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Practice Teaching System Establishment in the Major of Tourism Management

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Abstract

Based on the review of related national and international literature, it illustrated the current condition of practice teaching in the major of tourism management in China, specifically analyzed the existing problems, and then established the practice teaching system on the basis of competency based education (CBE), which include system establishing principles, system contents and measures to carry out the system.

Key words: Tourism management; Competency based education (CBE); Practice teaching system

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INTRODUCTION

Tourism industry is one of the pillar industries in our country and, according to the forecast, in five years, China will become the largest tourist destination country and the fourth largest tourist-source country in the world. With the increase of tourist attractions and tourism enterprises, the demand for high-quality tourist talents is also growing, especially in travel agencies, hotels, tourist attractions, etc..

However, the survey shows, it seems somewhat hard for getting talents into the industry. One of the most important reasons is that for the graduates of tourism management major, although having relatively abundant theoretical knowledge, their comprehensive practical ability is relatively weak. Therefore, to deepen the reform of the existing traditional tourism management professional practice teaching system, to study how to enhance the comprehensive practice abilities of College Tourism Management Graduates, and to construct the competency based education (Competency Based Education, referred to as CBE), have very important theoretical and practical significance.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 The Related Research Abroad

Competency based education (CBE), beginning to be mentioned in the late World War Two and the representative countries are the United States and Canada. CBE pays more attention to the needs of the occupation, while determining the target. The specific operation process is composed of employing a group of experts to form a professional committee of the school. In accordance with the needs of the post, it defines the layers, the abilities to take the position and clear training objectives. Then, by organizing school teaching staff, it takes the abilities to be the target, designs the teaching contents, sets the curriculum and finally assess whether the above could meet the needs (Zhang, 2009).

Competency based education (CBE) in the 1960s was used for the training of teachers of Vocational Education in the United States. After the 1980s, it was transferred to Canada, and gradually extended to Europe, Australia and many other countries. It has exerted a far-reaching influence on the vocational education and training.

Especially in the late 1980s and early 1990s, main commonwealth countries, such as England, Australia, and New Zealand, used this thought to construct the system of vocational education and training and pushed the thought into a new high level (Xu, 2010).

On the basis of CBE, a detailed analysis of the ability to work and the talent market demand in different countries had been conducted, and the corresponding practice teaching system had been established. In their major of tourism management, practice teaching content occupies a high proportion in the tourism teaching system.

1.2 The Related Research in China

After 1980's, China's education reform was affected by CBE mode in different extents (Zhao, 2009). In 2002, Wang Jilin proposed to conduct reform by using CBE mode. He compared of four aspects of between the traditional teaching model and CBE teaching mode, including the career goals, teaching module, personalized learning and management. In the research of competency based education in the area of practical tourism teaching, in 2008, Zhang Haiyan and Ye Zhengmao proposed to learn from the CBE model, and to promote the teaching reform practice of tour guide service course. In 2012, Li Junjia, from the aspects of planning, implementation, examination and execution in the practice teaching system of higher vocational tourism education, he established the competency based practical education system of tourism management.

1.3 Research Assessment

To sum up, the domestic and foreign scholars both have their related researches on the competency based education in tourism management specialty and have accorded achievements. Study abroad is earlier than China, and their system construction and implementation are comparatively better and more mature. But there are significant differences in the aspects of economic development, education and market environment between countries such as Britain and America, and China. Therefore, we can not just take their research results for granted. The scholars of our country in this aspect more focused on the higher vocational colleges, and the research on the application of the concept of competency based education in the major of Tourism Management in universities was relatively small. This paper takes this as a starting point to study how to use CBE for the establishment and implementation of practice teaching system, and to train advanced talents of tourism management.

2. THE CURRENT PROFESSIONAL PRACTICE TEACHING SITUATION AND THE EXISTING PROBLEMS IN UNIVERSITY TOURISM MANAGEMENT MAJORS OF CHINA

2.1 The Current Professional Practice Teaching Situation in University Tourism Management Majors of China

Higher education of tourism management in China started from the beginning of 1980s. Bachelors' degree of tourism was first granted in 1990s. After 30 years of development, there is currently more than 800 Chinese tourism higher education schools, including professional level, undergraduate level and graduate level. However, there is still a big gap between the educational system and the market demand. The current training mode still can't meet the actual requirements of the tourism market. Therefore, most professional tourism management graduates do not stay in the tourism field after graduation. The talents employment rate is low and the loss rate is too high.

2.2 The Existing Problems in Practice Teaching in University Tourism Management Majors of China

Tourism management majors in colleges and universities of our country have taken some reform measures in the practice teaching, in order to provide high level talents for the tourism industry. However, there still exists a series of problems, mainly in the following aspects:

2.2.1 Paying Too Much Attention on the Theoretical Knowledge Teaching

Compared with other majors in colleges and universities, tourism management is a highly practical application and its practice teaching ideas and methods directly affect the comprehensive training quality and the prospect of future employment of students majoring in tourism management. However, at present, in our country, many tourism management majors of colleges and universities set this major under the category of management of business administration, with courses divided into basic courses, professional foundation courses, professional courses and practical teaching courses. This pays too much emphasis on theoretical teaching, and therefore ignores the importance of practice teaching, and neglects the students' key position in teaching activities. It results in less students' practical ability training and it is rather difficult for students to adapt to the future employment needs.

2.2.2 The Construction of Practice Training Base Is Lagging Behind

The construction of practice training base in our colleges and universities is lagging behind, and a relatively steady and good training base outside of the campus has not yet been established. In many universities, it mainly relies on students and teachers to have contact with the training base, especially in those second and third level cities. In a convenient point of view, the school usually prefers to contact the local place for practice. However, the local tourism enterprises, due to various reasons, have not formed a certain scale, and lacked the ability to train many students at the same time.

2.2.3 The Practice Teaching Content Is Not Good Enough

Due to the restriction of the practice funds and practice time, various factors are not controllable, which affect the practice teaching content. In many cases, the actual practice content should be consistent with the actual needs of the practice place and seasonal factors of tourism location and management mode may change. So the content of the practice teaching also has to be changed. The practice condition of the travel agencies and the tourist hotels is not the same. Therefore, the practice time, position, and the number of the students are different, which leads to different practice results. In addition, some tourism enterprises have different requirements on students' appearance, which makes students face unequal opportunities. In sum, the content of practice teaching needs to be further improved and standardized.

2.2.4 The Existence of a Phenomenon: "Having Grandiose Aims but Puny Abilities"

At present, there has been a phenomenon, which is university students majoring in tourism management sometimes have grandiose aims but puny abilities. A lot of places of practice require students to start from the most basic work. For example, the hotel practice will require students to learn the restaurant service, the room service, the lobby service, telephone service, and so on. In many cases, after the orientation training, students are required to work directly. But, at present, most of the students are the only child of their parents. Their expectations seem contrary to the actual practice. Students may think that the work is too easy. Since they are university students, they should learn more high-level knowledge and get more high-level training. Although teachers will give the students right guidance, and will tell the students to have solid foundation first, then superstructure, but still the phenomenon of the above sometimes arises.

2.2.5 Lack of the Cultivation of Comprehensive Ability

Tourism Management Major Students in universities usually set practice skill knowledge about some specific courses, such as tourist etiquette, hotel management, catering management, front desk and room management,

tour guide service and other basic skills courses. These courses are generally explained mainly by teachers, through using multimedia measures. Students usually are unrelated to the actual content. They lack the practice in the aspects of travel agency, hotel operation, and tourism product sales. The students' comprehensive ability needs to be further improved.

3. THE ESTABLISHMENT OF UNIVERSITY TOURISM MANAGEMENT PRACTICE TEACHING SYSTEM BASED ON CBE

With the rapid development of China's tourism industry and the actual employment situation, it is quite necessary for universities and colleges to train a group of excellent talents with high ability and strong sense of service. And on the basis of CBE, the construction of tourism management practice teaching system can better meet the actual needs of teaching, and better train tourism talents for the society.

3.1 The Construction Principle

The construction of tourism management practice teaching system based on CBE should have the following principles:

3.1.1 The Principle of Target

The tourism management practice teaching system establishment should have target principle. It should be based on the actual market demand to identify the professional positioning, highlight the professional characteristics, and closely be around the needs of personnel training and tourism management professional training objectives. Professional goals should fully implement the Party and the country's basic policy, and should vigorously meet the quality needs according to the requirements of quality education and the tourism industry economic development. Objective principle is the most basic starting point of the construction of practice teaching system based on CBE, and is the ultimate goal of constructing the teaching system of practice.

3.1.2 The Principle of Practice

In order to construct the practice teaching system, practice content is very important. The training plan and the course setting should highlight the position of practical teaching, should be based on objective and professional characteristics of professional training, should combine the development of the local tourism industry, tourism enterprises and the actual situation of students learning, should set up the proportion of the theory and the practice content in the teaching, should emphasize the practical teaching content, should take CBE as the basis, should reasonably arrange the teaching time, should make teaching plan practical, and should strive to cultivate

students practical ability and innovation ability, so as to meet the needs of students learning.

3.1.3 The Principle of Normative

It must be admitted to the normative principles of practice teaching system, so as to achieve the teaching plan specification, operation and management norms, quality management and the practice base construction management. According to the concept of competency based education training market position, layers of refinement, clear training objectives, reasonable training plan, good teaching content, emphasis on teaching quality, the construction of teaching system, strict teaching management, and the corresponding practice teaching assessment methods and requirements must be arranged perfectly (Yang, 2013).

3.2 System Content

On the basis of CBE, the practice teaching system of tourism management major in universities conducts reform from the aspects of training objectives, training programs, teaching methods, teachers and basic construction.

3.2.1 Clear Professional Training Objectives

The most important thing for the system establishment on the basis of CBE is clear training objectives of the students in tourism management major in universities and colleges. It should be in accordance with the competency based education thought, inviting relevant experts and scholars, analyzing market occupation demand together, decomposing the layers of demand for professionals, and establishing training target according to the requirements. A clear overall target classification and making target refinement are quite important, so that teachers and students, in the training process, can complete the teaching task according to the training target.

3.2.2 Developing Reasonable Training Programs

Training plan is reasonable or not will affect the students' overall quality. Therefore, we should focus on the training target system, highlight students' ability oriented education and make reasonable training plan. The training programs should have a reasonable proportion of the teaching theory and practice, consider the importance of practical teaching in tourism management major, arrange the students to have practice teaching time, and combine the theory and practice, so as to cultivate high-quality professional talents in tourism management field.

3.2.3 Improving the Traditional Teaching

The traditional way of teaching is "The teacher teaches and the students learn". However, for the professional tourism management, student-centered teaching model can enhance students' interest in learning and improve the learning effect. For example, the tour guide practice simulation, and tourism line design can be explained by the teacher about teaching aims and requirements, and

then transfer the initiative to the students. The teacher demonstrates, the students follow, and conducts an on-site contest. It can not only improve the students' enthusiasm and the ability to think independently, but also can improve the students' learning effect.

3.2.4 Cultivating Competent Teachers

The key to the employment competitiveness of tourism management major students in universities, and students' practical ability is the teaching staff with high level and rational structure. For tourism management which pay more attention on practice, "Double-ability Teachers" (those who have both professional and technical abilities, which means he not only can be as a lecturer, or associate professor, but also has practical teaching experience.) can make better guidance to students. Therefore, we should provide opportunities for tourism management professional teachers' training, enhance the practical experience, so that the teachers can be qualified for practice teaching in tourism management field.

3.2.5 The Construction of Suitable Training Base

At present, most of the tourism management majors lack stable cooperation training base which accord with the teaching requirement. Usually, scenic spots, hotels or travel agencies, due to seasonal reasons, need students to work directly and temporarily in their period of internship. There are some disadvantages in the practice. So the school should actively contact different places, not just limited to local ones, so as to make full use of domestic and foreign resources. Better international travel agencies, high-grade star hotels, or scenic spots, as the practice base for students, in order to better train the students, and cultivate professional talents in tourism management field.

4. THE COUNTERMEASURES FOR IMPLEMENTATION OF CBE BASED PRACTICE TEACHING SYSTEM IN UNIVERSITY TOURISM MANAGEMENT MAJOR

4.1 To Learn the Advanced Experience at Home and Abroad

The practice teaching of tourism management and competency based education in foreign countries is earlier than our country, and have accumulated rich experience. The organization of the school leaders and teachers to learn the advanced experience of foreign countries will no doubt improve the practice teaching system in our country. China's tourism industry is in the stage of development, and it needs to learn the advanced experience to promote the tourism industry, so as to minimize the gap in practice teaching in tourism management between foreign countries and China.

4.2 To Write Practice Teaching Materials

Tourism management textbooks in China, compared with other professional textbooks, update slowly. Professional knowledge system is usually created by relating the professional courses with “tourism” ahead of them. Teaching material is lack of practice teaching, which has been unable to meet the needs of practice teaching. Therefore, the teaching practice is in urgent need of system supporting materials to promote the development of practice teaching. We should actively encourage teachers, according to the actual situation, to conduct practice teaching materials reform.

4.3 To Establish Evaluation System for Practice Teaching

The effect of the practice teaching depends on the evaluation system of examination. So the scientific and accurate establishment of evaluation system of practical teaching can effectively monitor the implementation of practice teaching system and can improve the practice teaching system based on the assessment results. However, the establishment and practice of teaching evaluation system need the joint efforts of many aspects. Educational institutions, universities, academic offices and social practice departments need to join in.

4.4 To Provide Moral Education for the Occupation

The practice teaching of tourism management requires students to be dependable and is willing to work hard. They need to do their best, to be professional, serious and realistic and have sincere service awareness of tourism services. Sometimes, the students pick easy jobs and shirk hard ones, and have grandiose aims but puny abilities,

therefore, to carry out occupation moral education of students can make students have higher occupation morality and good sense of tourism industry, and foster the habit of good occupation behavior in the process of practice teaching.

CONCLUSION

Tourism industry develops quite fast in China, but there is a large gap between the talents supply and talents demand. Here in this paper, it tries to establish a practical teaching system based on CBE for university students in tourism management major, so as to shift more concentration from theoretical teaching to practical teaching and to better equip the university students in tourism management major with both theoretical and practical knowledge and skills. In this way, the education quality can be improved and more qualified talents can be provided to the tourism market.

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