

Improving the Taxi Drivers' Attitudes In Discharging Better Services to the Passengers in Klang Valley, Malaysia



Management

KEYWORDS: Attitudes, Customer Service, Taxi Driver, Taxi Services, Factors

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ABSTRACT

The main objective of this study is to determine the level of taxi drivers' attitudes while discharging services to the passengers in Klang Valley area, apart from examining the factors that lead towards poor attitudes of the taxi drivers.

Executing the survey approach, this study involved 384 respondents. Besides questionnaires distribution, interviews have also been conducted with the representatives from Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) and passengers in order to better comprehend the current scenario of taxi services industry in Klang Valley.

In conclusion, with regards to the level of the taxi drivers' attitudes, the dimensions which mostly neglected by them are safety, empathy, hygiene and courtesy. While for the factors that lead towards taxi drivers' poor attitudes include financial problems, family commitment and low education level. Therefore, recommended strategies have been outlined to improve the current situation of the taxi industry in order to uphold better taxi services in Klang Valley.

INTRODUCTION

Public Transport is services that provide various mode of mobility for the public [8]. It plays an important role in reducing the problems related to several transport externalities such as accidents and traffic congestion. Taxi, buses, trains and ferries are among variations of public transports that could be easily accessible in any country around the world.

As the capital city as well as an established city center of Malaysia, Kuala Lumpur is said to possess one of the most modern transportation systems in this region, which inclusive of comprehensive networks of buses, taxis, monorails, and commuter trains that provides convenient and quick access from one point to another to all of its users. Thus, it can be said that Malaysia has quite an effective transportation systems.

1. BACKGROUND OF STUDY

Most people do not prefer to use public transport because of its long duration of waiting time and massive crowd. This is obvious especially on types of transport that offer cheapest fare, such as buses and trains. Safety is also one of the main concern in using the public transport.

Usage of taxi services is the most preferred medium of public transportation for those who really care about the conveniences and time [3]. This is because of their tremendous convenience by providing a door-to-door services, easily accessible and the availability at any time, which is 24 hours a day [5].

However, many Malaysian policymakers do not see taxis as part of public transport services. Therefore, there is no focus in creating world-class taxi service [3]. In Malaysia context, taxis system is said to be lack in good management and control. This is supported by a survey [3] that figured out that despite the large number of taxis, consumers are not satisfied with the taxi services in the Klang Valley due to several factors such as taxis are lack of basic safety features like ABS and airbags, most taxis especially Proton are very small for the average sized passengers, difficult to call taxis at the peak hours, many taxis are old and

not particularly clean looking, taxi drivers in KL have typically not mastered-map readers and the worst part is, although meter-use is compulsory, drivers still overcharged the passengers.

2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Malaysia taxi services are well known in the world for its poor services as many cases reported by foreign tourist, such as being charged for high fees. Local people also had an unpleasant experiences, including experiencing taxis drivers refused to transport them to their desired destination, ask them to pay more or even being rude and show gangster behavior among the taxi drivers [2].

Referring to an article entitled "Malaysia's taxi industry is in need of a 'clean-up', [1] it is highlighted that Malaysia's Metered Taxi Drivers Task Force wants the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD) to fix the fundamental problems plaguing the taxi industry instead of just punishing errant drivers. Among the problems being discussed in the article are gangsterism, territory control, touts, foreign drivers and too many taxis.

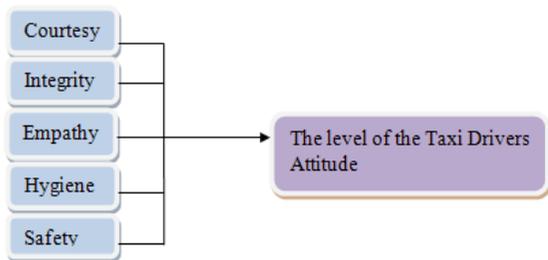
Although taxi industry is a mirror image of the country they served, many are still unaware on the importance of taxi drivers' attitudes and this is proven, as reported in previous research, many complaints received with regards to the attitudes problems of the taxi drivers.

Hence, in conducting this research, the researchers are keen to examine the level of taxis drivers' attitudes in discharging services to the passengers as well as to determine factors that lead to taxis drivers' poor attitudes.

MODEL DEVELOPMENT

The researchers have come out with the model of attitudes consisted of dimensions that influenced the level of taxi drivers attitudes. Each dimensions possessed significant impacts that influence the deliverables of the taxi services.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK



IV (Dimensions of Attitude)

DV (Behavioural)

3. RESEARCH FINDINGS

Based on the distribution of 384 questionnaires to the taxi users around the Klang Valley.

3.1 Finding 1:

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Data gathered from the Demographic Profile part of the questionnaires:-

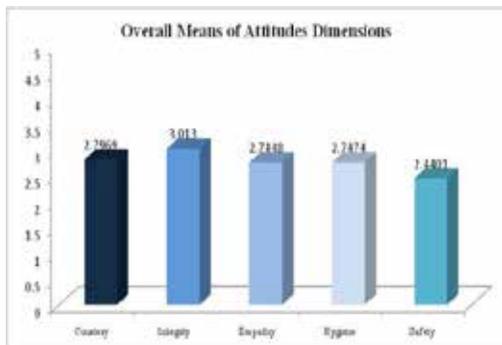
- i) Majority of the respondents aged from 15 to 24 years old (35.42%)
- ii) Female respondents are more dominant than male respondents (56.25%)
- iii) Majority of the respondents are married couples (51.04%)
- iv) Majority of the respondents are Diploma or Degree holder (75.26%)
- v) Majority of respondents are Malaysian citizen (60.94%)
- vi) Majority of the respondents used taxi services occasionally (54.69%)

3.1 Finding 2:

The Level of Taxis Drivers' Attitudes in Discharging Service to the Passengers.

In Part B of the questionnaires, total of 31 questions represented by five (5) variables which are Courtesy, Integrity, Empathy, Hygiene and Safety have been constructed in order to examine the level of taxi drivers attitudes in the Klang Valley.

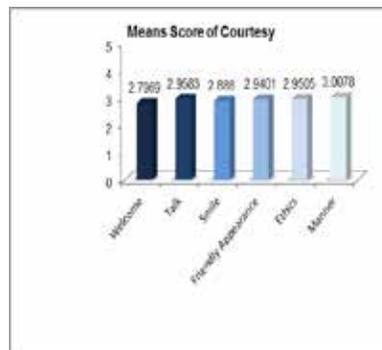
The result obtained are as follows:



The dimension of integrity is at the highest mean with a score of 3.013. The dimension of courtesy, hygiene and empathy is at the average mean score while safety is under the mean score represented the least score with the value of 2.4401. This shows that, safety is the main dimensions that have been neglected by the taxi drivers while servicing the customers.

Following are the mean score for each elements under each dimensions:

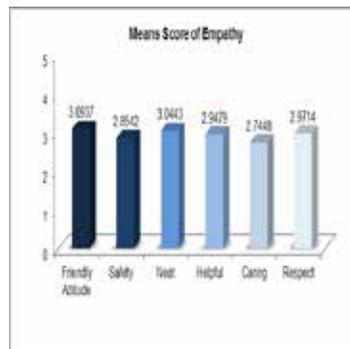
i) Elements of Courtesy



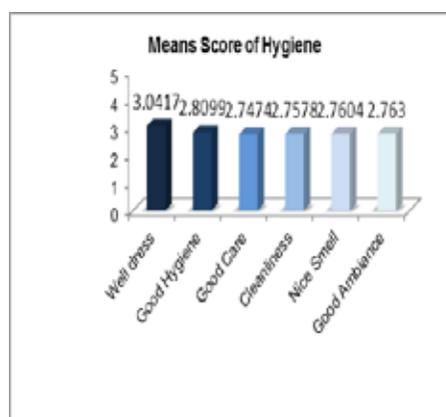
ii) Elements of Integrity



iii) Elements of Empathy



iv) Elements of Hygiene



v) Elements of Safety



3.2 Finding 3:

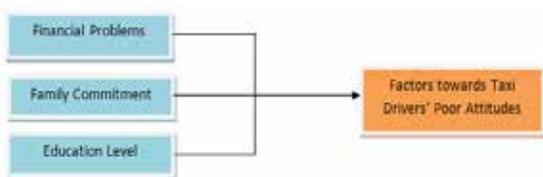
Factors That Lead to Taxis Drivers' Poor Attitudes in Discharging Service to the Passengers.

Interview sessions were conducted with a purpose to help the researchers to determine the factors that lead towards taxi drivers' poor attitudes in discharging service to the passengers.

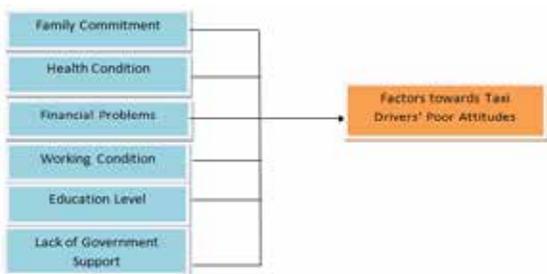
The first interview was conducted with the Land Public Transport Commission (SPAD); the authority of the Taxi Industry in Malaysia while the second interview sessions are with the taxi passengers in Klang Valley.

Based on the information obtained from both interviews, the factors that lead towards poor attitudes of the taxi drivers are:-

From the perspective of SPAD:



From the perspective of taxi users:



4. CONCLUSION

4.1 Objective one:

The Level of Taxi Driver's Attitude

For each dimensions of Courtesy, Integrity, Empathy, Hygiene and Safety, the mean score are 2.7969, 3.013, 2.7448, 2.7474 and 2.4401 respectively. This shows that, safety is the main dimensions that have been ignored by the taxi drivers while servicing the customer apart from empathy, hygiene and courtesy dimensions. On the other hand, as a result of Integrity is above the mean of 2.5, it could be said that in discharging the services, taxi drivers are taking a good control of their integrity.

Hence, the government need to come out with initiatives that specifically cater those four dimensions that have huge impacts on the level of taxi drivers' attitudes.

4.1 Objective two:

The Level of Taxi Driver's Attitude

Attitudes of one individual to another always differs. Though the same situation is given, the reaction of the person might differ, either negative or positive. Factors which influencing the taxi drivers' poor attitudes while servicing the passengers have been identified. Those factors given are interrelated with each other, in comparison of the answer given by the SPAD representatives, the taxi users and from the researchers' reading as well.

Among the factors that lead towards taxi drivers' poor attitudes are financial problems, high family commitments, low education level, health condition, working condition as well as lack of government support and attentions.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are some relevance recommendations for SPAD to review and to be implemented in future:-

| Strategy 1: Improving the level of taxi drivers' attitude | Strategy 2: Refining the factors that lead towards the taxi drivers' poor attitude |
|---|---|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Entry requirements for drivers 2. Training Prior to Service 3. Recording activity with security cameras 4. Use Automatic Vehicle Location (AVL) systems in keeping track of vehicle locations | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. SPAD to effectively utilize the authority given by the Government 2. Reduce the gap that limits the taxi drivers' better performance <ol style="list-style-type: none"> i. Facilitate the taxi drivers' needs and wants ii. Engage drivers as employees iii. Adjustment on drivers' remuneration iv. Adjustment on drivers' earnings 3. Enrich the knowledge of the drivers |

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