定時不得不倚仗本身的能力、經驗和技術。

其次，領隊被視為跨界者(boundary spanner)，他們因為職責關係，需要跨越組織內外的多種界線。在公司之內，由於要滿足老闆、上司、同事的期望，因而會感到壓力。在公司之外，他們的難題則來自其他提供支援服務的供應商和顧客。情況不只這樣，領隊所扮演的角色比別的跨界者還要複雜。大多數從事其他專業的跨界者只需要為一個委託人工作，並且只需要扮演買家或賣家的角色。可是領隊卻不同，他們要同時扮演兩個角色，因為他們背後同時有兩個委託人：旅行社和顧客。當領隊受旅行社委託時，他們扮演買家的角色，負起與提供支援服務的供應商磋商的責任，以獲得所需要的服務。但當他們受顧客委託時，他們卻扮演賣家的角色，向顧客提供旅遊服務。此外，他們還要同時維護顧客的利益，務求各個提供支援服務的供應商提供高素質的服務。領隊的收入來源不一，一部份是固定的薪金，一部份是可多可少的小費和商店的回扣。領隊的收入既然來自旅行社和顧客，同時滿足他們的期望自然十分重要。

領隊的性格有沒有關係？

領隊承受角色壓力，這顯而易見，但角色壓力對他們的工作表現有甚麼影響，這卻意見紛紜。行為理論家聲稱，人的表現受制於組織的制約，而角色壓力提供了其中一個解釋因素。領隊和其他專業人士一樣，都喜歡確切而避免含混。假如他們清楚別人期望他們做甚麼，以及那樣做有甚麼後果，那就會出現正面的結果。相反，假如他們不知道他們角色的要求，又或者他們同時被託付多個互不相容的角色，那他們就可能感到這樣那樣的壓力，結果是他們深受影響，表現不濟。

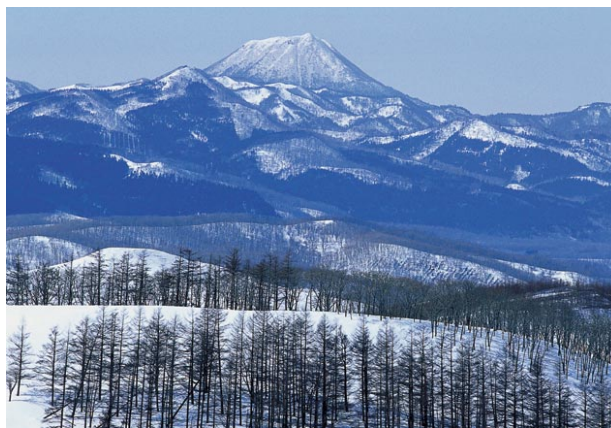
支持性格影響表現的人卻另有一番看法。他們斷言，人的表現取決於性格傾向的變化。在載於文獻的各種性格特質中，自我監控(self-monitoring)看來是最關鍵的因素。

bosses, supervisors and co-workers. Outside the firm, tour escorts face challenges that are imposed by other support service providers and customers. Furthermore, the roles that are played by tour escorts are more complicated than other boundary spanners. Most boundary spanners in other professions only work for a single principal and play the role of either buyer or seller. Tour escorts, in contrast, play dual roles. They have two principals behind the scenes: the travel agency and the customers. To travel agencies, tour escorts play a buyer's role, taking the responsibility of negotiating with support service providers for the provision of services. To their customers, tour escorts play a seller's role, offering tour services to customers. Concurrently, they also represent the interests of the customers, demanding quality service from the respective support service providers. Tour escorts work under a shared remuneration mechanism that is composed of a fixed salary and variable pay in terms of tips and merchandise rebates. As both travel agencies and customers contribute to their pay, meeting the expectations of both parties is crucial.

Does personality matter?

Whilst role stress is evident amongst tour escorts, its influence on job performance is contentious. Behavioural theorists contend that individual performance is subject to organisational constraints, and that role stress is one of the explanatory factors. Tour escorts, like other professionals, prefer a state of certainty and evade uncertainty. If they are clear about what they are expected to do and what the consequences are, then a positive outcome is likely. In contrast, if they do not know their role requirements or if many conflicting roles are assigned, then they are likely to experience role stress of one kind or another, which will lead to profound and adverse effects on their performance.

Personality proponents tell the opposite story. They argue that individual performance is subject to variations in per-




所謂自我監控，指察言觀色、從而調整行為以適應環境的能力。在相似的制約下，自我監控能力較強的人，在與顧客交流方面，比自我監控能力較低的人優勝。其他有利的性格特質包括：性格外向、待人友善、自我調整、善於交際。擁有這些性格特質的人是較佳的服務人員，這點已經屢屢得到證明。

究竟是自我監控還是角色壓力的觀點更能解釋問題，還需要進一步研究。不過，假使忽略兩種觀點的任何一種的話，都難免無法全面分析領隊的表現，這倒是確鑿無疑的。角色壓力會影響領隊的工作表現，而自我監控卻能提升表現，因而可以紓減角色壓力的負面影響。如果我們認為角色壓力對組織來說是一種制約的話，那麼，自我監控就應該是一項操控因素，讓我們可以藉着招募來維持一支優秀的領隊隊伍。

結論

對業界來說，以上構思的研究會在兩方面起實質作用。首先，假如角色壓力是影響領隊表現的主要原因，那麼緩和這種壓力就可以直接提高領隊的表現。旅行社可以為領隊提供更多指導和培訓，以期減少各有關人等的預期出入。反過來說，假如性格對領隊的表現有較大影響的話，要控制他們的表現就應該從招募入手。本研究擬開發一種適用於挑選領隊的測驗工具；只要開發成功，這種以性格指標為基準的工具就可以有效地為領隊這個專業挑選合適的人才。

大體來說，本研究以角色理論和性格因素為理論基礎。雖然研究框架仍然處於構築階段，但筆者希望業者能夠提供寶貴意見。各位如果希望與筆者分享意見，請以電郵寄送許涼涼小姐(hmedith@polyu.edu.hk)。 


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personality predisposition. Amongst the various personality traits that have been reported in the literature, self-monitoring seems to be the determinant factor. Self-monitoring as a personality construct refers to an individual's ability to perceive social cues and adjust their behaviour to fit the situation. Under similar constraints, a person with high self-monitoring tends to outperform their counterparts in customer interaction. Other desirable personality traits include extraversion, agreeableness, adjustment and sociability. The evidence consistently indicates that people who possess these personality traits are better service providers.

Whether self-monitoring or role stress explain more of the story is an issue that still needs to be investigated. However, one is certainly sure that omitting either could lead to the incomplete analysis of tour escort performance. Self-monitoring, which is positively related to performance, is expected to exert moderating effects on the negative relationship between the role stress and work performance of tour escorts. If we believe that role stress is a constraint in organisations, then self-monitoring should be a controlling factor that will allow us to maintain teams of quality tour escorts through recruitment exercises.

Concluding remarks

The proposed study will have practical implications for the industry in two respects. First, if role stress is the major predictor of the tour escort performance, then reducing it will be the direct solution to the problem. Travel agencies could consider narrowing the gap of expectation incongruence amongst the various parties by providing more guidelines and training for tour escorts. Alternatively, if personality exerts more influence on tour escort performance, then the control of tour escort performance should start with the recruitment process. This study will develop an instrument that is viable for the selection of tour escorts. Once developed, the instrument based on personality indicators will serve as a useful device to select suitable personnel for the profession.

By and large, the study will be based on Role Theory and personality factors. While the framework of the study is still in its construction stage, the authors would like to invite comments from the industry. Any interested parties who wish to share their views with the authors, please submit comments to Ms Edith Hui via email at hmedith@polyu.edu.hk. 

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