

AN ANALYSIS OF THE PERCEPTION OF TOUR GUIDES IN BULACAN ON THEIR PROFESSION

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Abstract

Tour guides are professionals in the hospitality and travel sectors who provide cultural, historical, and practical information to tourists, enhancing their trip experience and acting as cultural ambassadors. In the Philippines, tour guides are essential for educating visitors about the country's sights, past, and present, ensuring safety on trips, and providing in-depth expertise. Part-time tour guides can supplement their income while pursuing other careers, catering to visitors' tastes and timetables. The growing popularity of tour guides has led to a variety of perceptions about their actual jobs, aiming to determine whether tour guiding goes beyond a simple career or part-time work or manifests support for tourism. A study examining the socio-demographic profile of respondents in Malolos, Bulacan, aimed to identify the frequency of tour guiding, the type of tour guide, and the perception of their profession as a profession, advocacy, or job. A survey of 24 participants found that the majority of tour guides were female (58.3%), aged 21-30, with a median income between 21,000 and 30,000. Most were freelancers, working less than once a week and twice a day.

The majority viewed their profession as advocating for ethical tourism practices, respecting local communities' rights, and supporting destination initiatives. The study found no significant relationship between gender, years in service, monthly income, type of tour guide, or frequency of work, but a significant relationship between age and perception. Tour guides have a positive perception of their profession, with the highest perception being in the profession, followed by advocacy, and the least being in their job.

Keywords: Tour Guide, Cultural, Tourists, Local Communities' Rights, Ethical Tourism.

Introduction

Tour guides are professionals in the hospitality and travel sectors who provide cultural, historical, and practical information to tourists, enhancing their trip experience and acting as cultural ambassadors. In the Philippines, tour guides are essential for educating visitors about the country's sights, past, and present, ensuring safety on trips, and providing in-depth expertise. Part-time tour guides can supplement their income while pursuing other careers, catering to visitors' tastes and timetables. The growing popularity of tour guides has led to a variety of perceptions about their actual jobs, aiming to determine whether tour guiding goes beyond a simple career or part-time work or manifests support for tourism. A study examining the socio-demographic profile of respondents in Malolos, Bulacan, aimed to identify the frequency of tour guiding, the type of tour guide, and the perception of

their profession as a profession, advocacy, or job. A survey of 24 participants found that the majority of tour guides were female (58.3%), aged 21-30, with a median income between 21,000 and 30,000. Most were freelancers, working less than once a week and twice a day.

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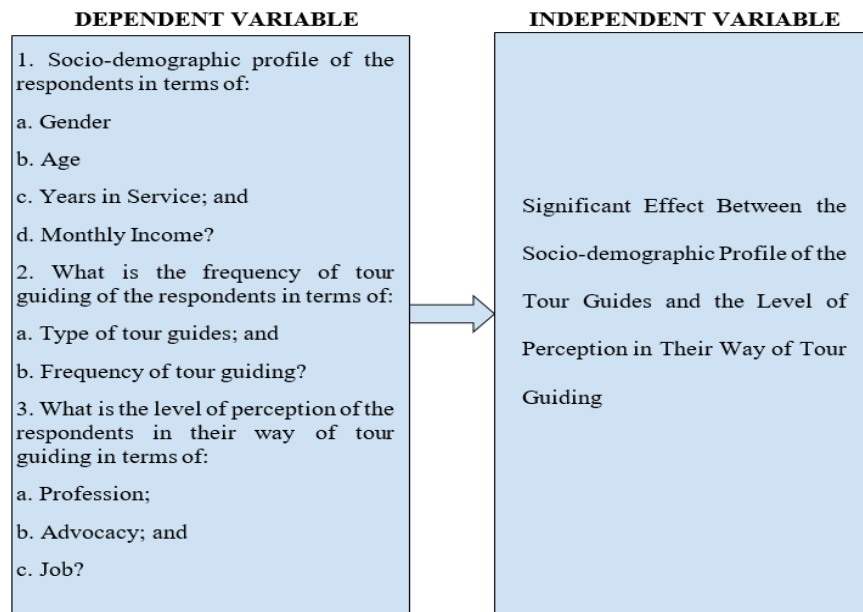
Theoretical Framework

The concept of person-environment fit (P-E fit) focuses on how well an individual matches up with specific environmental qualities. The wants, values, and objectives that a person has are examples of personal traits. The demands of a job, cultural norms, and intrinsic and extrinsic rewards are a few examples of traits that come from the environment. According to research, when a person and their surroundings are compatible, it is advantageous for both parties and has a favorable effect on workers' attitudes and behaviors (Boon et al., 2011; Kristof-Brown et al., 2005; Lepak et al., 2012) (as cited by Beurden et al, 2020). Moreover, Peyton et.al. (2021) stated that for many years, the appraisal process has been utilized as a paradigm by numerous scholars to study human-motivated or volitional behavior. Studies on themes including the evaluation of customer service/satisfaction, organizational change, and transformational leadership employ psychological assessment as a framework in organizational contexts. Following this history, the creators of the EWPA model likewise choose appraisal theory as a theoretical foundation for their analysis of how employee work passion develops. Zigarmi et al. (2009) (as cited by Peyton et.al, 2021) on its article, stated that the operational definition of work passion that was provided was as follows: "an individual's persistent, emotionally positive,

meaning-based state of well-being stemming from recurrent cognitive and affective appraisals of various job and organizational situations that result in consistent, constructive work intentions and behaviors". The authors hypothesized that, as suggested by the term, the development of employee work passion entails an evaluation of particular job, organizational, and relational qualities that result in the formulation of a variety of goals.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents the conceptual framework of the study. This shows that the dependent variable includes the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, years in service, and monthly income. This also includes the frequency of tour guiding of the respondents in terms of type of tour guides, frequency of tour guiding, and the level of perception of the respondents in their way of tour guiding in terms of profession, advocacy, and job. The process of this study used survey questionnaires and statistical data analysis using frequency, percentage distribution, and weighted mean. Moreover, the independent variable of this study is expected to present a significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and their level of perception of their way of guiding.



Statement of the Problem

The objective of this study is to determine whether tourist guiding is a profession, an advocacy, or a job towards the respondents. Specifically, it aims to answer the following:

1. What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:
 - a. Gender;

- b. Age;
 - c. Years in Service; and
 - d. Monthly Income?
 - e. Type of tour guide
 - f. Frequency of tour guide services per week
2. How may the perception of tour guides on their profession be described in terms of:
 - a. Profession;

- b. Advocacy; and
 - c. Job?
3. Is there a significant relationship between the socio-demographic profile of the respondents and the level of perception on their profession?

Scope and Limitations

This study will focus on determining whether tourist guiding is a profession, an advocacy, or a job towards tour guides. It will specifically determine their socio-demographic profile in terms of gender, age, years in service, and monthly income, the frequency of tour guiding in terms of type of tour guides and frequency of tour guiding. It will also identify the level of perception of the tour guides in their way of tour guiding in terms of profession, advocacy, and job, and the significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and the level of perception in their way of tour guiding. Moreover, this study will also focus on the tour guides working and living in Malolos, Bulacan regardless of their socio-demographic status, especially their years in service as it may show variation of the results of the study.

Methodology

Methods and Techniques Used

The study used a descriptive research design. The goal of the descriptive research design was to collect descriptive data and depict the participants in an accurate way. Also, it aimed to accurately and consistently describe an existing population, situation, or phenomena. The study used this method to describe the demographic profile of the participants, particularly their gender, age, years in service, and monthly income, the frequency of tour guiding in terms of type of tour guides and frequency of tour guiding. It will also identify the level of perception of the tour guides in their way of tour guiding in terms of profession, advocacy, and job, and the significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and the level of perception in their way of tour guiding in Malolos, Bulacan.

Respondents of the Study

The target respondents in this study are tour guides in Malolos, Bulacan. The researchers choose tour guides who resides at Malolos, Bulacan as respondents. The researcher needed 20 respondents in this study. The researchers give survey questionnaires.

Instruments of the Study

This study utilized primary and secondary data. Primary data was gathered through the use of a self-made questionnaire and from the responses of tour guides in Malolos, Bulacan. The secondary data came from books, theses, journals, and articles that were published online. The self-made questionnaire

consists of 4 parts. Part 1 consists of the socio-demographic profile of the participants, particularly their gender, age, years in service, and monthly income. Part 2 consists of the frequency of tour guiding in terms of type of tour guides and frequency of tour guiding. Part 3 consists of the level of perception of the tour guides in their way of tour guiding in terms of profession, advocacy, and job. While, part 4 consists of the significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and the level of perception in their way of tour guiding in Malolos, Bulacan.

Validation of Instrument

As the study will use a self-made survey questionnaire, thus, the instrument will go through reliability and validity testing through the use of the Cronbach Alpha by the chosen professional statistician of the study.

Data Gathering Procedure and Data Processing

The study's objectives will be answered from the self-made questionnaire through face-to-face interaction with the participants. The self-made questionnaire consists of 4 parts. Part 1 consists of the socio-demographic profile of the participants, particularly their gender, age, years in service, and monthly income. Part 2 consists of the frequency of tour guiding in terms of the type of tour guides and frequency of tour guiding. Part 3 consists of the level of perception of the tour guides in their way of tour guiding in terms of profession, advocacy, and job. While, part 4 consists of the significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and the level of perception in their way of tour guiding in Malolos, Bulacan. Before the survey questionnaire will be answered by the participants, it will be subjected to a test of reliability and validity using Cronbach's Alpha.

The questionnaire used a 4-point Likert scale that determined the level of agreement or disagreement with the given statements. This ranges from 1–4, wherein 1—strongly disagree to 4—strongly agree. The data will be collected from the responses of the participants on the face-to-face survey. These will be analyzed and statistically treated with the use of different statistical analyses.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis. This study used descriptive statistical tools to describe the demographic profile, the frequency of tour guiding, the level of perception of the tour guides in their way of tour guiding, and the significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and the level of perception in their way of tour guiding in Malolos, Bulacan.

Frequency and Percentage Distribution. These tools were used to determine the demographic

profile of participants in terms of gender, age, years in service, and monthly income, the frequency of tour guiding in terms of type of tour guides, and frequency of tour guiding.

Mean. This tool was used to get the average response of all the participants to measure the level of perception. It will also identify the level of perception of the tour guides in their way of tour guiding in terms of profession, advocacy, and job, and the significant effect between the socio-demographic profile of the tour guides and the level of perception in their way of tour guiding in Malolos, Bulacan.

Ethical Consideration

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	10	41.7%
Female	14	58.3%
Total	24	100%

Note. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender, age, years in service, monthly income, types of tour guides and frequency of tour guide services. There are a total of twenty-four (24) respondents in this study. Based on their responses on **gender**, Male has forty-one point seven percent (41.7%) while Female has fifty-eight point three percent (58.3%). Hence, it can be seen that there are more female respondents who participated in the survey as compared to males.

Table 2: Frequency and Percentage Distribution Table of Age

Age	Frequency	Percentage
20 and below	3	12.5%
21-30 years old	12	50%
31-40 years old	3	12.5%
41-50 years old	5	20.8%
51 and above	1	4.2%
Total	24	100%

Note. As stated at the **age**, it displays the demographic characteristics of the study participants with respect to age. The study includes 24 respondents and according to their responses, 3 individuals (12.5%) fall within the 20 and below age group, while 12 individuals (50%) are in the 21-30 age group. In addition to that, 3 individuals (12.5%) belongs to the 31-40 age group, 5 individuals

All throughout the process, the commitment of the study treats the information as confidential and as if it were used only for the study's objectives. In addition, the participants who refused to answer the survey were respected and were not forced to answer the survey.

Results and Discussion

Demographic Profile

This presents the profile of the respondents to determine the necessary background information of the respondent which are gender, age, years in service, monthly income, the frequency of tour guiding in terms of type of tour guides and frequency of tour guiding. Findings were presented and analyzed as follows:

Ferguson (2018) claims that the tourism sector has historically been predominately male and resistive to gender equality. By default, men are expected to provide tourism services (Lin, Wang, & Chen, 2008). However, there is an increasing number of women working in the tourism sector (Goyanes, 2017; Smith, 2012). For instance, women made up about 40% of tour guides in the US as of 2016 (The Boston Globe, 2019). Concurrently, there is an increasing trend of studies on women in the literature (e.g., Brown & Osman, 2017; Guimarães & Silva, 2016).

(20.8%) are in the 40-50 age group. And lastly, only 1 individual (4.2%) is in the 51 and above age group. According to (Mieczkowski, 1990), tourists' age can be used to accurately anticipate their level of leisure, tourism stakeholders view age as a critical demographic element. Age is said to positively impact a person's desire to unwind and explore the outdoors (Ma et al., 2018). As per Spence's (2002) findings, an individual's likelihood of engaging in

wildlife activities is age-dependent, indicating that the likelihood of engagement rises throughout youth and falls with old age.

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Years in Service

Years in Service	Frequency	Percentage
1 year and below	10	41.7%
1-3 years	7	29.2%
4-6 years	4	16.7%
10 years and above	3	12.5%
Total	24	100%

Note. As mentioned in the *years in service*, the study includes 24 respondents, and according to their responses, the majority, which has 10 individuals (41.7%) has only 1 year and below of years in service. 7 individuals (29.2%) belong to those who have 1-3 years in service while 4 individuals (16.7%) fall within the ones with 4-6 years in service. Lastly, 3 individuals (12.5%) belongs to the 10 years and above in years in service group.

According to Brown and Leigh, they devised this scale with an acronym PWPS, which stands for Perceived Work Performance Scale. (1996). It's a self-rating scale designed to gauge an employee's satisfaction with how they performed their job. The scale also assesses an employee's propensity to work long hours and use difficult methods to succeed, as opposed to focusing only on their activities within a given time frame. The two parameters of the scale are work intensity and time commitment.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Monthly Income

Monthly Income	Frequency	Percentage
Below 10,000	9	37.5%
11,000-20,000	4	16.7%
21,000-30,000	7	29.2%
31,000-40,000	2	8.3%
41,000 and above	2	8.3%
Total	24	100%

Note. The distribution of the respondents according to their *monthly income*, the study includes 24 respondents and according to their responses, 9 individuals (37.5) earns below ₱10,000 while 4 individuals (16.7%) earns ₱11,000-₱20,000 monthly. Additionally, 7 individuals (29.2%) earns ₱21,000-₱30,000 and 2 individuals (8.3%) earns ₱31,000-₱40,000 a month. Lastly, 2 individuals (8.3%) earns ₱41,000 and above.

corroborated by the results of this study. Different personality types have different effects on career advancement, particularly when the external environment shifts. Proactive freelance tour guides now have more opportunities because to COVID-19. The epidemic has increased demand for short-distance and online travel; adaptable and aggressive freelancers can take advantage of these opportunities fast. Their ability to launch new enterprises fast and effectively with little capital thanks to mobile internet platforms has made them a valuable tool for boosting revenue and, consequently, retention rates.

The findings of Ren and Wong (2021) that personality qualities are important considerations when hiring independent tour guides are

Table 5: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Types of Tour Guides

Types of Tour Guide	Frequency	Percentage
Adventure Tour Guide	2	8.3%
Freelance Tour Guide	9	37.5%
Local Tour Guide	5	20.8%
Private Tour Guide	3	12.5%
Professional Tour Guide	5	20.8%
Total	24	100%

Note. In terms of the respondents' **Types of Tour Guides**, it displays the frequency and percentage distribution based on what type of Tour Guide they are. The study includes 24 respondents and according to their responses, 2 individuals (8.3%) are Adventure Tour Guides while 9 individuals (37.5%) are Freelance Tour Guides. In addition, 5 individuals (20.8%) are Local Tour Guides while 3 individuals (12.5%) are Private Tour Guides. Lastly, 5 individuals (20.8%) are Professional Tour guides. According to (Yuan, 2022), those who work as tour guides full-time are referred to as "freelance tour

guides," as opposed to part-timers who conduct excursions on the side. Long-standing, reliable industry customs and a flexible practice system set them apart. In a similar vein, they lack sufficient anti-risk capabilities. COVID-19 has brought about significant changes for independent tour guides who, among other things, lack corporate support, receive no base pay, have no business, struggle to make ends meet, and may feel afraid or anxious (Nazli, 2022).

Table 6: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Frequency of Tour Guide Services Per Week

Tour Guide Services Per Week	Frequency	Percentage
Once a day	2	8.3%
Twice a day	5	20.8%
Thrice a week	4	16.7%
Twice a week	2	8.3%
Once a week	3	12.5%
Less than once a week	8	33.3%
Total	24	100%

Note As shown in the table, the **Frequency of Tour Guide Services Per Week**, a total of 24 tour guides were included in the study who are mostly female (58.3%) while on age 50% are from 21- to 30-year-old. Additionally, 20.8% are from 40 to 50 years old. On years in service, 41.7% are 1 year and below while 29.2% are from 1 to 3 years. Monthly income was also observed where 37.5% earned below

10,000 while 29.2% earns from 21,000 to 30,000. Most common type of tour guide is freelancer (37.5%) while 20.8% are professional. Furthermore, 33.3% are doing their work less than once a week while 20.8% does it twice daily.

SOP2. Perception of Tour Guide on Their Profession (Profession, Advocacy, Job)

Table 7: Perception of Tour Guides on Their Profession

	Mean	Interpretation
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I have enough knowledge and expertise in this field with regards to the historical, cultural, geographical, and sometimes even scientific information.	3.54	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I am able to convey information clearly, engagingly, and in a way that is appropriate for my audience.	3.71	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I have customer service and interpersonal skills.	3.63	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I have an organizational skill including scheduling, coordinating transportation, managing time, and ensuring that all aspects of the tour run smoothly.	3.63	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I present myself in a professional manner at all times including my appearance, behavior, and adherence to industry standards and ethical guidelines.	3.75	Strongly agree
Overall mean	3.65	Strongly agree

Note. Table 7 shows that overall resulting mean of 3.65 denotes that tour guides generally strongly agree on the attributes related to their perception to advocacy. Among the five attributes, all are rated as strongly agree. Highest mean is 3.75 which is about how they strongly agree that perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I always present myself in a professional manner including my appearance, behavior, and adherence to industry standards and ethical guidelines. Lowest mean is 3.54 which denotes that they strongly agree that they perceived my way of tour guiding as a profession because I have enough knowledge and expertise in this field with regards to the historical, cultural, geographical, and sometimes even scientific information.

The responses from the respondents support the idea that most people who become tour guides do it spontaneously and without much planning. In contrast to other occupations (such as football players, singers, doctors, actresses, pilots, etc.), very

few people are considering or "fantasizing" about working as tour guides. Such a result seems counterintuitive at first, especially in light of the fact that many individuals view tour guiding as a very appealing career that allows for "free travel and income, too." But the prevalent perception that guiding is not a serious profession deters individuals from considering it as a possible career path: "I can see that you are educated and knowledgeable, so why is tour guiding your only employment?" or "You have to be doing something else; is this your actual job?" (Pond, 1993)

Holloway (1981) concludes, the majority considers themselves to be information providers, while the remainder identify as educators or "outdoor teachers" (Janko, 23). "To be an information-giver, but language skills are vitally important in order to gain the visitors' trust and provide them with information they cannot find elsewhere," states Nikola (48) as the primary responsibility.

Table 8: Perception of Tour Guides on Their Profession (Advocacy)

	Mean	Interpretation
I perceived my way of tour guiding as an advocacy because I often advocate for the preservation and appreciation of cultural heritage	3.67	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as an advocacy because I educate visitors about the importance of conservation and sustainable practices	3.67	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as an advocacy because I believe that Tour Guides are Frontline Ambassadors in Tourism's Fight Against the Climate Crisis	3.63	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as an advocacy because I foster cross-cultural understanding and empathy.	3.58	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as an advocacy because I advocate for ethical tourism practices, such as avoiding exploitative activities, respecting the rights and dignity of local communities, and supporting initiatives that benefit the destination.	3.79	Strongly agree
I perceived myself as a tourist guide because I believe that they are the greatest storytellers of the land.	3.63	Strongly agree
Overall mean	3.66	Strongly agree

Note. As shown on Table 8, overall resulting mean of 3.66 denotes that tour guides generally strongly agree on the attributes related to their perception to advocacy. Among the six attributes, all are rated as strongly agree. Highest mean is 3.79 which is about how they strongly agree that perceived their way of tour guiding as an advocacy because I advocate for ethical tourism practices, such as avoiding exploitative activities, respecting the rights and dignity of local communities, and supporting initiatives that benefit the destination. Lowest mean is 3.58 which implies that they strongly agree that they perceived their way of tour guiding as an

advocacy because I foster cross-cultural understanding and empathy.

Due to their ability to positively impact tourists' experiences and happiness, tour guides are seen as crucial front-line employees in the tourism sector (Huang et al., 2010; Weiler & Black, 2015). In particular, they have a crucial role in fostering greater visitor knowledge, contentment, attitudes, and behavior modification, making them the important link between ecotourism and tourists (Hofman & Hughes, 2017; Juma et al., 2020; Kong, 2014).

Table 9: Perception of Tour Guides on Their Profession (Job)

	Mean	Interpretation
I perceived myself as a tourist guide because I believe that they are the greatest storytellers of the land.	3.63	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a job only because I receive compensation in the form of wages, tips, or a combination of both.	3.25	Agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a job only because I undergo training programs to enhance their knowledge and skills.	3.46	Strongly agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a job only because just like other jobs, I am subject to taxation on my earnings.	3.00	Agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a job only because I have a regular schedule and consistent income.	3.00	Agree
I perceived my way of tour guiding as a job only because there are legal and regulatory frameworks that govern my career.	3.33	Strongly agree
Overall mean	3.28	Strongly agree

Note. In terms of Table 9, the overall resulting mean of 3.28 denotes that tour guides generally strongly agree on the attributes related to their perception to job. Among the six attributes, three are rated as strongly agree while the other three are rated as agree. Highest mean is 3.63 which implies that they strongly agree that they perceived myself as a tourist guide because I believe that they are the greatest storytellers of the land. The lowest mean is 3.00 which denotes that they agree that they perceived their way of tour guiding as a job only because just like other jobs, they are subject to taxation on my earnings.

In national parks, tour guides have a variety of responsibilities and are an essential connection between ecotourism and visitors. (Bogdan & Łasiński, 2019; Rokenes, Schumann, & Rose, 2015; Weiler & Walker, 2014; Wong & Lee, 2012) A review of the literature reveals that they are interpreters/educators, storytellers, service providers, information givers, planners, cultural interpreters, activity experts, and choreographers. These roles were categorized and classified by Cohen (1985) as instrumental, social, interaction, and communicative.

Table 10: Test of Significant Relationship Between Socio Demographic Profile and Level of Perception on Their Profession

	Correlation Coefficient	P value	Decision	Conclusion
Age	0.42	0.041	Reject null	Significant
Gender [Male=1, Female=0]	0.235	0.268	Accept null	Not significant
Years in Service	0.393	0.058	Accept null	Not significant
Monthly Income	0.329	0.117	Accept null	Not significant
Type of tour guide are you [Freelance=1, Others=0]	-0.103	0.631	Accept null	Not significant
Frequency of your tour guiding in a day, in a week or in a month?	0.12	0.576	Accept null	Not significant

Note. Resulting p value which exceeds 0.05 denotes that their gender (p=.268), years in service (p=.058), monthly income (p=.117), type of tour guide (p=.631) and frequency of their tour guiding in a day, a week or month (p=.576) is not significantly related with their perception on their profession. On the other hand, p value of 0.041 which is less than 0.05 implies significant relationship between age and their perception. Additionally, Pearson r of

0.420 implies that the older they are, the more positive is their perception to their profession.

Conclusion

The primary conclusions may be described as follows, based on the research problem and answers to the study's questions:

1.What is the socio-demographic profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1 Gender: The survey had a majority of female respondents, comprising 14 out of 24 participants, accounting for 58.3% of the total, while male respondents had a higher percentage of 41.7%.

1.2 Age: The study reveals that out of 24 respondents, 12.5% are aged 20 and below, 50% are aged 21-30, 12.5% are aged 31-40, 20.8% are aged 40-50, and 4.2% are aged 51 and above. The demographics of these individuals vary significantly.

1.3 Years in service: The study reveals that out of 24 respondents, 41.7% have less than a year in service, while 29.2% have 1-3 years, 16.7% have 4-6 years, and 12.5% have 10 years or more. The majority of respondents have less than a year in service.

1.4 Monthly income: The study reveals that out of 24 respondents, 37.5% earn below ₱10,000, 16.7% earn between ₱11,000-₱20,000, 29.2% earn between ₱21,000-₱30,000, 8.3% earn between ₱31,000-₱40,000, and 8.3% earn above ₱41,000 monthly.

1.5 Type of tour guides: The study reveals that of 24 respondents, 8.3% are Adventure Tour Guides, 37.5% are Freelance Tour Guides, 20.8% are Local Tour Guides, 12.5% are Private Tour Guides, and 20.8% are Professional Tour Guides, based on their frequency and percentage distribution.

1.6 Frequency of tour guides services per week: The study included 24 tour guides, primarily female (58.3%), aged 21-30, and 20.8% between 40-50. The majority were freelancers (37.5%), with 20.8% being professionals. The majority of tour guides earned less than \$10,000 per month, with 33.3% working less than once a week and 20.8% twice daily.

2. How may the perception of tour guides on their profession be described in terms of:

2.1 Profession: The overall mean is 3.65, implying a very positive perception specifically about their profession. All five attributes are rated as strongly agree, with the highest mean being 3.75 and the lowest being 3.54.

2.2 Advocacy: The overall mean is 3.66, implying a very positive perception specifically about their advocacy. All six attributes are rated as strongly agree, with the highest mean being 3.79 and the lowest being 3.58.

2.3 Job: The overall mean is 3.28, implying a very positive perception specifically about their job. Among the six attributes, three are rated as strongly agreeing, while the other three are rated as agreeing. The highest mean is 3.63 while the lowest is 3.00.

Overall perception: the mean is 3.53, implying a very positive perception of tour guides' profession. Among the three aspects, the highest or most positive perception is on advocacy (3.66) followed by profession (3.65) and job (3.28).

3. Test of Significant Relationship between Socio-Demographic Profile and Level of Perception on Their Profession:

Only age is significantly related to their perception of their profession ($r = .42$), while gender, years in service, monthly income, type of tour guide, and frequency of their doing their work are not significant.

The study successfully gathered enough data that was run and valid results were derived. It can now be concluded that the overall perception of tour guides toward their profession is very positive. All three aspects received a very positive perception, where the highest is obtained by profession, followed by advocacy, and the least is perception on the job. Their perception of the profession is very positive, with most strongly agreeing that they perceive their way of guiding as a profession since they always present themselves in a professional manner.

Similarly, advocacy obtained a very positive perception where they strongly agree the most about their perception that their way of tour guiding is advocacy because I advocate for ethical tourism practices, such as avoiding exploitative activities, respecting the rights and dignity of local communities, and supporting initiatives that benefit the destination. Perception on the job is also very positive, where they strongly agree the most about perceiving themselves as a tourist guide because they believe that they are the greatest storytellers of the land. The study also reveals that age is significantly related to their perception, where the older the tour guide, the more positive their perception of their profession is.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study and given conclusion, the following recommendations were developed:

1. Develop a comprehensive survey with a mix of closed-ended and Likert scale questions to quantitatively measure perceptions of tourist guides. Include aspects such as professionalism, societal recognition, and job satisfaction.
2. Collect demographic information to understand how perceptions might vary across different age groups, educational backgrounds, and levels of engagement with tourism in Bulacan.
3. Employ a systematic sampling method to ensure representation across various demographics within Bulacan. This will enhance the generalizability of your findings.
4. Utilize appropriate statistical techniques, such as regression analysis, to identify factors influencing perception. Explore correlations between demographic variables and attitudes toward the profession.

5. Compare the perceptions of tourist guides with other professions or part-time jobs in Bulacan to provide a broader context for your findings. Examine historical tourism data in Bulacan to identify trends and potential shifts in perception over time. This could provide insights into the evolving dynamics of the industry.
6. Involve local tourism authorities, tour guide associations, and other relevant stakeholders in the research process. Their insights can contribute to the study's validity and practical applicability.
7. Develop a strategy to disseminate your findings widely, targeting both academic and non-academic audiences. This can include presentations, reports, and potentially media outreach to increase awareness and impact. Extend your analysis by comparing the perceptions of tour guides in Bulacan with those in other regions or countries. This comparative approach can offer valuable insights into the uniqueness or commonalities of perceptions.
8. Consider including a diverse group of respondents, including both experienced and novice tour guides, as well as individuals from different age groups and backgrounds. This can provide a more comprehensive understanding of perceptions.
9. Include perspectives from tourists who have interacted with tour guides in Bulacan. Their feedback can contribute to a more holistic understanding of the impact of tour guides on the tourist experience.

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Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there are no significant competing financial, professional, or personal interests that might have influenced the performance or presentation of the work described in this manuscript.

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