

# Research on Construction of Tourism Marketing Talent Training System Based on CBE (Competency Based Education) Theory

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## ABSTRACT

Chinese education authorities have put forward the general requirements for the transformation of some undergraduate universities to application-oriented development. In this context, this paper analyzes the problems in the traditional subject oriented training mode of tourism marketing talents, such as the emphasis on theoretical knowledge, ignoring practical ability, and puts forward the basic idea of constructing the training system of tourism marketing talents based on CBE (Competency Based Education). From the author's front-line teaching experience, this paper, with the course construction of tourism marketing, puts forward the specific strategies, including clarifying the training objectives and ability requirements of tourism marketing talents, adopting flexible and diverse teaching methods, attaching importance to practical teaching aiming at training comprehensive, etc., in order to provide valuable reference and model for the successful transformation of undergraduate universities into application-oriented ones.

*Keywords: CBE (Competency Based Education), application-oriented undergraduate education, tourism marketing talents*

## I. INTRODUCTION

On December 30, 2016, Li Xiaohong, Vice Minister of the Ministry of Education of China, said at a policy briefing held by the Information Office of the State Council that about 200 ordinary colleges and universities across the country are conducting pilot projects to promote the transformation of some ordinary undergraduate colleges and universities into application-oriented ones. [1] In July 2016, Guangdong Provincial Department of Education, Guangdong Provincial Development and Reform Commission and Guangdong Provincial Department of Finance jointly issued "Suggestions on the implementation of guiding the transformation of ordinary undergraduate colleges and universities to application-oriented universities". It clarifies that in 2016 Guangdong Province would select a number of transformation Pilot Universities for the province's ordinary undergraduate universities, with a pilot period of 4 years. In September 2016, the Department of Education of Guangdong Province released the "Announcement on the selection of the Pilot Universities for the transformation of ordinary undergraduate colleges and universities", and the first batch of 14 ordinary undergraduate colleges, including Zhuhai College of Jilin University, were chosen to the

application-oriented ones. [2] The "Suggestions" requires that these colleges and universities should have a progressive reform in talent cultivation, professional settings, students' recruits and staffing as well. "The Outline of China's Medium and Long Term Education Reform and Development Plan (2010-2020)" clearly requires that education should be developed by reform. Colleges and universities should "reform talent development scheme" and "innovate personnel training mode". The training objective of application-oriented undergraduate talents should be an application-oriented professional between academic type and vocational technical type, engaged in high-tech professional work by applying scientific theories, with corresponding professional theory and scientific knowledge, strong practical ability and management ability, who do not only have a wide range of professional theoretical knowledge, but also can meet the needs of modern production, construction, management, service and other first-line posts. CBE is translated into "competency based education", which is a new teaching mode based on the "Mastery Learning" and "feedback teaching principles" and "goal classification theory" put forward by the famous psychologist Bloom who works in the University of Houston in the United States. [3] In the 1960s, it was used for the teacher's training in

vocational education, and in the 1990s, it was introduced into China by the State Education Commission through the Sino Canadian cooperation project.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Based on the key words of "capability standard" and "CBE", a total of 4366 results were searched in CNKI<sup>1</sup>, and there is an increasing trend in the past five years, which can be seen that the research in this field has become one of the hotspots in higher education. In the literature that has been searched, "higher vocational education" and "undergraduate course" as theme words respectively occupy 1300 documents and 190 documents, which also can be seen that "ability standard" is more applied in the research of higher vocational education. It can be seen that the educational concept of "ability standard" is more applied to the research of higher vocational education. Hence, it is noticeable that the educational concept of "ability standard" is more applied to the research of higher vocational education. Among all the retrieved "competency based" and "CBE" documents with "tourism" as the theme word, only 45 documents were found in the second search. Therefore, compared with the large number of "competency based" researches, the research in tourism related fields is less. In the existing tourism related literature, the main research focuses on curriculum construction, personnel training mode construction, practical teaching, school — enterprise cooperation and so on. In the aspect of the introduction of the basic theory of "ability based education", the researcher emphasizes that the biggest characteristic of "CBE Mode" lies in that the whole teaching goal is based on how to make the educated have the necessary ability to engage in a certain profession. [4] Compared with the traditionally "subject-based" education concept which put focus on the basis of knowledge and the center of subject, "CBE" is based on ability, which emphasizes knowledge integration and mastering core knowledge and ability. From the needs of enterprises, we should attach importance to students' deep participation and dominant position in the learning process, in which the core is how to make students have the practical ability necessary for a certain occupation. [5] Researchers generally believe that the ability in the ability-based education is a kind of comprehensive ability, including knowledge, attitude, experience and feedback, which emphasizes the cultivation of students' comprehensive professional ability. [6] The demand of tourism industry for talents emphasizes the richness of connotation and the comprehensive ability as well. In addition to the basic skills required by the industry, more attention is paid to the application of

non-technical comprehensive abilities such as cooperation ability, public relations ability, emergency response ability, etc. [7] In terms of the application of the "CBE" concept, most of the researches in the literature are "to put forward the problems existing in the current higher education — to reform the existing education and teaching mode in different forms by using the CBE framework". Therefore the similar research ideas and methods are adopted in this paper.

## III. PROBLEMS IN THE CULTIVATION OF TOURISM MARKETING TALENTS IN COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

### A. *Unclearly of training target of applied tourism marketing talents*

At present, when setting the training objectives of tourism management professionals, most of the application-oriented colleges and universities still use the "subject based" concept and traditional teaching mode, while they do not grasp the specifications, levels and abilities of the talents needed by the society in time, and they cannot get rid of the "knowledge centered" examination-oriented education system. Therefore, the tourism marketing curriculum is not targeted and not well combined with the requirements of the society for the skills of tourism management professionals, so it is hardly to meet the needs of the comprehensive ability of tourism marketing talents.

### B. *Teacher-centered method focusing on theory and neglecting application*

At present, most of the courses of tourism marketing in Colleges and universities focus on teaching theories. The teaching method is teacher-centered and spoon-feeding. Although the teaching method has gradually evolved from using blackboard and chalk to employing computer and PPT, the students' subjectivity and initiative have not been effectively triggered. Because of the crammed teaching, the students stay in the stage of passive acceptance of the theory, has not developed enough interests in relevant theories, let alone the cultivation of the ability to use marketing theory to solve problems in marketing practice.

### C. *Lack of internships and practical posts that can effectively exercise students' management ability*

Due to the huge market demand, it is not difficult to establish off-campus practice bases for tourism management majors and other related majors in Colleges and universities at present, but these practice bases mostly uses these interns as relatively cheap labor force from the perspective of economic benefits, and most of the posts provided are ones with relatively low technical content, such as grassroots guide, hotel

<sup>1</sup> Searching through CNKI (Chinese National Knowledge Infrastructure) on January 17, 2020

doorman, room attendant, restaurant attendant and so on. The relatively sufficient theoretical studies carried out by undergraduates majoring in tourism management cannot be really applied in specific internship positions, let alone the practice of theories. As a result, the enthusiasm of students' participation is not high, and they gradually question and doubt their choice of tourism and the major. Finally, the goal of "application talents" training in undergraduate colleges and universities cannot be effectively achieved, and tourism enterprises have lost the opportunity to cultivate middle and senior management talents for the future.

*D. Lack of teachers who have rich practices and practical experience*

At present, most of the teachers who undertake the application-oriented undergraduate Tourism Marketing courses are masters or doctors who have graduated from domestic and foreign universities shortly, who have such characteristics as scientific background, strong theoretical and academic skills, while lack the practices and practical experiences. As a result, the teaching basically is from theory to theory and lacks sufficient experiences to cultivate students to apply theories to solve the practical problems. And obtaining this ability is exactly the talent training goal of the practical and applied courses like tourism marketing.

**IV. THE CONSTRUCTION OF TOURISM MARKETING TALENTS TRAINING SYSTEM BASED ON CBE THEORY**

*A. To clarify the training objectives of tourism marketing talents*

We have adopted the two-way track of "from top to down" and "from bottom to up" to establish the training objectives of applied tourism talents. The so-called "from top to down" is to initially establish the talent training objectives based on the requirements of higher education authorities, to take the training objectives of tourism management professionals (professional talents with solid foundation, wide range and rich application) in the "national standard for undergraduate professional teaching quality of general institutions of higher learning"[8] proposed and issued by the Ministry of education as the basis, to determine the training objectives of tourism marketing talents by the professional teachers, and then feed this strategy back to the teaching steering committee composed of industry experts and professional teachers for approval of the training program "from the bottom to top". Finally, the training target of applied tourism marketing talents is determined as: those who have strong comprehensive and practical ability, are familiar with the characteristics of tourism reception industry and

marketing theory, and can serve tourism marketing practice.

*B. To establish the ability requirements of tourism marketing talents*

We can divide ability into professional ability, method ability and social ability, and the level of individual professional ability depends on the integration of these three elements [9]. Professional ability refers to the special skills and corresponding professional knowledge required for professional activities, which are directly related to the occupation; method ability refers to the work and learning methods required for professional activities, especially the ability for individuals to learn new knowledge independently; social ability refers to the behavioral norms and values required for professional activities, mainly including interpersonal communication ability, public relations processing ability, labor organization ability, group consciousness and social responsibility. [10] The integration of the three elements, namely "comprehensive vocational ability", further requires the cultivation of general or extensive skills that are not directly related to the specific occupational situation, and emphasizes the mobility of the ability. Under the guidance of this thought, the educational authorities of our country gradually realize that the cultivation of ability is the central task or the most basic destination of teaching [11], which is embodied in three dimensions of knowledge, ability and quality in talent training specifications. See "Table I".

TABLE I. COMPETENCE ANALYSIS TABLE OF APPLICATION-ORIENTED UNDERGRADUATE TOURISM MARKETING TALENTS

Knowledge	Competence		Quality
Fundamental philosophy of marketing & tourism marketing; The method of marketing environment analysis; Strategic marketing STP (market segmentation, target market selection and market positioning; Tactical marketing 4Ps (Production, pricing, place, promotion); New media (SNS) marketing	Professional competence	General competency	Correct world outlook, views of life value; Core Values of Socialism; Global tourism ethics code; Good scientific accomplishment and humanistic spirit; Rigorous, practical, team work, attention to detail, practical work spirit
	Analyzing marketing environment; Tourism market research; Segmenting & positioning marketing; Developing & designing Tourism product and project; Planning tourism product; Using new media to promote tourism product	Language expression and communication skills; Using modern office software; Analyzing and solving problems; Innovation & Creative thinking;	

*C. To adopt flexible teaching methods and means*

In order to cultivate the comprehensive vocational ability of students, and improve the teaching effect, in the course teaching of Tourism Marketing based on the ability standard, teachers should take the students as the main body, try to adopt teaching method, heuristic

method, discussion method, task-based method, embedded and other teaching methods according to different types of course contents, and use modern information technology teaching methods such as PPT, network platform, mobile app and to improve students' participation and initiative in classroom teaching. See "Table II".

TABLE II. COURSE CONTENTS AND TEACHING METHODS

Course contents	Teaching methods
Basic idea and theory of marketing	Heuristic /Case/Lecturing
Hospitality marketing and internal marketing	Heuristic /Case/Lecturing
New media marketing theory and application	Task-driven/Lecturing/ Embedded
Tourism marketing environment	Heuristic /Case/Lecturing/ Group discussion
Tourism marketing research	Heuristic /Case/Lecturing/ Task-driven
Tourism market segmentation/target/positioning	Heuristic /Case/Lecturing/ Group discussion
Tourism product	Situational /Heuristic /Case/Lecturing
Tourism product price & place tactics	Heuristic /Case/Lecturing
Tourism product promotion	Task-driven/Lecturing/Embedded

Among several teaching methods, "heuristic" method means that teachers are not firstly eager to teach knowledge in the subject teaching, but inspire students to think by asking questions and gradually approach the answers to questions. This method can effectively exercise students' ability to put forward and analyze questions, and also reduce the passivity of students in traditional teaching. "Task base" method means to give students a task in advance, which can be a new theory or knowledge, or a problem in practice.

Students can complete the teaching in the form of group autonomous learning — topic sharing. This method can effectively mobilize students' initiative, exercise and enhance students' abilities of analysis, integration of resources, and oral expression. For example, the teaching content of "new media marketing" is very suitable for this teaching method. On the one hand, this part of knowledge is very new, and various theories and cases emerge in endlessly; on the other hand, students have a lot of practical experiences and are interested in

this topic, so that they can receive good teaching results. Situational teaching method can be summarized as "seeing is better than hearing". For example, when the section of "development and design of tourism products" is taught, we can bring students to a real tourism enterprise. Through on-site observation and exchange with middle and senior managers of the enterprise, we can understand the whole process of a specific tourism product from its conception, planning to landing. "Embedded" method means that in order to make up for the strong theoretical and practical problems of full-time teachers, part-time teachers outside the school are invited to give lectures and full-time teachers are assisted to complete the teaching tasks.

#### *D. To attach importance to practical teaching aiming at training comprehensive professional ability*

The high-level and application-oriented tourism marketing talents need comprehensive professional ability, but the acquisition of ability needs the alternation of theory and practice. The subject-based traditional education pays less attention to practical teaching, while under the concept of CBE, students find, summarize and analyze problems in their work practice, in which knowledge is transformed into one's own ability.

Due to limited space, this paper puts forward two key questions about the practice teaching. Firstly, paying attention to the integration of off-campus and in-campus practice teaching. The cultivation of tourism marketing talent always gears to the needs of practical application, especially the theoretical teaching in the school with a "question consciousness". For example, when it comes to the chapter "the characteristics of hospitality industry", the teacher should not be satisfied with theories "from textbook to textbook", but he should inspire students to think about how to apply the theory into the tourism practice, especially specific to the operational level, only by this way the teacher can make the knowledge into students' real ability. Secondly by strengthening the cooperation with tourism enterprises, providing interns higher levels positions, we should consciously change the current situation in which the tourism management internships are mostly the low level service positions, which can exercise the undergraduate students' management and marketing competence, such as management trainee, professional marketing planning controller, etc., which truly reflects the characteristics of applied undergraduate education.

## **V. CONCLUSION**

Tourism management and marketing are both comprehensive and applied majors, and the intersection of these two is the training of tourism marketing talents, which needs to be guided by the goal of application-oriented talents training, focusing on the cultivation of

students' comprehensive professional ability. In order to achieve this goal, the first thing is to reverse the traditional subject-based educational concept, and the talent training model based on CBE can better guide the application-oriented undergraduate to complete the transformation. The talent training of application-oriented undergraduate course is a systematic project, which needs the consensus and efforts of education authorities, university administrators, professional teachers, students, enterprises and social groups.

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