

The Influence of Tour Guide Performance Towards Tourist Experience

¹Janicel L. Macarulay*, ¹Annie Carl E. Davis, ¹Mary Ann A. Uy, ¹Judith Grace B. Awatin,

¹Charise A. Pabayao, ¹Ludger Hope T. Saldivar

¹Tagoloan Community College, Philippines

*Corresponding Author's Email Address: irdc2025@gmail.com

DOI: 10.63941/DisKURSO.2025.1.1.14

Article Information
Received: August 12, 2025
Accepted: September 12, 2025
Published: November 14, 2025
Keywords <i>Tour Guide Performance, Professional Competence, Interpersonal Skills, Empathy, Tourist Experience, Tourist Services, Guiding Services</i>

ABSTRACT

This study explores the critical role of tour guide performance in shaping the overall tourist experience. Thus, this study aimed to determine the influence of tour guide's performance on the tourist experience. The researchers utilized an adapted questionnaire which was distributed to the one hundred-nine (109) hospitality management students who recently joined the Cebu Educational Tour under subject THC 4 (Philippine Tourism, Geography and Culture) of Tagoloan Community College. Results revealed that the tourists had a good experience in terms of the tour guide's professional competence, interpersonal skills, empathy, tour services, and guiding services. Thus, this study reveals that there is a significant relationship between the tour guide's performance and tourist experience. The study recommends that the Department of Tourism and other tourism organizations should invest in the training and continuous development of tour guides and implement a system for regular performance assessments and feedback for tour guides. Equip tour guides with additional resources, such as multimedia presentations, maps, and reference materials, to enhance the educational aspect of the tour. These resources can help convey information more effectively and keep tourists engaged.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism has become an experience-based industry that connects the abstract picture of potential travelers with the destinations they visit (Meacci et al., 2018). During their actual visit, tourists need more information about the conditions, circumstances, history, and exciting content to better understand the destination's uniqueness. The performance of tour guides has sparked intense academic discussions due to the crucial role they fulfill in enabling a wide range of tourist experiences (Željko et al., 2022). The performance of a tour guide can have a significant influence on the overall tourist experience. A tour guide plays a crucial role in enhancing the quality of the tour, providing valuable information, and creating a positive and engaging atmosphere for the tourist experience (Lin et al., 2019).

Moreover, tourists expect their tour guide to provide them with accurate information about the destination, offer engaging and informative commentary, and facilitate smooth and efficient trips. According to Alrawadieh et al. (2019), the effects of tour guide performance on the tourist experience are considered an important aspect of a tourist's overall journey. Thus, Prebensen et al. (2018) have argued that tourist experience has a determining effect on shaping and enhancing tourist value and future behavioral outcomes, such as word-of-mouth (WOM) publicity, revisit intention, and increased loyalty. Thus, the effectiveness of tour guides can affect tourists' experiences. It is critical to understand that a tour guide's performance can greatly contribute to and enhance the tourist experience. One of the significant dimensions of evaluating tourists' experiences is determining the tour guide's performance (Hwang & Lee,

2018). According to Chen et al. (2018), it is crucial to comprehend how tour guides influence the tourist experience to respond effectively to tourist needs. In the context of the tourism industry, understanding and evaluating the tourist experience is critical since it gives travel agencies and tour guides an idea of how to improve their services.

This study addresses the lack of research on the relationship between tour guide performance and tourist experience. Moreover, previous studies have concentrated on the impact of the life satisfaction of tour guides. While there is existing research on tour guides' influence on tourist satisfaction in general, there is a need for further investigation on how tour guides' specifically affect the tourist experience. By filling this gap, the study aims to provide insights that can be used to improve the tourist experience.

The study aimed to determine the tour guide's performance in terms of professional competence, interpersonal skills, empathy, and tourist experience with tour services and guiding services. It also aimed to determine if a tour guide's performance may influence the tourist experience. In the tourism and hospitality industries, tour guides' qualifications are vital as they may affect the tourist experience. Therefore, tour operators and travel agencies need to understand these aspects to contribute to a positive tourist experience and train their guides accordingly. Therefore, the research is conducted.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research utilized a quantitative, descriptive correlational research design to determine the relationship between tour guide performance and tourist experience. Correlational research is a non-experimental quantitative design in which the researcher applies correlational statistics to measure and describe the degree of association among variables or sets of scores (Creswell., 2012).

The descriptive method best suits this study as it describes the characteristics of the population and explains the occurrence of a certain phenomenon. In this study, a correlational design was utilized to explore the relationship between tour guide performance and tourist experience.

The study was conducted in Tagoloan Community College, located in MH Del Pilar St., Baluarte, Tagoloan, Misamis Oriental, specifically in the College of Hospitality Management. This place was selected knowing the efficiency of data to be collected among 2nd-year Hospitality Management students who recently participated in the Cebu Educational tour.

The respondents of the study were the one hundred nine (109) hospitality management students of Tagoloan Community College, who recently joined the Cebu educational tour. The respondents were selected as they have experienced different tours accompanied by Department of Tourism Accredited Tour Guides.

This study will utilize non-random sampling, specifically purposive sampling. The respondents are selected intentionally based on specific characteristics or criteria relevant to the research question. In this research, respondents are those who joined the Cebu Educational tour last March 2023.

The researchers utilized the universal sampling method to come up with a reliable and accurate number of respondents.

Table 1. Frequency Distribution of Respondents

Students who Joined the Cebu Educational Tour	Frequency
Male	40
Female	69
TOTAL	109

The researchers asked permission by giving the letter to the Dean of College Hospitality Management to conduct the study. Upon approval, the researchers sent an informed consent letter to the students who recently joined the Cebu educational tour. They were informed about the objective of the study and the information-gathering process, assuring them that in the gathering of data, all information was kept with the utmost confidentiality.

The researchers personally administer the data gathering using the printed form for the gathering of data to survey at the most convenient time for students. The researchers provided respondents with the assurance of the anonymity and privacy of the gathered data.

The researchers utilized an adapted questionnaire from the study of Huang et al (2009) entitled Tour guide performance and tourist satisfaction: A study of the package tours in Shanghai which helped the researchers construct the research instrument.

The research instrument has six parts. The first part consists of professional competence, the second part consists of Interpersonal skills, the third part consists of empathy, the fourth part consists of tourist experience, the fifth part consists of tour services, and the sixth part consists of guiding services. The researchers employed a 4-point Likert scale.

To ensure the validity of the instrument's content, the researchers sought advice from the experts as well as from the panels to refine the questionnaire. The questionnaire was pilot-tested to thirty (30) students, who joined the Cagayan de Oro Educational tour. The researcher used Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine its reliability; the Cronbach's alpha result must be 0.70 and above for a questionnaire to be reliable (Shemwell, Chase, & Schwartz, 2015).

A scoring procedure was employed to guide the researchers in interpreting the data and was utilized as a guide to score the respondents' responses fairly and objectively. The respondents chose the criteria from strongly agree to strongly disagree, whichever best presented their opinion on each statement/question.

Table 2. Scoring Procedure

Scale	Mean Range	Description	Interpretation
4	3.75 – 4.0	Strongly Agree	Very good experience
3	2.75 – 3.0	Agree	Good experience
2	1.75 – 2.0	Disagree	Poor Experience
1	1.00 – 1.75	Strongly Disagree	Very poor experience

RESULTS

Respondent's Profile

Table 1 shows the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Gender. The data revealed that males had 40 or 34.80 percent and females had 75 or 65.20 percent. This means that most of the respondents are female.

Table 1
The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Gender

Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	40	34.80
	Female	75	65.20
	Total	115	100

Table 2 shows the Frequency and Percentage Distribution of respondents by educational attainment. The data revealed that college-level had 115 or 100.00 percent. This means that most of the respondents are college-level.

Table 2
The Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Respondents in Terms of Educational

Profile	Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Educational Attainment	Elementary Level	0	0
	Elementary Graduate	0	0
	High School Level	0	0
	High School Graduate	0	0
	College Level	155	100.00
	College Graduate	0	0
	Total	155	100

1. What is the tour guide's level of performance in terms of the following:

- 1.1 Professional competence;**
- 1.2 Interpersonal Skills; and**
- 1.3 Empathy?**

Table 3 presents the tour guide's level of performance in terms of professional competence. The data exposed that the tour guide's level of performance in terms of professional competence is 3.67 and the SD of 0.50, or "Good Experience". This implied that the tour guide is generally doing a decent job in terms of professional competence, but there may be areas for improvement or individual preferences among the participants that lead to variability in the ratings. (Lin et al., 2017).

Table 3. The Tour Guide's Level of Performance in Terms of Professional Competence

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
The tour guide knows the destination's tourist attractions.	3.78	0.47	Strongly Agree	Very Good Experience
The tour guide takes good care of tourist needs.	3.66	0.53	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide has good communication skills.	3.81	0.42	Strongly Agree	Very Good Experience
The tour guide is knowledgeable of basic first-aid procedures.	3.56	0.53	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide can organize the related activities.	3.65	0.48	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide shows a good sense of humor.	3.64	0.50	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide's ability to answer questions and provide accurate information.	3.68	0.49	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide communicates information and instructions during the tour.	3.71	0.47	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide manages the pace and timing of the tour, ensuring that all scheduled activities are covered.	3.57	0.56	Agree	Good Experience
The tour guide is good at interpersonal communication.	3.63	0.50	Agree	Good Experience
Average	3.67	0.50	Agree	Good Experience

Legend: 1.0-1.75 (Very Poor Experience), 1.75-2.0 (Poor Experience), 2.75-3.0 (Good Experience), 3.75-4.0 (Very Good Experience)

Data showed that the highest item on the extent of the tour guide's level of performance in terms of professional competence is "The tour guide has good communication skills," with a mean of 3.81 and SD of 0.42, or "Very Good Experience". This implies that the ability to communicate clearly and engage with the audience is a significant aspect of a tour guide's performance and can greatly enhance the quality of the tour. (Yang et al., 2022)

Furthermore, the lowest item is "The tour guide is good at interpersonal communication," with a mean of 3.63 and SD of 0.50, or "Good Experience". Thus, this item is recommended for further improvement since it does not meet the highest mean standard deviation.

Table 4 presents the tour guide's level of performance in terms of interpersonal skills. The data exposed that the tour guide's level of performance in terms of professional competence is 3.59, with a SD of 0.52, or "Good Experience". This implied that a tour guide's professional competence is generally rated positively. (Al-Okaily, 2022).

Moreover, the highest item on the extent of the tour guide's level of performance in terms of interpersonal skills is "The tour guide manages the group dynamics and ensures a positive and harmonious experience for everyone," with a mean of 3.65 and SD of 0.48, or "Good Experience". This implies that the tour guide's ability to handle various personalities and ensure that all participants have an enjoyable and harmonious experience during the tour. (Syakier & Hanafiah, 2022).

Table 4
The tour guide's level of performance in terms of interpersonal Skills

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. The tour guide is capable of handling tourist Complaints properly.	3.58	0.53	Agree	Good Experience
2. The tour guide can generate rapport among tourists.	3.48	0.58	Agree	Good Experience
3. The tour guides know the destination's history.	3.64	0.50	Agree	Good Experience
4. The tour guide pays immediate attention to his/ her tourist needs.	3.57	0.55	Strongly Agree	Very Good Experience
5. The tour guide shows good interaction with his/ her tourist.	3.65	0.48	Agree	Good Experience
6. The tour guide creates a memorable and exciting experience.	3.59	0.53	Agree	Good Experience
7. The tour guide knows how to negotiate conflicts and misunderstandings.	3.57	0.50	Agree	Good Experience
8. The tour guide manages the group dynamics and ensures a positive and harmonious experience for everyone.	3.65	0.48	Agree	Good Experience
9. The tour guide addresses any safety concerns or precautions during the tour.	3.64	0.50	Agree	Good Experience
10. The tour guide accommodates the diverse needs and preferences of the participants.	3.55	0.55	Agree	Good Experience
Average	3.67	0.50	Agree	Good Experience

Legend: 1.0-1.75 (Very Poor Experience), 1.75-2.0 (Poor Experience), 2.75-3.0 (Good Experience), 3.75-4.0 (Very Good Experience)

Furthermore, the data revealed that the lowest item is "The tour guide can generate rapport among tourists." with a mean of 3.48 and SD of 0.58 or "Good Experience". Thus, this item is recommended for further improvement since it does not meet the highest mean standard deviation.

Table 5 presents the tour guide's level of performance in terms of empathy. The data exposed that the tour guide's level of performance in terms of empathy is 3.58, with a SD of 0.53, or "Good Experience". This implies that empathy can be a crucial skill for tour guides to create a positive and memorable experience for tourists. (Ap & Wong, 2001).

Moreover, the highest item on the extent of the tour guide's level of performance in terms of empathy is "The tour guide displays empathy towards the local communities and the impact of tourism on their lives," with a mean of 3.65 and SD of 0.51, or "Good Experience". This implies that the tour guide is not only attentive to the needs and feelings of the tourists but also deeply respects and understands the local communities and the potential challenges they face due to tourism. (Abiew et al., 2020).

Furthermore, the lowest item is "Tour guide dependable in occurrences of conflicts," with a mean of 3.45 and SD of 0.52, or "Good Experience". Thus, this item is recommended for further improvement since it does not meet the highest mean standard deviation.

Table 5
The Tour Guide's Level of Performance in Terms of Empathy

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. The tour guide empathizes with the physical limitations or special requirements of individuals in the tourist.	3.62	0.54	Agree	Good Experience
2. The tour guide shows empathy in their communication style, considering the diverse backgrounds and perspectives of the tourists.	3.59	0.51	Agree	Good Experience
3. The tour guide displays empathy towards the local communities and the impact of tourism on their lives.	3.65	0.51	Agree	Good Experience
4. The tour guide knows how to take accountability for tourist decisions.	3.61	0.54	Agree	Good Experience
5. Tour guide dependable in occurrences of conflicts.	3.45	0.52	Agree	Good Experience
6. The tour guide showcases excellent problem-solving skills.	3.49	0.57	Agree	Good Experience
7. The tour guide shows the ability to work under pressure.	3.57	0.53	Agree	Good Experience
8. The tour guide showcases good listening skills.	3.59	0.58	Agree	Good Experience
9. The tour guide knows how to find an alternative as a solution to find alternatives as a solution to issues/ conflicts.	3.57	0.51	Agree	Good Experience
10. The tour guide knows how to handle conflicts and issues professionally.	3.61	0.49	Agree	Good Experience
Average	3.58	0.53	Agree	Good Experience

Legend: 1.0-1.75 (Very Poor Experience), 1.75-2.0 (Poor Experience), 2.75-3.0 (Good Experience), 3.75-4.0 (Very Good Experience)

Problem 2: What is the extent of tourist experience in terms of the following dimensions:

2.1 Tour Services; and
2.2 Guiding Services?

Table 6 presents the extent of the tourist experience in terms of tour services. The data exposed that the tourist experience in terms of tour services is 3.57, with an SD of 0.56, or "Good Experience". This implies that it is essential for tourism providers to maintain this level of quality to continue attracting and satisfying customers. (Alexandra Matos Pereira, 2015).

Moreover, the highest item on the extent of the tourist experience in terms of tour services is “The tour destination visited creates a safe and enjoyable environment for the students,” with a mean of 3.66 and SD of 0.54, or “Good Experience”. This implies that a safe and engaging setting significantly enhances the overall educational and recreational experience for students during the tour. (Lin et al., 2017).

Furthermore, the lowest item is “The tour services provide good value for the price you paid,” with a mean of 3.49 and SD of 0.63, or “Good Experience”. Thus, this item is recommended for further improvement since it does not meet the highest mean standard deviation.

Table 6
The Extent of Tourist Experience In Terms of Tour Services

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. The tour services offer opportunities for cultural immersion or interaction with local communities.	3.56	0.56	Agree	Good Experience
2. The tour service provider assures the safety and security of the students.	3.57	0.58	Agree	Good Experience
3. The tour services offer flexibility and options for personalization, allowing you to tailor the experience to your preferences.	3.55	0.57	Agree	Good Experience
4. The tour destination visited creates a safe and enjoyable environment for the students.	3.66	0.54	Agree	Good Experience
5. The amount of time given to visit the destination is enough for the students to explore and enjoy the area.	3.50	0.64	Agree	Good Experience
6. The transportation organizer considers the quantity and comfortable travel spaces for tourists.	3.55	0.55	Agree	Good Experience
7. The tour services provide good value for the price you paid.	3.49	0.63	Agree	Good Experience
8. The tour services meet your expectations in terms of providing a memorable and enjoyable experience.	3.61	0.52	Agree	Good Experience
9. The transportation arrangements made by the tour service provider.	3.60	0.51	Agree	Good Experience
10. The tour service ability to create a memorable and enjoyable experience for you as a tourist.	3.63	0.52	Agree	Good Experience
Average	3.57	0.56	Agree	Good Experience

Legend: 1.0-1.75 (Very Poor Experience), 1.75-2.0 (Poor Experience), 2.75-3.0 (Good Experience), 3.75-4.0 (Very Good Experience)

Table 7 presents the extent of the tourist experience in terms of guiding services. The data exposed that the tourist experience in terms of guiding services is 3.59 and the SD of 0.52 or “Good Experience”. This implied that the majority of tourists share a favorable perception of the guiding services. (Yang et al., 2022).

Moreover, the highest item on the extent of the tourist experience in terms of guiding services is “The tour guide's performance impacts the overall experience of tourists.” with a mean of 3.67 and SD of 0.47 or “Good Experience”. This implies that tourists place a substantial emphasis on the tour guide's competence, communication skills, and ability to provide an informative and engaging experience. This also means that tourists perceived that the tour guides possessed good communication that they were able to convey information effectively and answer tourists' questions. (Syakier & Hanafiah, 2022).

Furthermore, the lowest item is “The accommodation service provided by the tour organizer satisfies my needs.” with a mean of 3.41 and SD of 0.59 or “Good Experience”. Thus, this item

is recommended for further improvement since it does not meet the highest mean standard deviation. The mean score of 3.41 implies that, on average, respondents find the accommodation service moderately satisfactory, as it falls between a neutral and positive evaluations.

Table 7
The Extent of Tourist Experience in Terms of Guiding Services

Items	Mean	SD	Description	Interpretation
1. The tour guide's performance impacts the overall experience of tourists.	3.67	0.47	Agree	Good Experience
2. The tour guide officer shares wisdom about the place's history.	3.64	0.50	Agree	Good Experience
3. The accommodation service provided by the tour organizer satisfies my needs.	3.41	0.59	Agree	Good Experience
4. The tour guide's ability to handle unexpected situations and challenges contributes to a positive tourist experience.	3.56	0.53	Agree	Good Experience
5. The tour guide shows genuine care and concern for the safety and well-being of the tourist.	3.48	0.54	Agree	Good Experience
6. The tour guide demonstrates good leadership and organizational skills throughout the tour.	3.63	0.48	Agree	Good Experience
7. The tour guide creates a friendly and welcoming atmosphere during the tour.	3.62	0.56	Agree	Good Experience
8. The tour guide provides clear and accurate information about the attractions and destinations visited.	3.59	0.49	Agree	Good Experience
9. The tour guide's voice is loud and clear for tourists to hear.	3.65	0.48	Agree	Good Experience
10. The tour guide allows the tourist to share their ideas and opinions	3.61	0.54	Agree	Good Experience
Average	3.59	0.52	Agree	Good Experience

Legend: 1.0-1.75 (Very Poor Experience), 1.75-2.0 (Poor Experience), 2.75-3.0 (Good Experience), 3.75-4.0 (Very Good Experience)

Problem 3: Is there a significant relationship between the tour guide's performance and tourist experience?

H01: There is no significant relationship between the tour guide's performance towards the tourist experience.

Table 8 depicts the significant relationship between the tour guide's performance and tourist experience.

Table 8
Test of the Significant Relationship Between the Tour Guide's Performance and Tourist Experience

Tour Guide's Performance	Tourist Experience		
	R-Value	P-Value	Decision on H0 Rejected
Significant if P-value <0.05	.651	.000	

*Legend: H0 is rejected if Significant
H0 is accepted if Not Significant.*

The data exposed that ($r=.651^{**}$, $p\text{-value}=.000$) there is a significant relationship between the Tour Guide's Performance and the Tourist Experience since the p -value is less than 0.05. This means that the null hypothesis is rejected. A similar result was affirmed by Chang, K. C. (2014), who stated that the tour guide's performance has a positive and significant effect on the tourist experience.

DISCUSSION

The study used quantitative research in the form of non-probability sampling for the selected Hospitality Management students who have the subject for THC4—Philippine Tourism, Geography, and Culture of Tagoloan Community College and recently joined the Cebu Educational Tour.

The study focused more on a descriptive correlational research design to determine the relationship between tour guide performance and tourist experience in Tagoloan Community College. The data and output of the study were used as a basis for an organizational enhancement plan for successful operations.

The results of the data that were gathered were presented and analyzed.

1. What is the demographic profile of the respondents in terms of gender and educational attainment?

In terms of gender distribution among the respondents, it indicates that most of the respondents are female. The respondents' educational attainment shows that the entirety of the respondents holds a college-level educational background.

2. What is the tour guide's level of performance in terms of professional competence, interpersonal skills, and empathy?

The data underscores the importance of effective communication, group management, and empathy in tour guides' performance, with room for improvement in certain areas to enhance the overall tour experience. To further enhance their service, tour guides may benefit from addressing the areas that received lower ratings and focusing on continuous improvement.

3. What is the extent of tourist experience in terms of tour services and guiding services?

The data highlights the importance of creating safe and engaging tour environments for students and underscores the significant role of tour guides in shaping the overall tourist experience. While many aspects receive positive ratings, there is clear room for improvement in aspects related to value for money and accommodation services, which could enhance overall customer satisfaction and loyalty.

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, the following recommendations are drawn:

1. Tourism organizations should invest in the training and continuous development of their tour guides. This includes providing comprehensive knowledge about the destinations, history, culture, and local customs. Guide training should also focus on communication skills, customer service, and handling diverse groups of tourists.
2. The Department of Tourism should implement a system for regular performance assessments and feedback for tour guides. This can include collecting feedback from tourists, peers, and supervisors, as well as conducting periodic evaluations. These assessments can help identify areas for improvement and provide constructive feedback to guides.

3. Tour guides should have the flexibility to tailor tours to the preferences and interests of the tourist group. This personalized approach can significantly enhance the tourist experience by making the tour more engaging and relevant to participants.
4. Encourage guides to engage with tourists, answer questions, and create a friendly and inclusive atmosphere during the tour. Guides should be approachable and open to dialogue.
5. Tour guides should be culturally sensitive and aware of the diverse backgrounds of tourists. This includes respecting cultural norms and being mindful of potential cultural differences among tourists. Cultural sensitivity can greatly impact the overall experience.
6. Equip tour guides with additional resources, such as multimedia presentations, maps, and reference materials, to enhance the educational aspect of the tour. These resources can help convey information more effectively and keep tourists engaged.
7. Actively seek feedback from tourists through surveys or post-tour evaluations. Analyze this feedback to identify trends and areas for improvement. Adjust based on this input to continually enhance the tourist experience.
8. Future Researchers may consider other variables on tourist experience and tour guide performance, such as problem-solving skills, tourist satisfaction, and perceived services. As the industry evolves, future research may investigate the factors that will impact the tourist experience.

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