

Tourist Satisfaction Experience With Boracay Information Guide Application: Bases for Sustainability Plan

Khina Marie Dela Torre-Prado*, Christopher D. Toloress
Aklan State University, Aklan, Philippines

*Corresponding Author Email: khina.delatorre23@gmail.com

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Abstract. This descriptive-correlational research was conducted to develop a proposed sustainability plan for Boracay Information Guide Application (BIG-A). The researcher used a researcher-made questionnaire to determine user satisfaction by evaluating the usability of BIG-A under three categories: accessibility, learnability, and operability. The results revealed that the users of the application are extremely satisfied with BIG-A. Also, it was found that there is no significant relationship between tourist demographics and user satisfaction with the usage of the app. Despite the extremely satisfactory rating of the mobile application, it is still essential for the Boracay Information Guide Application to be even more competitive to meet the demands of an ever-growing competitive tourism market. A proposed sustainability plan was crafted to ensure BIG-A's stability and continuity. It was strategized into four categories: BIG-A's Longevity and Maintenance, Community Support, Internal and External Funds, and Organizational Support. Presentation of the proposed sustainability plan to LGU-Malay and the stakeholders of Boracay Island is highly suggested.

Keywords: Tourist information guide; Boracay; Philippines.

1.0 Introduction

The Island of Boracay has always been considered a tourist hotspot either locally and internationally. Recently, Boracay reached 172,913 tourists in January 2024 according to the data of the Malay Tourism Office for January 2024. With the rapid growth of tourist influx, frauds, and scams are inevitable to occur. In 2023, according to the Malay Tourism Office data, an accumulation of almost Php 1,000,000.00 was reportedly scammed from tourists. Though digitalization can be beneficial for instantaneous communication and connectivity, digital risks compromise users' online safety and autonomy. While digital hazards jeopardize users' online safety and autonomy, digitalization can also be advantageous for rapid communication and connectivity. The Boracay Information Guide Application (BIG-A) Project was developed to address these issues. This mobile application for tourists and residents of the island is a free downloadable travel guide for Android and iOS phones. Several features such as the tourist spots in the municipality, events, accommodations, offices, and hotline numbers were the initial information that users can access in the app. It was developed and operated by the Local Government of Malay through the Municipal Tourism Office making sure that all information about services, updates, and new protocols came from reliable sources.

Competition among destinations is very tough and there is a need for Boracay to respond and step up as a smart tourism destination. Boracay Information Guide Application is an essential part of managing tourism on the island. Presently, there are no available studies signifying tourists' satisfaction with Boracay Information Guide Application. BIG-A also doesn't have a "feedback" button to receive comments and suggestions from its users.

Understanding tourists' perception of BIG-A is vital in ensuring the success and relevance of the mobile application for tourists visiting Boracay. This study was conducted to inquire BIG-A's usability under three categories: accessibility, learnability, and operability. The evaluation aimed to identify strengths and potential areas of improvement and create a sustainability plan to better manage tourism information in Boracay as well as the mobile application that hosts these information.

2.0 Methodology

2.1 Research Design

This research used the descriptive correlational research design. This design aims to determine the extent to which two or more variables co-vary, that is, where changes in one variable are reflected by changes in another (Miksza et al., 2023). Descriptive correlational studies often employ methods such as surveys, observational techniques, or questionnaires to collect data, which is then analyzed to identify patterns of association (Miksza et al., 2023) (Topuz & Gözüml, 2022). In this study, tourist demographics such as age, gender, civil status, and place of origin will be correlated with tourist satisfaction and how they affect the sustainability plan for Boracay Information Guide Application.

2.2 Research Participants

The respondents of this study were 134 local and foreign tourists visiting the Island of Boracay from the period of February to March 2024. The researcher used the purposive sampling technique in selecting participants. Purposive sampling is adaptable to both qualitative and quantitative research methods and is recognized for its methodological rigor when the sampling strategy is aligned with the research methodology (Campbell et.al., 2020). It also lowers the margin of error in data collection because the data sources are a close fit to the research context(Obilor, 2023). In this research, the survey was purposely conducted on domestic and foreign tourists who have downloaded the Boracay Information Guide Application. The study did not include minors(tourist 17 years old and below) as respondents

2.3 Research Instrument

The instruments used to collect data for this research were validated and pilot-tested researcher-made questionnaires composed of different indicators on the Boracay Information Guide Application's ease of use. Part I was the personal profile of the respondents such as gender, age, civil status, and geographical location or place of origin. Part II was composed of questions on tourist satisfaction through the user's assessment of BIG-A's accessibility, operability, and learnability utilization.

2.4 Data Gathering Procedures

The researcher asked for the assistance of the Malay Municipal Tourism Office in the distribution of questionnaires to domestic and foreign tourists with downloaded BIG-A on their mobile phones. The tourist respondents were given two options in answering the questionnaires- the respondents who were prepared may answer them in real-time and those who were not were time until their checkout dates to respond to the survey questionnaire. If the tourist-respondent chooses the latter, he or she can give the answered survey form to the Municipal Tourism Office personnel assigned at the "Tourist" counter of Cagban Port.

2.5 Data Analysis

Descriptive and inferential analyses were conducted in analyzing the data.

Frequency and Percentage

These were employed to explain the individual respondent demographics.

Mean

Mean was accustomed to determining the extent of tourist satisfaction with the Boracay Information Guide App.

Cramer's V

This was employed to ascertain the substantial correlation between tourist satisfaction with the Boracay Information Guide Application and the age, gender, civil status, and geographic area or place of origin of the respondents.

The decision to reject or confirm hypothesis was based on the p-value generated by the statistical software such as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0. If the p-value was less than or equal to the 5% level, then the hypothesis was rejected, and if the p-value is greater than the 5% level, then the hypothesis was confirmed.

2.6 Ethical Considerations

The conduct appropriately adhered to the ethical considerations of the research. The ensuing moral guidelines were noted by the researcher during the study: (1) Authorization to administer the study was solicited from LGU-Malay's Office of the Municipal Mayor and the Port Administrator of Caticlan Jetty Port and Passenger Terminal, and voluntary participation of the respondents was requested. Necessary permits were secured before the conduct of the study and letter requests were also given to the respondents. (2) The researcher assured the participants that there would be no negative consequences associated with the study. The researcher informed the purpose of the survey and emphasized that their responses would be utilized for research purposes only as part of an academic requirement. (3) The researcher retains the ability to ask the respondents to stop answering if they are uncomfortable or refuse to self-determination. The researcher informed the respondents that participation is purely voluntary and requested them to respond to the best of their knowledge, and (4) Respondent's anonymity was reserved and confidentiality was respected. The personal information of the respondents was not disclosed and was kept confidential by the researcher.

3.0 Results and Discussion

3.1 Profile of Respondents

Table 1 shows that regarding sex, there were slightly more female respondents, with 71 out of 134 or 53%, than male respondents, with 63 out of 134 or 47%. As for age distribution, the age group of 30 and below constituted a significant portion, with 68 out of 134 or 51.49%, while the age group of 42 and above was the smallest segment, with 20 out of 134 or 14.91%. Concerning civil status, married respondents made up a significant portion, with 71 out of 134 or 45.52%, while single respondents accounted for 61 out of 134 or 45.52%.

Table 1. Distribution of respondents according to their profile

	FREQUENCY	PERCENTAGES
Sex		
Female	71	53
Male	63	47
Age		
30 and below	68	51
31-41	45	34
42 and above	20	15
Civil Status		
Married	71	53
Single	61	46
Undeclared	2	1
Country of Origin		
Philippines	101	75.38
South Korea	11	8.22
USA	6	4.49
Japan	5	3.74
Australia	2	1.51
Austria	1	0.74
China	1	0.74
Germany	1	0.74
Korea	1	0.74
Russia	1	0.74
Singapore	1	0.74
South Africa	1	0.74
Taiwan	1	0.74
UK	1	0.74

The data above describes a research population where most of those who participated are young females. This group of respondents is an ideal target since most people of this demographic are inclined to use technology-based applications in their decision-making. Younger people tend to use mobile applications more than older

ones. Vacation travels, on the other hand, are usually done in groups, so it is not surprising to find married respondents in this survey. Boracay is a destination for couples to bond. While Abahre et al. (2023) and Liu et al. (2023) emphasize the importance of gender and age, Tamir et al. (2016) highlight the impact of cultural context on marital satisfaction and overall well-being, suggesting that the influence of demographic factors may vary across different cultural settings.

Table 1 also depicts the distribution of respondents according to their country of origin. Boracay Island is a melting pot of people from various places and cultures. It is also a tourism hub in the region, a pride of the country's tourism industry. This can be seen in the high patronage of Filipinos, as noted in this survey. The majority of respondents are from the Philippines, comprising 101 out of 134, or 75.38%. South Korea also contributed a notable portion, with 11 out of 134, or 8.22% of respondents. The United States of America also contributed a significant portion, with 6 out of 134, or 4.49%. Other countries have smaller representation, with 1 out of 134, or 0.74% of the total respondents.

This distribution provides insights into the geographic diversity of respondents using the BIG-A, being highly visible with visitors from the Philippines and notably visible with visitors from South Korea, Japan, and the USA. This diverse distribution is expected to provide a greater understanding of user preferences, behaviors, and satisfaction levels. While Damanik & Yusuf (2022) do not explicitly link visitor origin to mobile app satisfaction, they suggest that visitor characteristics, including country of origin, can influence perceptions and expectations, which may, in turn, affect satisfaction with various services, potentially including mobile applications.

3.2 Level of Satisfaction with Boracay Information Guide Application

Tables 2, 3, and 4 display the results of the survey conducted on the satisfaction of tourists with the Boracay Information Guide Application (BIG-A) along the criteria of accessibility, learnability, and operability.

Accessibility

Table 2. Tourist's satisfaction regarding accessibility

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Navigating the features of the app	4.51	0.743	Extremely Satisfactory
Layout and design of the app	4.43	0.654	Extremely Satisfactory
Technical difficulties reduction	4.40	0.824	Extremely Satisfactory
Loading times for pages in the app	4.31	0.740	Extremely Satisfactory
Finding Information in the app	4.25	0.763	Extremely Satisfactory
Mean	4.38	0.565	Extremely Satisfactory

Table 2 shows that respondents highly favored the navigation features of the app, as noted by its mean rating of 4.51, which is categorized as "Extremely Satisfactory." Despite receiving the lowest mean rating of 4.25, the feature for finding information was also rated as "Extremely Satisfactory." Overall, the table indicates that tourists are highly satisfied with various aspects related to the accessibility of the BIG-A. The mean scores are consistently high across all indicators, reflecting positive user experiences in terms of navigation, design, technical performance, information accessibility, and overall satisfaction. The low standard deviations suggest a relatively tight clustering of responses around the mean, indicating a high level of agreement among users regarding satisfaction levels.

Learnability

Table 3. Tourist's satisfaction regarding learnability

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Confidence in using the app	4.49	0.67	Extremely Satisfactory
Learning to use the app	4.45	0.64	Extremely Satisfactory
Organization of information categories	4.44	0.73	Extremely Satisfactory
Locating specific information	4.43	0.78	Extremely Satisfactory
Understanding menu option	4.40	0.73	Extremely Satisfactory
Mean	4.44	0.57	Extremely Satisfactory

Table 3 reflects the findings regarding the respondents' level of satisfaction with the learnability features of BIG-A. Data reveals that all indicators have been rated as "Extremely Satisfactory," as indicated by the mean of 4.44. Confidence in using the app leads all other criteria with a mean of 4.49, while the lowest mean of 4.40 was recorded for understanding the menu options. The standard deviations are relatively low, indicating a tight clustering of responses around the mean and high agreement among respondents regarding satisfaction levels with the app's learnability.

Operability

Table 4 on the next page indicates high levels of satisfaction across all indicators, with mean scores ranging from 4.40 to 4.49, all interpreted as "Extremely Satisfactory". It can be observed from the data that respondents' perceptions of the operability of BIG-A are very similar to their perceptions of learnability.

Table 4. Tourist's satisfaction regarding operability

INDICATORS	MEAN	SD	VERBAL INTERPRETATION
Bugs and glitches	4.49	0.67	Extremely Satisfactory
Run time experience	4.45	0.64	Extremely Satisfactory
Feedback and recovery	4.44	0.73	Extremely Satisfactory
Workflow procedure	4.43	0.79	Extremely Satisfactory
User-friendliness	4.40	0.74	Extremely Satisfactory
Mean	4.44	0.57	Extremely Satisfactory

The satisfaction with the absence of Bugs and glitches implies that their presence was negligible. Despite obtaining the lowest mean, User friendliness is still perceived as extremely satisfactory. The low standard deviation values (ranging from 0.57 to 0.79) suggest that the responses are closely clustered around the means, indicating a high level of agreement among respondents regarding satisfaction levels. The average mean score for all indicators is also "Extremely Satisfactory," reinforcing the conclusion that tourists find the operability of the BIG-A to be excellent across various aspects such as bug handling, runtime experience, feedback mechanisms, workflow procedures, and user-friendliness.

In all, these findings suggest that BIG-A performs exceptionally well in terms of operability, meeting or exceeding tourists' expectations, and contributing positively to their overall satisfaction with the app.

3.3 Relationship Between Respondents' Profile and Tourist Satisfaction

Tables 5 through 8 present the results of the inferential analysis rendered between profile variables and tourists' satisfaction with BIG-A.

Gender

Table 5. Gender and tourist satisfaction with BIG-A

VARIABLES	COEFFICIENT	P-VALUE	INTERPRETATION
1. Sex and Accessibility in terms of			
Navigating the features of the app	0.106	0.679	Not Significant
Finding Information in the app	0.209	0.209	Not Significant
Loading times for pages in the app	0.140	0.456	Not Significant
Layout and design of the app	0.039	0.977	Not Significant
Technical difficulties reduction	0.136	0.646	Not Significant
2. Learnability in terms of			
Learning to use the app	0.204	0.061	Not Significant
Confidence in using the app	0.167	0.441	Not Significant
Organization of information categories	0.201	0.248	Not Significant
Locating specific information	0.209	0.054	Not Significant
Understanding menu options	0.145	0.421	Not Significant
3. Operability in terms of			
Run time experience	0.045	0.872	Not Significant
Bugs and glitches	0.232	0.066	Not Significant
Feedback and recovery	0.181	0.335	Not Significant
Workflow procedure	0.120	0.749	Not Significant
User-friendliness	0.155	0.521	Not Significant

Table 5 shows the resulting data on the relationship between respondents' sex and their satisfaction with BIG-A. As can be gleaned from the table, all p-values are greater than the threshold p-value of 0.05, and therefore, the null hypotheses were accepted since there is evidence to show that there is no significant relationship between respondents' sex and their satisfaction with BIG-A. Thus, it can be said that respondents' sex does not significantly influence their satisfaction with the BIG-A across all accessibility indicators. These findings echo the work of Đàng et al. (2021), who did not find a significant difference in visitor satisfaction based on gender in the Dong Thap tourist destination. This indicates that while some studies have found gender differences, others have not, suggesting that the relationship between gender and tourist satisfaction may be context-dependent and influenced by various factors such as destination type, cultural context, and the nature of the tourism services provided (Đàng et al., 2021). Since information on these matters is also available in the BIG-A, it is not surprising to find that males and females do not significantly differ in their satisfaction with the app across all indicators.

Age

Table 6. Age and tourist satisfaction with BIG-A

VARIABLES	COEFFICIENT	P-VALUE	INTERPRETATION
1. Age and Accessibility in terms of			
Navigating the features of the app	0.294	0.240	Not Significant
Finding Information in the app	0.247	0.720	Not Significant
Loading times for pages in the app	0.183	0.143	Not Significant
Layout and design of the app	0.148	0.458	Not Significant
Technical difficulties reduction	0.130	0.871	Not Significant
2. Learnability in terms of			
Learning to use the app	0.179	0.637	Not Significant
Confidence in using the app	0.141	0.789	Not Significant
Organization of information categories	0.158	0.609	Not Significant
Locating specific information	0.086	0.921	Not Significant
Understanding menu options	0.142	0.528	Not Significant
3. Operability in terms of			
Run time experience	0.092	0.895	Not Significant
Bugs and glitches	0.175	0.195	Not Significant
Feedback and recovery	0.136	0.830	Not Significant
Workflow procedure	0.124	0.906	Not Significant
User-friendliness	0.162	0.570	Not Significant

Table 6 displays the results of the inferential analyses made on the relationship between respondents' age and their satisfaction with BIG-A. As seen in the data, all obtained p-values are greater than the threshold p-value of 0.05. The coefficients and p-values indicate that age does not play a significant role in determining satisfaction levels across these aspects of app usage. This led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that there are no significant relationships between respondents' age and their satisfaction with BIG-A across all evaluation criteria. There is evidence to show that respondents' age does not significantly influence their satisfaction levels across all surveyed variables. The analysis suggests that respondents' age does not significantly influence their satisfaction with the BIG-A app in terms of accessibility, learnability, and operability.

The findings in this study support the study of Imtiaz & Suki (2022), wherein they emphasized the high satisfaction with mobile travel apps among tourists but did not explicitly link this satisfaction to demographic variables (Imtiaz & Suki, 2022). Although age is considered a factor in designing tourist experiences and has been considered in the design and development of BIG-A, the result of this research is identical to the earlier findings.

Civil Status

Table 7 displays the results of the inferential analyses made on the relationship between respondents' civil status and their satisfaction with BIG-A. As can be gleaned from the data, all obtained p-values exceed the threshold p-value of 0.05. The coefficients and p-values indicate that civil status does not play a significant role in determining satisfaction levels across the three aspects of BIG-A being surveyed. These results led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that there are no significant relationships between respondents' civil status and their satisfaction with BIG-A across all evaluation criteria. There is evidence to show that respondents' civil status does not significantly influence their satisfaction levels across all criteria in the survey. The analysis suggests that respondents' civil

status does not significantly influence their satisfaction with BIG-A in terms of accessibility, learnability, and operability.

Table 7. Civil status and tourist satisfaction with BIG-A

VARIABLES	COEFFICIENT	P-VALUE	INTERPRETATION
1. Civil status and Accessibility in terms of			
Navigating the features of the app	0.128	0.900	Not Significant
Finding Information in the app	0.079	0.990	Not Significant
Loading times for pages in the app	0.236	0.021	Not Significant
Layout and design of the app	0.201	0.093	Not Significant
Technical difficulties reduction	0.138	0.749	Not Significant
2. Learnability in terms of			
Learning to use the app	0.106	0.556	Not Significant
Confidence in using the app	0.119	0.874	Not Significant
Organization of information categories	0.117	0.885	Not Significant
Locating specific information	0.036	0.987	Not Significant
Understanding menu options	0.125	0.654	Not Significant
3. Operability in terms of			
Run time experience	0.174	0.086	Not Significant
Bugs and glitches	0.132	0.590	Not Significant
Feedback and recovery	0.148	0.661	Not Significant
Workflow procedure	0.132	0.793	Not Significant
User-friendliness	0.116	0.889	Not Significant

Despite these findings, it is important to note that civil status does play a role in designing the tourist experience. Okorejior et al. (2024) identify a significant relationship between food choices and marital status among customers at ecotourism destinations, suggesting that civil status can indeed influence tourist preferences in specific contexts (Okorejior et al., 2024). The same can be said about making BIG-A work for all types of tourists.

Origin

Table 8. Visitor's origin and tourist satisfaction with BIG-A

VARIABLES	COEFFICIENT	P-VALUE	INTERPRETATION
1. Visitor's origin and Accessibility in terms of			
Navigating the features of the app	0.238	0.983	Not Significant
Finding Information in the app	0.214	1.000	Not Significant
Loading times for pages in the app	0.204	0.999	Not Significant
Layout and design of the app	0.220	0.996	Not Significant
Technical difficulties reduction	0.202	1.000	Not Significant
2. Learnability in terms of			
Learning to use the app	0.244	0.938	Not Significant
Confidence in using the app	0.252	0.975	Not Significant
Organization of information categories	0.229	0.997	Not Significant
Locating specific information	0.246	0.929	Not Significant
Understanding menu options	0.248	0.964	Not Significant
3. Operability in terms of			
Run time experience	0.262	0.862	Not Significant
Bugs and glitches	0.248	0.964	Not Significant
Feedback and recovery	0.166	1.000	Not Significant
Workflow procedure	0.194	1.000	Not Significant
User-friendliness	0.185	1.000	Not Significant

The results of the inferential analyses made on the relationship between respondents' visitor origin and their satisfaction with BIG-A are presented in Table 8. As can be seen from the data, all computed p-values are above the threshold p-value of 0.05. The coefficients and p-values indicate that visitor origin does not play a significant role in determining satisfaction levels across all aspects of BIG-A being surveyed. These results led to the acceptance of the null hypothesis that there are no significant relationships between respondents' visitor origin and their satisfaction with BIG-A across all three evaluation criteria. The results imply that respondents' visitor origin does not significantly influence their satisfaction with BIG-A in terms of accessibility, learnability, and operability.

4.0 Conclusion

Boracay attracts tourists from diverse backgrounds, therefore, there's a crucial need for an aggressive information campaign and promotion of the Boracay Information Guide Application to cater to this diverse demographic. Secondly, the functionality of the Boracay Information Guide App is confirmed and appears to be operating as planned, offering users helpful resources and information about the island. However, to maintain its utility, continuous monitoring and evaluation are essential. Thirdly, efforts should be directed towards sustaining the gains achieved by the Boracay Information Guide App. This entails implementing a Sustainability Action Plan, ensuring its long-term viability and relevance. Sustaining the gains of the Boracay Information Guide App is crucial for its continued success and effectiveness in serving visitors to Boracay and ensure that the app's information remains current and relevant by regularly updating it with the latest details on attractions, accommodations, restaurants, events, and any changes in local regulations or guidelines. Lastly, recognizing the importance of such an app in enhancing the tourist experience, it's imperative to integrate the proposed sustainability measures into the local tourism office's strategic development plan and secure necessary administrative support for its sustainability. The implementation of a thorough Sustainability Action Plan would enable the Boracay Information Guide App to maintain its current level of success while simultaneously making a positive impact on the environment, society, and economy of Boracay in the long run.

Given the foregoing conclusions, the following recommendations are given;

- a) There is a diverse tourist demographic visiting Boracay Island. With this, there should be an aggressive information campaign and promotion of the Boracay Information Guide Application to increase its visibility. It may affect the total experience of tourists on the island as the application covers usually what tourists need like accommodation, activities, restaurants, and others.
- b) Regular monitoring and evaluation of BIG-A is recommended to maintain its accessibility, learnability, and operability. Also, a possible application to the Intellectual Property Office (IPOPHL) for the Boracay Information Guide Application is to be protected.
- c) Adoption of the proposed sustainability action plan in the local tourism office's strategic development plan is highly encouraged so that the results of the present study may be utilized. It is also encouraged that a Municipal Resolution will be made for its sustainability.
- d) Other researchers are encouraged to address the limitations of the present study.

5.0 Contributions of Authors

The authors initiated and completed this study.

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7.0 Conflict of Interests

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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