

Research on the Construction of Practical Teaching Mechanism of Applied Undergraduate Tourism Management Major and the Starting Time of the Mechanism

-- Take Zhaoqing University as an Example

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the existing issues in the practical teaching of tourism management majors, establishing four mechanisms for applied undergraduate tourism management practical education, namely, the expansion training social practice mechanism, the innovation and entrepreneurship ability cultivation mechanism under the big creation project platform, the professional competition skill practical teaching mechanism, and the "exploratory internship" mechanism under the social practice platform. According to different stages in the academic system, corresponding practical teaching mechanisms are arranged: in the freshman year, an open practice mechanism is initiated to deepen students' understanding of theoretical knowledge; in the sophomore and junior years, a multi-scenario practice mechanism is implemented to enhance students' practical abilities and innovation and entrepreneurship capabilities; in the senior year, a comprehensive internship and exploratory practice mechanism is launched to thoroughly train students' professional skills and innovative thinking. The aim is to achieve progressive and integrated practical ability cultivation throughout the entire academic journey, providing strong support for training high-quality applied tourism management talents that meet market demands.

KEYWORDS

Applied Undergraduate; Tourism Management Major; Practical Teaching Mechanism.

1. INTRODUCTION

In China's higher education system, local undergraduate colleges bear the important mission of cultivating high-quality applied talents for local economic and social development. In recent years, with the continuous attention and improvement of the national quality of higher education, local undergraduate colleges have successively transformed to applications to better serve the development of local economy and society[1]. Against this backdrop, the tourism management major, which is one of the highly applicable disciplines, has its teaching model and quality directly affecting the talent supply and industry development of the tourism industry[2]. However, the tourism management major in China's applied undergraduate colleges is currently facing a series of problems. Firstly, some universities still overly emphasize the imparting of theoretical knowledge, leading to students' lack of practical operation capabilities and difficulties in quickly adapting to industry needs. Secondly, with the rapid development of emerging formats such as self-media and sharing economy, the tourism

industry's demand for talents is becoming increasingly diversified, requiring tourism talents to possess cross-disciplinary integration abilities, innovative capabilities, and practical skills[3]. However, the existing teaching system often fails to keep up with this change, resulting in a significant discrepancy between talent cultivation and industry requirements. Additionally, the singular school-enterprise cooperation model and low enterprise participation are key factors restricting the improvement of the practical teaching quality of the tourism management major[4].

The existence of these problems not only affects the employability of students majoring in tourism management but also restricts the transformation, upgrading, and sustainable development of the tourism industry. Therefore, exploring and practicing a practical teaching mechanism for the tourism management major that meets the demands of the era and can effectively enhance students' comprehensive abilities is particularly important [5]. Researching the practical teaching mechanisms of applied universities for the tourism management major has significant implications for improving the quality of talent cultivation, promoting the development of the tourism industry, and advancing higher education reforms. On one hand, optimizing the practical teaching mechanism can enhance students' practical and innovative capabilities, making them better suited to the development needs of the tourism industry. On the other hand, improving the practical teaching mechanism also helps promote the transformation and upgrading of the tourism industry, providing strong talent support for the sustainable development of the tourism sector. Moreover, this research will provide beneficial references for higher education reforms, encouraging applied universities to shift towards a greater emphasis on practice and innovation.

This study aims to enhance the practical and innovative abilities of tourism management students in applied universities by constructing a multi-dimensional practical teaching mechanism, which includes the integration of self-media platforms and practical bases, innovative project platforms, professional competition and training base platforms, as well as social practice platforms.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

With the adjustment of economic structure and the deepening of industrial upgrading in China, the higher education system is undergoing profound changes. The Ministry of Education's "Guiding Opinions on Promoting the Transformation of Some Local Universities to Application-oriented Universities" clearly proposes that local undergraduate colleges should actively adapt to the new normal of economic development, actively transform to application-oriented universities, and cultivate more high-quality application-oriented talents to meet the market demand [6]. This guiding principle not only emphasizes the service, application and innovation of higher education, but also provides direction for the reform of the practical teaching mechanism of tourism management major.

In terms of practical teaching, the Ministry of Education has put forward specific requirements, aiming to improve students' professional skills, professional accomplishment and innovative ability through practical teaching. As far as tourism management is concerned, this requires that practical teaching not only focuses on the combination of theoretical knowledge and practical operation, but also emphasizes the close connection with industry development [7]. However, there are still some problems in the practical teaching model of tourism management major in current applied undergraduate colleges. On the one hand, some colleges and universities still pay too much attention to theoretical teaching, and the practical teaching link is relatively weak, so that students can hardly apply what they have learned to their actual work. On the other hand, the lack of practical teaching resources, especially the lack of high-quality off-campus practice bases and teachers with industry experience, affects the effectiveness of practical teaching. In addition, the evaluation system of practical teaching is not perfect, and it is difficult to accurately evaluate students' practical ability and professional accomplishment [8].

In response to these issues, the academic community has conducted in-depth research on the practical teaching mechanism of tourism management majors in applied undergraduate colleges. Related studies pointed out that the reform of the practical teaching mechanism should focus on constructing a student-centered, industry-demand-oriented teaching model [9]. Specifically, strengthening school-enterprise cooperation, establishing stable off-campus internship bases, providing students with real professional environments and practical opportunities is essential. Also, introducing teachers with industry experience, enhancing teacher training, and improving teachers' practical teaching abilities are recommended [6]. Furthermore, the practical teaching evaluation system should be improved, focusing on the combination of process evaluation and outcome evaluation, to comprehensively assess students' practical abilities and professional qualities [3,5]. In terms of research methods, scholars have employed various methods such as questionnaire surveys, interviews, and case analyses to deeply explore the current situation, problems, and countermeasures of the practical teaching mechanism [2,6]. These studies not only provide theoretical support for the reform of the practical teaching mechanism but also offer practical guidance for optimizing the practical teaching mechanism in universities.

Therefore, the reform of the practical teaching mechanism of tourism management major in applied universities is an important part of the current higher education system reform. By strengthening school-enterprise cooperation, improving practical teaching resources, enhancing teachers' teaching abilities, and perfecting the practical teaching evaluation system, the existing problems in current practical teaching can be effectively solved, and students' professional skills and professional qualities can be improved [10]. In the future, with the deepening of educational reform and the continuous development of the tourism industry, the practical teaching mechanism of tourism management major in applied universities will be continuously improved and innovated, making greater contributions to training more high-quality applied talents who meet the market demands.

3. STATUS STUDY

In the current wave of reform and innovation in higher education, although the Tourism Management major at Zhaoqing College is dedicated to the construction and optimization of practical teaching mechanisms, it still faces a series of challenges and shortcomings.

3.1. In Terms of Industry-University-Research Integration

Although schools attempt to promote the integration of industry, education, and research through self-media platforms and practical base platforms, there is insufficient synergy between the platforms in actual operation. The mechanism for resource integration and information sharing between the self-media platforms and the practical bases is not yet perfected [10]. At the same time, although cultural and tourism lectures provide an important platform for exploratory learning, their integration into practical teaching is not enough. The penetration power of ideological and political courses and party building is not strong, and the mutual promotion mechanism between teaching and scientific research needs to be strengthened. This leads to a disconnection between practical teaching and theoretical research.

3.2. In Terms of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Ability Training

Although the Tourism Management major at Zhaoqing College relies on the Dachuang project platform to guide students in entrepreneurship training for homestays and shared accommodations, the project coverage is limited, the participation rate of students is not high, and there is a lack of systematic entrepreneurial guidance and resource support [11]. Although the car camping project provides opportunities for students to learn about new forms of accommodation, the content of the project is not closely aligned with the actual needs of the tourism industry. Training such as simulated

hotel investment aims to cultivate an international perspective for hotel brands, but in practice, students find it difficult to gain real industry experience and opportunities to expand their international horizons. Furthermore, although professional competition platforms and practical training base platforms provide conditions for open practical teaching, the participation rate in competitions and the utilization rate of training bases are not high, and students still have obvious shortcomings in their entrepreneurial innovation capabilities.

3.3. In Social Practice and "Inquiry-Based Internship"

Although the Tourism Management major at Zhaoqing College organizes students to participate in the summer "Three Villages" social practice, the content of the practice does not sufficiently align with the actual needs of the tourism industry. While the survey report competition can enhance students' research abilities, it lacks in-depth industry analysis and problem-solving skills training [12]. At the same time, although the introduction of the Cultural and Tourism Industry College provides a platform for industry mentors to join, the participation and guidance intensity of these mentors are limited. Students find it challenging to obtain sufficient industry guidance and practical opportunities in their "exploratory internships". Moreover, when the school organizes students to think and innovate about the problems existing in business operations and competition, there is a lack of systematic guidance and incentive mechanisms, making it difficult for students to develop deep industry insights and innovative capabilities.

4. MECHANISM CONSTRUCTION

To improve the quality of practical teaching, schools should further establish a practical teaching mechanism for tourism management majors that suits the positioning of local applied undergraduate colleges, deepen the integration mechanism of industry, academia, and research, optimize the training system for innovative and entrepreneurial abilities [13], strengthen the guidance and support of social practice and "inquiry-based internships", and lay a solid foundation for training more high-quality applied tourism management talents that meet market demands.

4.1. Expanding the Training Social Practice Mechanism

In the practical teaching of tourism management majors in applied colleges, self-media platforms and practical base platforms have become important carriers for promoting the integration of industry, academia, and research. With its fast information dissemination speed and wide coverage, the self-media platform provides rich industry information and practical cases for students majoring in tourism management, promoting the deep integration of theory and practice. At the same time, through cooperation with enterprises, the practical base platform has established stable off-campus internship bases, providing students with a real professional environment to deepen their understanding of theoretical knowledge in practice. On this basis, the school creates a cultural and tourist lecture hall, inviting industry experts and scholars to give special lectures, implementing exploratory learning, which not only broadens students' academic horizons but also promotes the integration of ideological and political courses and party building, making practical teaching more ideological and political. In addition, the school also pays attention to driving scientific research with teaching and research, promoting teaching with scientific research. Through the declaration and implementation of scientific research projects, the school enhances the scientific research capabilities of teachers and provides opportunities for students to participate in scientific research, enhancing their practical innovation capabilities.

4.2. Constructing an Innovation and Entrepreneurship Capability Training Mechanism under the University Innovation and Entrepreneurship Project Platform

The innovation project platform is an important way for applied universities to cultivate the innovation and entrepreneurship capabilities of students in the tourism management major. By guiding students to carry out entrepreneurial training in homestays and shared accommodations, they not only can understand the new formats and operating models of the accommodation industry but also practice their entrepreneurial thinking and teamwork skills in real-world settings. At the same time, the auto-camping project, as an emerging field in the accommodation industry, provides students with a window to learn about new formats in accommodations, enabling them to keep up with industry development trends and enhance their professional competence. In addition, simulated hotel investment and other training projects cultivate students' international perspective on hotel brands by simulating a real investment environment, allowing them to view the development of the hotel industry from a global perspective and lay a solid foundation for their future career paths.

4.3. Building a Professional Competition Skill Practice Teaching Mechanism

Professional competition platforms and practical training base platforms are important platforms for implementing open practical teaching in tourism management majors of applied-oriented colleges. By participating in competitions such as "Challenge Cup" and "Dachuang", students can not only showcase their innovative achievements, but also hone their innovative thinking and teamwork abilities during the competition process. At the same time, the practical training base platform provides abundant practical opportunities for students by simulating real professional environments, enabling them to deepen their understanding of theoretical knowledge and enhance their professional skills in practice. This open practical teaching mechanism not only promotes the improvement of students' comprehensive qualities, but also enhances their employment competitiveness.

4.4. Constructing an "Inquiry-Based Internship" Mechanism under the Social Practice Platform

The social practice platform is an important link in cultivating the practical abilities and innovative spirit of students majoring in tourism management at applied universities. By organizing students to participate in the summer "Three Villages" social practice, students can not only gain a deep understanding of the current social conditions at the grassroots level but also hone their social adaptability in practice. At the same time, relying on the cultural and tourism industry college, the school has introduced industry mentors to guide students in actively conducting "exploratory internships." This allows students to not only complete work tasks during the internship process but also to deeply contemplate and innovate around issues existing in business operations and competition. This "exploratory internship" mechanism has not only enhanced the students' practical capabilities but also cultivated their innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities, laying a solid foundation for their future careers.

5. MECHANISM IMPLEMENTATION

In applied undergraduate institutions majoring in tourism management, students' professional knowledge learning, practical ability training, and career development needs change and require phased adjustments as the academic year progresses. For instance: Freshmen, newly exposed to tourism management knowledge, need to deepen their understanding of theoretical knowledge through practice. Sophomores and juniors, who have already grasped some professional knowledge, need to enhance their practical abilities through more diverse practical activities. Seniors, facing graduation and employment, need to experience all aspects of tourism management through

comprehensive internships to improve their overall capabilities. Therefore, for the four practical teaching mechanisms, the specific implementation sequence is as follows:

5.1. Grade 1 Initiates the Open Practice Mechanism

In the first year of university majoring in tourism management, the practice teaching mainly implements "open practice" training. At this stage, students have just entered the professional field and urgently need to deepen their understanding of theoretical knowledge through practice. The training base platform provides rich practical scenarios, allowing students to experience the various aspects of tourism management firsthand, thereby deepening their awareness of professional knowledge. At the same time, with the help of self-media platforms and cultural tourism lectures, students can carry out exploratory learning. By obtaining industry frontier information and participating in special topic discussions, they can broaden their academic horizons and cultivate sensitivity and insight into the tourism industry. This open practice mechanism not only provides students with practical opportunities but also promotes their ability to learn independently, laying a solid foundation for subsequent professional learning.

5.2. Grade 2 & 3 Start Multi-Scene Practice Mechanism

Entering the second and third years of university, the practical education of tourism management students gradually shifts to three platforms: social practice, professional competitions, and innovative projects. During the winter and summer breaks, students participate in the "Three-Village" social practice activities, delving into grassroots communities to understand the current development status and needs of the tourism industry, thereby enhancing their social adaptability. At the same time, by participating in innovative projects, students are able to carry out entrepreneurial practices such as homestays and shared accommodations under the guidance of mentors, cultivating their innovation and entrepreneurship skills. Furthermore, involvement in professional skill competitions not only tests the students' mastery of professional knowledge but also promotes their teamwork and problem-solving abilities. This multi-scenario practice mechanism provides students with diverse practical opportunities, allowing them to continuously challenge themselves and enhance their comprehensive practical capabilities.

5.3. Grade 4 Integrated Internship and Inquiry-Based Practice Mechanism

In the fourth year of university, the practical teaching for tourism management students focuses on comprehensive internships at training base platforms and "inquiry-based practice". At this stage, students have a solid foundation of professional knowledge and some practical experience. They need to test and enhance themselves through higher-level practical activities. Comprehensive internships allow students to fully experience every aspect of tourism management in a real professional environment, deepening their understanding and application of professional knowledge. Meanwhile, "inquiry-based practice" encourages students to think deeply and innovate against real problems existing in business operations. By introducing guidance from industry mentors, students can stand at the forefront of the industry and propose innovative solutions. This mechanism of comprehensive internships and inquiry-based practices not only improves students' professional skills but also cultivates their innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities, laying a solid foundation for their future careers.

Therefore, according to the educational and training needs of students majoring in tourism management at different stages of their four-year university program, it is necessary to initiate various practical teaching mechanisms to achieve a progressive and integrated practice capability development throughout the entire program.

6. RESEARCH CONCLUSION

This study addresses the issues existing in the practical teaching of tourism management majors in applied undergraduate colleges, and constructs a multi-dimensional practical teaching mechanism including the expansion training social practice mechanism, the innovation and entrepreneurship ability training mechanism under the big creation project platform, the professional competition skill practical teaching mechanism, and the "inquiry-based internship" mechanism under the social practice platform. These four mechanisms together affect the cultivation of practical abilities of tourism management major students, aiming to enhance their professional skills, innovation and entrepreneurship abilities, and problem-solving abilities, to better adapt to the development needs of the tourism industry.

The extended training social practice mechanism emphasizes the integration of resources through practical bases and self-media platforms to promote the deep integration of industry, academia, and research, broadening students' practical perspectives. The innovation and entrepreneurship training mechanism under the Dachuang project platform stimulates students' entrepreneurial enthusiasm and cultivates their innovative thinking and teamwork abilities through entrepreneurial training projects such as homestays and shared accommodations. The professional competition skill practice teaching mechanism utilizes competition platforms to enhance students' professional skills and teamwork capabilities, strengthening their employment competitiveness. Meanwhile, the "exploratory internship" mechanism under the social practice platform introduces industry mentors to guide students in deeply contemplating and innovating issues existing in business operations and competitions, nurturing their innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities.

This study proposes a corresponding sequence of practical teaching mechanisms for students majoring in tourism management at different stages of their four-year university period. In the freshman year, the open practice mechanism is mainly used to deepen students' understanding of professional knowledge through training bases and self-media platforms. In the sophomore and junior years, the comprehensive practical abilities of students are enhanced through various practical mechanisms such as social practice, professional competitions, and innovative projects. In the senior year, the focus is on integrated internships and exploratory practice mechanisms, allowing students to fully experience all aspects of tourism management in a real professional environment and cultivate their innovative thinking and problem-solving abilities. This progressive and penetrating method of practical ability cultivation ensures that students continuously improve their practical abilities during the four years of university, laying a solid foundation for their future careers.

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