The Experiences of the Tour Guides at a Famous Tourist Destination in Negros Occidental

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Abstract

Tour guides are one of the key frontline players in the tourism industry. They play a central role in making attractions or destinations, particularly in developing countries with emerging tourism markets. This study determined the tour guides' experiences at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental. The conversational partners were the tour guides of a renowned tourist destination in Negros Occidental. Qualitative research using an interview protocol was used in this study. The themes that emerged from this study exposed the fate of the tour guides who had unexpected career paths and opportunities in tour guiding, yet they learned to love their jobs as they feel mutual happiness between them and the visitors/tourists. Despite the challenges from their guests and coworkers and language proficiency, their administrators still appreciated their work. There are a lot of similarities in the experiences of the tour guides. Challenges faced by the tour guides vary, as reflected in their stories. Overall, there was a considerable similarity and fewer variations in the experiences of the tour guides.

Keywords: tourism management, tour guides, qualitative research, narrative inquiry, Philippines.

INTRODUCTION

Tour guiding is one of the oldest human activities. Tour guides existed even two and a half millennia ago. Still, along with modern mass tourism, they have become an important factor of the travel industry ever since (Raboti, 2010a). However, the complex nature of tour guides' functions precludes a single

means of describing or summarizing their diversified roles in the context of rapidly expanding markets for tourism worldwide (Sandaruwani 2016).

Tour guides can play a central role in making attractions or destinations, particularly in developing countries with emerging tourism markets (Jensen, 2009). They are professionals who guide groups around venues or places of interest such as natural areas, historic buildings, and sites and interprets the cultural and natural heritage in an inspiring and entertaining manner (Black & Weiler, 2016). Likewise, Gelbman & Maoz (2012) added that the role of tour guides in conveying information, offering explanations, and developing narratives had become a contemporary research theme. The tour guide is introduced as a translator of the culture, who has the crucial task of selecting, glossing, and interpreting sights. Tour guides are one of the key frontline players in the tourism industry. Through their knowledge and interpretation of a destination's attractions and culture (Burns, 2010; Strop & Carlson, 2010), and their communication and service skills, they can transform the tourists' visit from a tour into an experience (Ap & Wong, 2001; Strop & Carlson, 2010).

According to Harzer & Ruch (2013), the strengths-congruent activities of tour guides at the administrative center are necessary for positive experiences at work like work appreciation and experiencing pleasure, engagement, and meaning fostered by one's career. Rabotić (2011) added that what tour guides present and interpret affects local activities and how they behave on the spot. As frontline professionals, information-givers, and interpreters, the tour guides act as destination representatives and "ambassadors" in the eyes of tourists. Owaied, Farhan, Al-Hawamdeh, & Al-Okialy (2011) further explain that the tour guides' primary role is to escort groups or individual visitors from abroad or from a guides' own country around monuments, sites, or museums of a city or region. Tour guides clearly and entertainingly interpret facts to inform the visitors about the cultural and national heritage and environment. Patterson (2017) stated that tour guides act as buffers between tourists and the social environment, arranging transport, interpreting, and handling problems when they arise to

minimize friction between tourists themselves and encourage in-group solidarity.

Tour guides play an interestingly important role in tourism, carrying out the administration and handling clients booked with a tour operator and acting as the interface between visitors and locals (Collins 2000). Ap & Wong (2001) highlight that tour guides provide an important part of the interface between the host destination and visitors since frontline employees are very responsible for the overall impression and happiness with the tour services. The critical areas of a tour guide's job include environmental interpretation in an inspiring and entertaining manner, operation in a clearly defined cultural/geographical location, and specialized linguistic knowledge.

Many of the encounters of the tour guides with people and opportunities are meant to be and "fate." Tour guides will run with various people for different lengths of time as it is a part of their job. Floodgate (2011) concluded that many people believed in fate, they believed that everybody's life is mapped out before they are born, so when they start a journey, their destiny has already been foretold. Chance meetings, amazing job offers, and pivotal project assignments are often described as "lucky breaks," "perfect timings," or "being in the right place at the right time (Fabricant, Miller, & Stark 2013).

The quality of services provided by tour guides correlates strongly with levels of overall tourist happiness. In addition, it is identified that humor was influential in making tourism experiences more enjoyable by providing positive emotions and fun (Filep et al., 2016). Moreover, Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry (1985) stated that service quality perceptions result from comparing consumer expectations with actual service performance.

Tour help bring satisfaction to tourists visiting a country or region/state by creating a positive atmosphere that makes it easier for tourists to start a conversation with others and therefore acted as a successful ice breaker or initiator boosting exchange (Filep, Laing, & Csikszentmihalyi, 2016). The opportunity of direct interaction with the tourists makes them all the more responsible for projecting the correct image of the country/ region, giving factually accurate information about the

destination, ensuring the safety and well-being of the tourists as well as pleasing and satisfying the stay for them during their visits (Chowdhary & Prakash 2010).

Tour guides are responsible for tourist happiness with services provided in local destinations (Geva & Goldman, 1991) as they target image, marketing, and branding (Baum, Hearns & Devine 2007). The tour guides' primary role is to escort groups or individual visitors from abroad or from the tour guides' own country around monuments, sites, and museums of a city or region clearly and entertainingly interpret facts to inform the visitor about the culture and national heritage and environment. (Owaied et al., 2011). In this regard, it describes the job of the tour guides as leading, interpretative, inspiring, and entertaining in a specific geographical or environmental setting in which their specialized knowledge of various languages is applied. Therefore it is the one this paper follows (Chilembwe & Mweiwa 2014b).

Tour guiding has an essential and multifaceted role in contemporary tourism. It is one of the critical factors of successful presentation of destinations in contemporary tourism, affecting the resulting economic and social benefits. The role of tour guides in the tourism system distinguishes itself by its potential to manage and orchestrate tourist experiences, enhance destination image, and implement responsible tourism goals (Raboti 2010b). Tour guiding is one of the most exciting and personally rewarding careers that one can pursue. It enables the tour guide to travel, learn about the wonderful world, share knowledge and interact with a wide range of people. Best of all, it allows you to deliver life-changing experiences to your clients (Perks & Barrie 2015).

Objective

This study determined the tour guides' experiences at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental.

Framework

The critical areas of a tour guide's job include environmental interpretation in an inspiring and entertaining manner, operation in a clearly defined cultural/geographical

location, and specialized linguistic knowledge. (Ap & Wong 2001). Tour guides play an essential role as cultural buffers and serve as communication links between tourists and host populations. Thus, it makes sense to focus on the perceived communication competence of tour guides in tourism research (Leclerc & Martin, 2004). According to Chilembwe & Mweiwa (2014a), the tour guides' roles such as leadership, interpretation and education, information giving, mediation, and representation were critical in building a destination image. Also, Cohen (1985) mentioned that the two lines of origin of the modern tour guide are the pathfinder and the mentor. These are the antecedents, respectively, of the leadership and the mediatory spheres in the tour guides' role.

Prakash (2010) ascertain that "tour guiding and interpretation is a fundamental activity in the tourism value chain. Therefore, the importance of guiding cannot be undermined even though tour guides may be expected to assume different roles in different contexts. Zhang & Chow (2004) point out that the success of the tourism industry most of the time relies on the performance of tour guides in various destinations because tour guides provide the required information to visitors.

Tour guides are the frontline staff who provide the "moment of truth" for tourists and make or break their trip. Whether they can produce quality service for tourists is essential to the success of the tourism industry and the reputation and image of the destination (Zhang & Chow 2004). (Huang, Hsu, & Chan 2010) stated that tour guiding service is the core component of various tour services offered by tour operators and is also critical to the overall image of the destination they represent.

According to Spector (1997), job appreciation is the degree to which people like their jobs. From this perspective, workers, including tour guides, enjoy work and find it an essential part of their lives. Additionally, the experiences of the tour guides are also an inward state, triggered by phenomena a person met, endured, and experience (Raboti 2010a).

Similarly, tourists also see the important function of a tour guide. Quiroga (1990) opined that managing group dynamics guarantee to achieve some degree of satisfaction of the tour
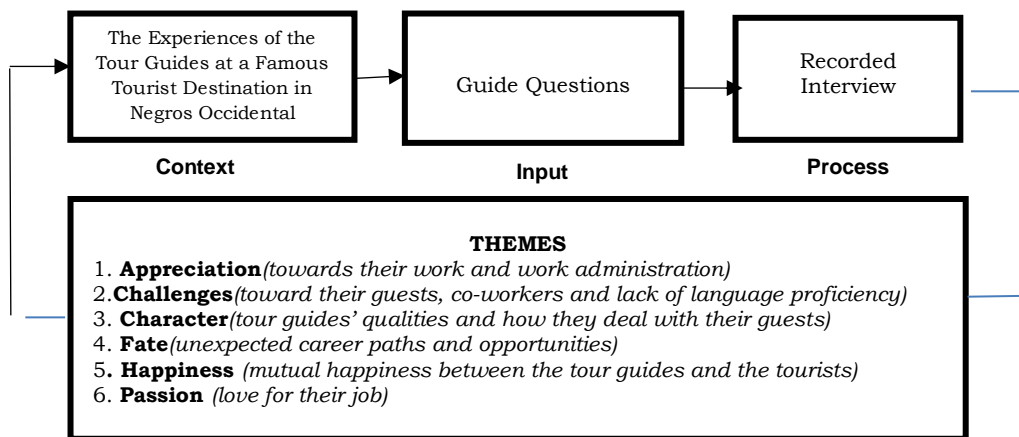
participants. She points out that this fact should be taken into account by tour operators and travel agencies when they replace professional tour guides with their employees or send groups without a tour guide due to economizing. Thus showing that they neither appreciate the job of tour guiding nor consider the needs of customers.

Indeed, for any market that makes wide use of tour guides and where the guide can be harnessed to foster sustainable tourism, tour guiding quality assurance is arguably a high priority focus (Huang & Weiler, 2010). The tour guides' role in doing so is to provide accurate and culturally appropriate interpretation of the site or resource in a way that enhances visitors' understanding and appreciation of indigenous culture, history, contemporary lifestyles, values, and issues (Blamey, 2001).

Moreover, work passion provides an incentive for work behaviors, which is more extensive and proactive than working. Also, emphasis is often directed towards activities that employees find particularly meaningful and that they are generally skilled at performing, thus manifesting in conduct that is intentional, determined, and stable (Perrewé, Hochwarter, Wayne, Ferris, Mcallister, Charn, & Harris, 2014).

Figure 1

Schematic Diagram of the Study

The Experiences of the Tour Guides at a Famous Tourist Destination in Negros Occidental	Guide Questions	Recorded Interview
Context	**Input**	**Process**

THEMES
1. **Appreciation** *(towards their work and work administration)*
2. **Challenges** *(toward their guests, co-workers and lack of language proficiency)*
3. **Character** *(tour guides' qualities and how they deal with their guests)*
4. **Fate** *(unexpected career paths and opportunities)*
5. **Happiness** *(mutual happiness between the tour guides and the tourists)*
6. **Passion** *(love for their job)*

METHODOLOGY

Research Design and Approach

This study on the experiences of the tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental was carried out using the qualitative method, and the approach was a narrative inquiry. According to Korrapati (2016) and Bernard (2003), Qualitative research is used to understand underlying reasons, opinions, and motivations and is also used to uncover trends in thought and opinions and dive deeper into the problem. Daiute (2013) and Cohen and Morrison (2011) explain that narrative inquiry typically focuses on experience and the meaning of experience from people's perspective living it in reality or imagination rather than identifying objective truth.

Sources of Data

Conversational Partners. The conversation partners were the two (2) tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental. They met the following inclusion criteria: Tour guide at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental for more than two (2) years, at least 20 years of age, male, and a high school graduate.

Gatekeeper. The gatekeeper of the study was the manager/owner of a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental, who allowed access only to the personal work experiences of the tour guides. The administrative and financial aspects of their experiences were not part of the study.

Data Gathering Procedure

We prepared guide questions for the series of interviews to collect data on the experiences of the tour guides at a famous

tourist destination in Negros Occidental. Mechanics, benefits, and other ethical considerations, including the conversational partners' rights and protection, were discussed before the interviews commenced. All interviews were audio-recorded. The series of interviews were conducted until data on the tour guides' experiences were saturated.

Ensuring The Trustworthiness Of The Findings

Credibility. Member checking was used. The interview transcripts were returned to the tour guides. Some of the statements were altered, while the conversation partners deleted some. After thoroughly reviewing, their signature was affixed on the bottom of each page of the interview transcripts. In this way, we made sure that the data reflect the experiences from the conversation partners' perspective (Letts, Wilkins, Law, Steward, Bosch, & Westmorland, 2007). This process was done before the succeeding interviews and data analysis were conducted. The participants checked the transcriptions. We also checked the transcripts several times as we progress in our data analysis.

Transferability. We purposively chose our conversation partners using the inclusion criteria we have: being a tour guide of the establishment for more than 2 years, at least 20 years of age, male, and at least a high school graduate. With purposive sampling, we selected the sources of our data based on specific purposes associated with answering our study's objective" (Teddlie & Yu 2007). We aim to achieve an outcome based on the tour guides' thoughts, feelings, and perspectives who have a wide array of experiences in the tourism industry, particularly tour guiding.

Confirmability. An audit trail was used through the process of constant conveyance of interviews with the tour guides. We interviewed our conversational partners until data were saturated. That is, one was interviewed three times while the other was interviewed four times. All interviews were conducted with a time gap between 7 – 15 days each. Interview transcripts were encoded using a spreadsheet. Each statement of the conversation partner was part of the data inventory that is

audited as these are coded and grouped into clusters of meanings until initial and final themes are identified. The number of supporting statements associated with each theme and sub-theme was also identified. Statements were also marked and determined whether these came from the first or the second interviewee. This process is an in-depth approach to illustrating that our findings are based on our interviewees' narratives that support the findings' truthfulness (Hadi & Closs, 2016).

Dependability. Code recode strategy and stepwise replication was used. The code-recode strategy involves the researcher coding the same data twice, giving one or two weeks' gestation period between each coding. Then, results from the two codings are compared to see if the results are the same or different (Chilisa & Preece, 2005). If the coding results are in agreement, it enhances the dependability of the qualitative inquiry (Anney 2014). We did this through evaluating the findings, interpretation and recommendations of the study to guarantee that they were all supported by the data received from the interviewees of the study. 'Code 1' of the data were created in a spreadsheet. After two weeks, these were clustered using 'Code 2'. The same process was repeated to to create cluster of meanings and initial themes until the final themes were identified.

As to stepwise replication, this was done by the researches through keen and separate analysis. Stepwise replication is a qualitative research data evaluation procedure where two or more researchers analyze the same data separately and compare the results (Chilisa & Preece 2005). We divided our group into two, one group analyzed the data using a spreadsheet while the other used a adata analytics software. The result of our analysis were then compared. The inconsistencies that arose from these separate analyses were adressed to improve the dependability of the inquiry. Our aim in doing this processs is to attain consistencies in the separate analysis to improve the dependability of the study.

Data Explication

Generally, our thematic analysis approach included the following:

Transcription. Transcription has played a central role in spoken language analysis and representation. It is part of the qualitative research activities designed to capture and unpack the complicatedness and meanings of naturally occurring phenomena (e.g., values, beliefs, feelings, thoughts, experiences) in social encounters. These phenomena can be best captured through talking or stories constructed or jointly constructed by participants and researcher. This "talking" is commonly mediated through interview (Widodo 2009). It is also a process of capturing the flow of discourse events in a written and spatial medium.

We transcribed the interview proceedings in a spreadsheet. Each sentence is encoded in one cell and treated as one data set. As we encode and prepare the interview transcript, repeatedly listening to the interview proceedings made us familiar with our data. This process paved the way for the systematic examination of our textual data.

Organising the Data. In the process of organizing our data, we provided reference codes for each sentence. This reference codes include the interview number, the source conversation partner, and the statement of the conversation partners. Instead of using a word processor, we used a spreadsheet to it would be easy to sort the data along with their codes and meanings. Each statement is assigned one row in the spreadsheet. A secure file was created that contained code numbers assigned to each conversation partner (Lacey & Luff, 2009). We carefully examined the data that were gathered and ommited unnecessary figures such as redundancies, foul or inapproriate words, and vocalized pauses. This cleaning process resulted to a more useful organized and concise data ready for analysis.

Familiarization. We have familiarized ourselves with our data from the time we started preparing the interview transcript. This is an essential stage, and is particularly important if the main researcher has not gathered all the data themselves (Lacey & Luff, 2009). After getting familiar with the interview transcript, we recognized that we have not yet saturated the data, thus, we went back for the succeeding insterviews.

Coding. After familiarisation with the material, we need to do some preliminary coding (Lacey & Luff, 2009). In this phase, we reviewed the data and assigned codes to each statement. We used the code-recode process where we initially we assigned 'Code 1' to each statement, then statements having similar but not identical codes were grouped together and assigned 'Code 2'. The code-recode process was repeated several times where we used 'Cluster 1', 'Cluster 2', and 'Initial Themes'. This way, data were refined such that statements of our conversation partners cohere together and formed broader categories.

Themes. Initial themes that we have identified served as basis in finalizing the emergent themes in our study. The initial themes we got led us to filter the data and develop a well-defined categories supported by statements that vividly describe each theme (Lacey & Luff, 2009). Finally, we were able to identify six themes.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

From our interview transcripts, we were able to produce voluminous textual data (Pope & Mays 2006). This large amount of textual data from our face-to-face interview clearly described the experiences and perspectives of the tour guides (DiCicco-Bloom & Crabtree 2006). What came out as most frequently repeated statements led to the emergent themes which are:1) Appreciation (towards their work and work administration), 2) Challenges (toward their guests, coworkers and lack of language proficiency), 3) Character (tour guides' qualities and how they deal with their guests), 4) Fate (unexpected career path and opportunities), 5) Happiness (mutual happiness between the tour guides and the tourists), and 6) Passion (love for their job). Each of these are described in detail.

Appreciation (towards their work and work administration)
Work. According to Harzer & Ruch (2013) strengths-congruent activities at the workplace are important for positive experiences at work like job appreciation and experiencing pleasure, engagement, and meaning fostered by one's job. In addition, communicating appreciation within work-oriented

relationships has been shown to improve the quality of relationships between workers and their supervisors, and also among coworkers (Chapman & White 2012).

The following are their statements:

Tour guide 1 said that *"I became what I am now because of this job. I started appreciating my job when I realized how much I appreciate history, so when I appreciated history that is the time I started appreciating my job…"*

"…Why? For me, when you start appreciating one thing, it will be easy for you to study and learn everything and expand it more…"

…So I appreciated my job because I have the eagerness to learn everything…"

Tour guide 2 explained that *"I am thankful that this job came into my life"*

"I've made my family and friends proud. I feel like I'm the luckiest because I was able to work here."

"This is the easiest job I ever had and I was able to experience a lot. I think my job now is the easiest among to the jobs I had."

Appreciation at work correlated positively with job satisfaction (Stocker, Jacobshagen, Semmer, & Annen 2010).

The aforementioned statements clearly depict how much the tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental appreciate their work. Employees who commit to become skilled appreciate their jobs more and eventually show more encouraging routine than others.

Work administration. Appreciation towards the work administration includes the work environment and the employer (Ghafoor & Tahir, 2015). Administration is defined as a cooperative human action or cooperative group behavior. It is an

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activity of groups cooperating to accomplish common goals (Chang, 2001; Mishra, 2013).

Awan & Tahir (2015) defines a work environment as the environment where people work together for achieving organization objectives, which interact with employees and affect in positive ways on employees' performance, it is also a location where a task is completed.

Furthermore, another factor that may improve appreciation towards the work administration is having a good boss or employer. According to (Black 2007) relationship with your boss is one of the most important working relationships anyone will have and that a positive relationship will mean that you are more likely to enjoy your work, stay motivated and progress in your career.

The following are their statements:

Tour guide 1 discussed that *"Of course I really like the environment of my job, I have a good boss."*

"…Another is good administration."

"…Well, we are also competing internationally now."

Tour guide 2 narrated that *"I consider this place as a home and my coworkers around me as my family."*

"You may call it a mansion without a roof but I still see this as a home where everyone treats each other like family."

"The thing that makes me stay in this job would be my sincerity and trust, sincerity towards my work and the trust that I commit to our manager."

Their statements reveal that working under an administration that consists of good work environment and a good boss has increased the level of appreciation of the tour

guides to the point that they consider their work environment as their home. Coens & Jenkins (2002) ascertain that with a supportive work culture and access to helpful resources and training, employees will take responsibility to get timely and useful feedback, grow their skills, and improve their performance in alignment with organizational needs.

Moreover, (Chapman & White 2012) claimed that going to work in an environment where there is a sense of appreciation for what we contribute is more enjoyable than doing the same task (for the same money) and not feeling valued by those around us.

Challenges (toward their guests)

Guests. One of the challenges facing the tour guides are the unconstructive criticisms coming from the guests which are Filipinos as well and that can be characterized as crab mentality, which is common in the Philippines. Crab mentality is a behavioral characteristic wherein someone tries to pull down those who are performing better than them. Crab mentality can be seen as a type of envy or hating (Spacey 2015).

The following are their statements:

> **Tour guide 1 said that** "The thing that I least like in my job are the negative people that I encounter. The negative tourists that arrive here at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental, especially if they cannot appreciate the place and the "…service that we have."

> "It's hard to deal with negative people, especially with my fellow Filipinos who are also the ones dragging me down."

> "There are people who will pull you down and will unconstructively criticize you, we cannot please everyone."

> **Tour guide 2 explains that** "As an in-house guide, what's challenging is that the mood and vibes of the tourists almost depend on

"It's all up to us on how we can get their attention."

In addition to the challenges of having *unappreciative tourists*, it is also a challenge on their part of being the front liners who is responsible for the overall impression of the tourists. What guides present and interpret takes effect on the way in which their customers experience a place or attraction, understand local culture, engage in local activities and how they behave on the spot (Raboti 2010).

Moreover, one of the tour guides consistently declared that he is facing challenges with his coworkers and his lack of language proficiency.

Coworkers. Conflict with coworkers is hypothesized to mediate the collaborative effect of innovative behavior and job involvement on satisfaction with coworker relations (Janssen 2003). Typical problems with coworkers include cursing, inappropriate joking and refusing to work with one another (Johnson 2009).

The following are his statements:

Tour guide 2 discussed that *"The thing that I least like about my job are the misunderstandings and all the other issues circling around my coworkers and I."*

"The thing that I least like about my job are the misunderstandings and all the other issues circling around my coworkers and I."

"When I'm having a good day and then one of my coworkers starts putting up an unfavorable vibe, I have a tendency to lose concentration for the rest of the day."

From the statements of tour guide 2, it shows that it has a negative impact in his job performance such as the tendency of losing attentiveness at work. It is ascertained that when coworkers do not have dependence on each other the team faces a dilemma.

Lack of Language Proficiency. Language is one problem that occurs in any typical cross-cultural communication, because in the workplace, they will be a diversity of workforce coming from different background and culture (Yusuf, Zulkifli, Rashid, & Kamil, 2014).

Tour guide 2 averred that:

"I really find it hard to speak English, so I always tell myself that I really can't."

"English language, but I do not know how to respond to the tourists.

"Honestly speaking, I am really slow in English."

The statement of tour guide 2 reveals that, communication also affects his willingness to provide useful recommendations. Communication is essential for any business or organization to prosper. It cuts out on wasted time and provides both customers and employees with necessary tools to succeed and find satisfaction (Muema 2012). Additionally, this challenge also disturbs his job performance.

Character (Tour guides' qualities & how they deal with their guests)
Tour Guides' Qualities. The qualities of the tour guides were exposed. At times, it is said that the character of a being is inbuilt inside a person's nature and cannot be changed or nurtured (Chowdhary & Prakash, 2010; Chapagain 2012).
It is understood that a person who believes whole heartedly to the social values and behaves accordingly, who can be taken in confidence for his commitment and dedication, who is pleasant and smiling all the time, who listens to understand other's view and who is ever ready to serve the needy people is a person with good character. And, a person with who has self-confidence, who always likes to learn and share new knowledge, who has a strong desire of excelling, who is capable of leading others, and who likes to develop skills and teach acquired skills

to other people is a person with smart character (Chapagain 2012)

Moreover, Cloninger (2005) highlighted the classification of character which is *signature strengths*. These are strengths of character that a person owns, celebrates and frequently exercises. The possible criteria for signature strength that are related to this study are: a) sense of ownership and authenticity ("this is the real me"), b) a feeling of excitement while displaying it, c) a rapid learning curve as themes are attached to the strength and practiced and d) continuous learning of new ways to enact the strength.

The qualities of the tour guides were emphasized as they utter the following statements:

> **Tour Guide 1 assumed that** *"So be yourself and enjoy what you are doing. Just be yourself. Smile at them and then be yourself again."*
>
> *"My work has improved my confidence, it taught me how to stand strong."*
>
> *"I became a positive person because of this job, I can't find any undesirable things in this kind of work."*
>
> *"Don't forget to look back, especially to where you started."*
>
> *"Most of all, of course, be patient in everything."*
>
> *"Smile always, your character and personality is reflected in your aura, it's in your face"*
>
> *"Like for example T you have Trust O for obedient U for understanding R for reading G for guidelines U for unique and I for intelligent D for discipline and E for Excellence.."*
>
> **Tour Guide 2 explained that** *"Being a wit, a*

comedian, that is the quality that a tour guide must possess."

" I just want to show all the best and good in me, no matter what they say."

"I'm just thinking about how i will be able to gain strength and trust, it's about taking a job seriously; no matter what they ask me to do I would still meekly obey them."

"Just aim for your goal and don't drag whoever who is ahead of you."

"Smile always at any circumstances."

The tour guides reveal that their job has improved their character. Character construed as positive traits allows us to acknowledge and explain these features of the good life. The good life is lived over time and across situations, and an examination of the good life in terms of positive traits is demanded. Strengths of character provide the needed explanation for the stability and generality of a life well lived (Cloninger, 2005).

Furthermore, positive emotions fuel employees' motivations, which in turn drives performance a long four key dimensions; creativity, productivity, commitment to the work and collegiality (Redmond, 2013).

How they deal with their guests. The tour guides believe that guests should be treated as an important individual. Fair treatment helps people manage their uncertainty, because it both gives them confidence that they will ultimately receive good outcomes and mix the possibility of losing less anxiety- provoking or even as in fair gambles, enjoyable (Kleinig & Smith 2001).

The tour guides affirm these statements as they said:

Tour guide 1: "Be fair to everybody, whether that person is negative or positive, treat them fairly. There shouldn't be a favoritism."

"Act the same, and be fair to everyone. Just because they don't like you doesn't mean you'll start avoiding them, talk to them instead, you do not know, maybe it's just a firm impression."

"So ignore negative people, ignore their attitudes but focus on the positive one."

"If people don't like me, I don't show them that I don't like them too, I just show them that okay I am interested talking to you."

"I'm not the type who immediately backs off just because someone doesn't like me, that's why part of my character is to approach people well, whether they are barefooted or people coming from rural areas."

"Yeah, fair treatment, just because the guests are well-off doesn't mean you'll prioritize them, so that's it, be fair to everyone."

"I don't like favoritism"

Tour guide 2: "There shouldn't be favoritism, you should not choose whom you would rather want to entertain, whether they look good, well-off, or whether they are nice or not, still, treat everyone fairly"

"I've encountered numerous of people already and there are no biased services…"

"Just smile at your guest always."

It is undeniable that the tour guides of a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental have unleashed a professional and remarkable character in dealing with their guests. Their statements about their experiences strongly indicate that their character is tested over time.

Moreover, character refers to individual differences in distinctive patterns of thinking, feeling and behaving. Character is the relatively enduring pattern of thoughts, emotions, and behaviors that distinguish a person, along with the psychological processes behind those characteristics. Personality traits are broad concepts about people that allow us to label and understand individual differences (Mcshane & Glinow 2014).

Fate (unexpected career path and opportunities)

Unexpected Career Path. Many of the events in our lives are influenced by unplanned and unexpected events. We can call it "good luck" or "bad luck". However, we are convinced that "luck is no accident". Each of us plays a key role in creating unexpected career and life enhancing events and transforming them into real opportunities (Krumboltz & Levin 2010).

The tour guides elaborate the unexpected opportunities they experienced through the following statements:

Tour Guide 1: "This is meant to be because destiny came or destiny brought me here."

"Before, I didn't have any idea that I will be in this job because this is not my dream job."

"I never dreamt of being a tour guide. Of course, as I have said I only became a tour guide because of destiny."

Tour Guide 2: "I think destiny brought me here. I guess destiny and an acquaintance of mine who happens to be the owner."

" The owner was the one who brought me in this career. I'm thankful for the people who have helped me."

"I think its fate and the owner who knows me."

"I did not choose this job, it just came to me."

"It means that there is really a purpose why I am here."

"I am thankful for having this job because of all the privileges, I was chosen by the owner to be a part of his administration."

The tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental have acquired their job unexpectedly and they think fate brought them in their career. Life events that have happened, good and bad, have an impact on you and they often take you in a different or unexpected career direction (Casto 2000).

Opportunities. The tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental are meant to acquire their job simply because they are meant to obtain opportunities such as meeting well-known people. According to (Graessle & Gawlinski 2003) unexpected may be a surprising development between people in the meeting, decisions or an outburst from yourself or someone else that seems to come from nowhere.

The following are their statements:

Tour guide 1: *"But in a positive way, the best experience here is that you meet unexpected people."*

I have met different VIP people.

"An advantage for me is also popularity, I became famous not only a famous tourist destination in

Negros Occidental, and a lot of opportunity knocks on my door."

"Every day, when I wake up in the morning, I'm always thinking about the people I might meet at work."

The most exciting part is sometimes you meet unexpected people, famous people that once in your life you never thought you would meet.

"Example, I didn't expect meeting the ambassador of US."

Tour guide 2: *I didn't expect that the television series "Ikaw Lamang" would shoot here.*

"Also, I didn't expect that I would be featured in social media and will be interviewed by Korina Sanchez, a well-known news anchor in the Philippines. I was also featured in a local newspaper"

"Here, I have experienced how to deal with different people."

The tour guides were able to obtain opportunities just by working at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental, such as meeting famous people whom they did not expect to meet one day.

Unplanned events are a normal and necessary component of every career. Every action involves some risk. Each person must evaluate whether the potential benefits are worth the potential costs. Foolish risks should be avoided. Mistakes are inevitable but provide opportunities for learning (Krumboltz 2009). (Krumboltz & Levin 2010) reported numerous stories of people whose actions enabled them to create and benefit from unplanned events. The book includes the story of a woman from England who moved to the United States and could not find a job.

The unplanned event was a chance meeting where she was told about a bank that was training new staff members.

Happiness (mutual happiness between the tour guides & the tourists)

Mutual Happiness between the Tour Guides and the Tourists. Happiness is" (Aydin 2012). happiness at the workplace refers to how satisfied people are with their defined as "the degree to which an individual judges the overall quality of his life-as-a-whole favorably work and lives. The idea of happiness is related to individual's subjective well-being. Happiness at the workplace is crucial for improving productivity in any organization. Happy people are productive people while those people who are unhappy may not pay full attention to any task (Wesarat, Sharif, & Majid, 2015).

The following are their statements:

Tour Guide 1: "I will describe my job in one word, it is fun, it is super fun."

In my job, all you have to do is enjoy it and share it with other people.

"So all you have to do is to combine it, knowledge and fun. I can make people happy and I can make my family happy. I can make someone happy. I can make people laugh. I can make them enjoy here at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental"

"It affects me whenever I make a person happy"

Tour Guide 2 "The most unforgettable thing for me are the jokes that I share to the guests."

I will never forget those moments because I'm still enjoying even when I'm already on my way home. Atleast, you help in making their tiring day better through making them laugh"

"I am happy that I have been here for a long time, I can make almost all of my guests enjoy. Having a tour with them is not a problem for me."

Making the guests happy is one of the most important roles of the tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental. They do not just share information about the place, but they also share humor and laughter. They too, feel happy whenever they see the guests satisfied with their service.

Humor is an essential element in personal communication. While it is merely considered a way to induce amusement, humor has also a positive effect on the mental state of those using it and has the ability to improve their activity (Mihalcea 2012). Happy employees bring their happiness from the office to their home; likewise, they also transfer their happiness from their home to the office (Asiyabi & Misabi 2012).

Passion (love for their job)

Love for their job. Loving of a job will be positively associated with a sense of intimacy with the job. In the workplace, the experience of intimacy is also likely to include an exchange of mutual benefits of contributions between the person and the job. That is, the people who love their jobs might simply feel a more multifaceted form of intimacy, passion, and commitment than those who like their jobs. For example, they may feel a sense of connection with their jobs on every aspect of their being, rather than in regard to just few of their interests and skills (Burke & Cooper 2008).

The following are their statements:

Tour Guide 1 narrated that "So if how I describe my job, this is my life."

"My job now is now my life"

You know what, coming to my job every day, it's like coming back home again, because that's how I love my job.

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"My life wouldn't be complete without my job"

"So that's one thing that brought me in this career, love, love in what I am doing. If I don't love my job I think wouldn't be able to have stayed long in this career and I think this is something that I want to do for the rest of my life."

"I don't want to leave my job, my passion has brought me in this career and if I don't like my job I wouldn't be able to have stayed long in this career but I really love what I am doing and I do it with all my heart."

"This is now what I want to do. I love my job."

Tour Guide 2 discussed that *"I really admire being a house guide."*

"The reason why I stayed this long in this job is because I love my work."

"I once decided to file a resignation but then, I refused because I really love my job."

"I would not trade it for anything else, that's all."

The tour guides point out that their work has been a part of their lives. Love of job is one of the reasons why they are still in their career. Their passion is to share their knowledge and to fulfill their responsibilities as the tour guides of a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental.

Passion is expounded as a strong inclination toward an activity that people like, that they find important, and in which they invest time and energy (Vallerand, Magaeu, Blanchard, Leonard, Koestner, & Gagné, 2003).

In return, it is expected that people who love their job will value and appreciate their job and desire to enhance and preserve it. In general, intimacy in loving a job maybe manifested as deep-seated sense of bonded and mutual engagement with the job.

GENERAL STATEMENT

The tour guides learned to appreciate their work and they find it enjoyable. They also feel being valued by the people around them. Though there are some guests who were not grateful for the tour guides' performance, they considered this impediment as a way for them to improve their job. Working at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental has cultivated the character of the tour guides making them more confident in doing their job. Fair treatment is what they consider as the most important factor in the workplace.

The tour guides unexpectedly assimilated their job and they think fate brought them in their career path. Their experiences made them realize that many opportunities were waiting for them in working at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental. The tour guides consider making the guests happy as one of their important roles. For them, it is not just about giving information, but also amusing the guest with their humor. They also feel happy whenever they give satisfaction to the guests. The tour guides' passion is what makes them sojourn in their career. They consider their workplace as a second home for it is where they feel valued and cherished.

However, in the thorough analysis, the researchers have also examined that there is one (1) variation supported by a recurring theme, namely, *Challenges (toward coworkers and lack of language proficiency)*. Both sub-theme of Challenges were experienced by tour guide 2. He has conflicts with his coworkers and hardly manages to have a harmonious relationship with them, another is lack of language proficiency in which he stated that he has a tough time speaking in English.

Overall, there was a considerable similarity and less variation in the experiences of the tour guides at a famous tourist destination in Negros Occidental, variation specifically because they have different skills as a person. Although there are variations, the researchers acknowledge that their experiences have helped make them better persons.

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