

# Supply-Side Structural Reform of Tourism Undergraduate Education in China

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**Abstract-***The structural reform of China's tourism undergraduate education is facing the structural reform of the economic supply-side, the increasing strategic position of tourism in the economic society, the globalization of the tourism market, and the ever-changing science and technology. It is facing the realistic requirements of increasing effective supply, reducing supply and demand misplacement, and making up for the gap in professional talents. In response to these requirements, this paper uses a variety of research methods such as literature review, questionnaire survey, and on-site visits to obtain successful international experience in tourism and hotel undergraduate education, get important data on two educational needs of students and industry enterprises, and use the importance-satisfaction (IPA) analysis theory and SPSS statistical software to statistics and analyze the data. Finally, from the perspectives of teaching plan, training objectives, teaching methods and means, internship positioning and management, the paper proposes some systematical and comprehensive recommendations for the supply-side reform of China's tourism and hotel undergraduate education.*

**Keywords-***Tourism; Hospitality; Undergraduate education; Supply-side reform*

## INTRODUCTION

"Higher education assumes the mission of providing quasi-public products to the market. Colleges and universities can provide important support for economic supply side reform and national social progress in terms of labor and technology" [1]. Today, China's higher education is facing the era requirements of structural adjustment and change. In the field of higher education, colleges and universities are providers of educational services, and students in school are internal demanders of educational services. Graduates become the talents needed by enterprises and institutions through the training and education of colleges and universities. Enterprises and institutions are the external demanders of the educational products of graduates from colleges and universities. The achievements, reputation and status of colleges and universities run largely depend on the working performance of graduates and their evaluation of the school. Therefore, students at school, graduates, colleges and universities, enterprises and institutions are the most important stakeholders in higher education. The author agrees with Li Yuhua's point of view (2016): "The focus and direction of the supply-side reform of higher education are all in colleges and universities" [1].

The global tourism industry and tourism market is

undergoing structural changes. The structural adjustment and reform of tourism higher education is a global topic. In Western Europe, the United States and other countries, the structural adjustment and reform of tourism and hotel higher education has never stopped. Although there are still many problems, the results have been very significant. China's tourism higher education, which is younger in industry, profession and discipline, faces more serious realistic problems and school operating challenges, urgently to be resolved. Liu Zhanhui [2] research found: "From the end of the 20th century, the number of Chinese candidates who are the first to apply for tourism majors is gradually decreasing." "Since 2006, the source of students major in the tourism profession lacked the first volunteer examinee, and the admission score is continuously decreasing, and even need supplementary admission." The ratio of Chinese tourism undergraduate students employed in tourism and hotel related industries is about 10-30 percent, and less than 20 percent of them stay in the tourism and hospitality related industries after two years. Bao Jigang and Zhu Feng [3] also showed that: The enrollment scale of Tourism Management undergraduate in China generally show a declined status; Students' tourism, hotel professional recognition and employment ratio in the industry are "double low"; The teacher size and title structure of

Tourism Management have not changed much in the past 40 years; Professional features are not obvious. Many other studies have shown that the employees in tourism and hospitality industry are only third-rate qualification. It is much lower than the employee qualifications in most other industries. There are serious problems in China's tourism undergraduate education.

Invalid and misplaced supply in tourism higher education is excessive, and effective supply is insufficient, lead to the specifications and quantity of Chinese tourism and hotel talents cultivation are far from meeting the needs of the industry development. The tourism and hospitality industries are faced with a huge talent gap. This paper stands at the perspective of the supply-side reform for tourism undergraduate education, by consulting a large amount of literature, visiting the tourism and hotel industry companies to conduct extensive and in-depth research, trying to propose some more systematic and unique perspectives on the key issues of tourism and hotel undergraduate teaching, curriculum, talent development, application and professional characteristics, internship, employment, and faculty from an operational level, which have been arguing all the time by the academic community and the industry.

## **OBJECTIVES**

Through reviewing a large number of literatures and surveys, this paper discovers the history and laws of evolution and development for tourism higher education in developed countries; On the basis of analyzing the background and development history of China's tourism undergraduate education, finding the structural problems in China's tourism undergraduate education, proposing the entry points for the supply-side structural reform of China's tourism undergraduate education; Further analyze the inherent logic and connections between these entry points, propose the strategies and recommendations for implementing supply-side structural reforms of these entry points. Because cultivating talent based on capability has always been a hot topic at home and abroad. Therefore, based on the previous studies, this paper puts forward the basic capabilities and qualities that Chinese tourism undergraduate professionals need. And get the importance and satisfaction status evaluation that tourism and hospitality industries give to these capabilities.

## **METHODS**

This paper uses a variety of research methods such

as literature analysis, online questionnaire survey, face-to-face interviews to collect a large amount of information and data. The researcher read a large number of Chinese and foreign related literature, distributed 100 questionnaires online, and recovered 76 valid questionnaires, formally interviewed 10 human resources directors, general managers or deputy general managers. The enterprises surveyed are mainly in the Yangtze River Delta region, and also involve provinces such as Beijing, Guangdong, Hainan, etc., which are economically developed or have mature tourism and hotel industries. The companies surveyed covered international and domestic well-known hotel brands, and travel agencies which engaged in different travel businesses. The education background of the respondents is mainly undergraduate (59 percent), master's and doctoral degrees' account for 16 percent, and college and below are 25 percent. The gender ratio is 43:57. The respondents are all travel agencies general manager, hotel human resources directors, hotel general managers or deputy general managers and other senior executives who were closely connected with the school and experienced in the industry. Each company selects only one executive to conduct investigation or interview. The purpose of the survey and interview is to obtain the importance and satisfaction evaluation on the basic ability or knowledge that the industry needs for tourism and hotel undergraduate students. This study divides the importance of capability into five levels: 1-very unimportant, 2-not important, 3-general, 4-important, 5-very important; and also divides satisfaction into five levels: 1-very dissatisfied, 2-unsatisfied, 3-general, 4-satisfied, 5-very satisfied. The respondents score the importance and satisfaction according to the five levels. The data of the survey were statistically analyzed using the "importance-satisfaction" analysis theory and SPSS software. The data of the survey were statistically analyzed using the "Importance-Satisfaction" analysis theory and SPSS software, involving descriptive statistical analysis, comparative mean, T test (T value, bilateral significant value analysis).

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **The history of domestic and international tourism and hotel undergraduate education reform and development**

Tourism education originated in Europe, and then spread to the United States and Canada, and then to Australia and New Zealand, etc. Global tourism and hospitality education is deeply influenced by Europe

and the Americas. American tourism and hospitality education started in the early 1920s. Most of the tourism and hospitality professions in the United Kingdom and the United States have developed from the disciplines of entertainment, leisure, geography, family economics, human ecology, and nutrition. The commonality of European higher education is the use of capability as a general standard to illustrate curriculum and educational activities. Western scholars emphasize that "higher education must recognize and adapt to the socio-economic environment in which students live." [4]. Australian tourism and hospitality specialties began in the mid-1970s, always maintain the characteristics of its industrial development. Its tourism and hotel professional school positioning has been deeply affected by the national economic situation and the market demand for talents. From the 1970s, focusing on food nutrition, food production, food science and technology; to pay attention to management, advanced management concepts, management techniques, and problem solving in the 1980s; then develop to the application of service quality and total quality management technology in the 1990s; and then to pay attention to the application of service quality and total quality management technology in the 1990s [5]. It can be seen that countries such as Europe, America, Australia and other tourism and hotel education started earlier, their tourism and hotel undergraduate education is closely following the changes in the national economic situation and market demand, constantly deepening adjustments and changes. The frequency of change is higher and the adjustment is larger.

China's tourism higher education is marked by the establishment of the first batch of colleges in 1978, and it has been 40 years of development. In 1981, eight universities in China first started tourism undergraduate education. But now, the situation of the tourism profession in these 8 universities is not optimistic [3]. The tourism management discipline is a new discipline developed with the development of China's tourism economy and tourism industry. It is a second-level discipline under the first-level discipline of management. Under it, there are three subject categories of tourism management, hotel management, exhibition economy and management. China's tourism management discipline initially relied on humanities and geography, history and culture, meteorology, ecology, agriculture and forestry and other disciplines and teachers, and then gradually became independent and developed. It is still deeply influenced by these

disciplines to date.

### **The basic principles that should be adhered to in the supply-side structural reform of China's tourism undergraduate education**

The supply-side structural reform of higher education is not a unilateral act of colleges and universities, and it requires the participation of various stakeholders such as colleges and universities, students, graduates, enterprises and institutions. The supply-side structural reform of China's tourism undergraduate education should adhere to the following principles: In response to the needs of the country's economic development and industry development; Respect and study individual students and highlight application characteristics; Set capacity standards and implement them; Industry and companies participate synergistically; Focus on what students can do and do, not just what they learn.

### **Analyze the basic capability of Chinese tourism undergraduate talents and its investigation results**

Refer to relevant research results by Australian scholars [6], American scholars and other Western scholars [4], Western higher education executives and professional institutions, and combined with the actual situation of China's tourism undergraduate education and industry development, finally, the 28 nuclear capabilities and quality indicators for tourism and hotel undergraduate students are determined. See Table 1 for details.

Table 1. Basic capabilities and qualities required for tourism and hotel undergraduate graduates to work

|    |  |
|----|--|
| 1  | Self-study capability                                    |
| 2  | Teamwork capability                                      |
| 3  | Oral communication skills                                |
| 4  | Writing communication capability                         |
| 5  | English communication and writing capability             |
| 6  | Work planning capability                                 |
| 7  | Analyze and solve problems capability                    |
| 8  | Self-confidence and psychological balance capability     |
| 9  | Independent judgment capability                          |
| 10 | Critical thinking and innovation capability              |
| 11 | Capability to implement change                           |
| 12 | Communication capability                                 |
| 13 | Flexibility and adaptability                             |
| 14 | Time management capability                               |
| 15 | Information technology and computer operation capability |
| 16 | Customer service capability                              |
| 17 | Leadership and management capability                     |

Table 1(cont.) Basic capabilities and qualities required for tourism and hotel undergraduate graduates to work

|    |   |
|----|---|
| 18 | Research capability                                   |
| 19 | Relationship coordination and processing capability   |
| 20 | Incident response capability                          |
| 21 | Decision making capability                            |
| 22 | Hotel and tourism related industry knowledge          |
| 23 | Marketing and sales business knowledge and capability |
| 24 | Economic knowledge and financial knowledge            |
| 25 | Professional ethics and professional awareness        |
| 26 | Academic achievement                                  |
| 27 | Related working experience                            |
| 28 | Image and temperament                                 |

In order to further determine the importance of 28 capabilities and qualities for students' future career

development, and the current achievements, reputation and industry satisfaction that colleges and universities cultivate the students' capabilities and qualities, this study use "Importance-Satisfaction" analysis theory and SPSS software to statistic and analyze the importance and satisfaction evaluation data of 28 capabilities and qualities to obtain the important indicators such as comparison mean, standard deviation, T value and paired samples two-sided significant value of them. The higher mean score of the importance, the more important this capability is; the higher the mean score of satisfaction, the higher the satisfaction with this capability cultivation and the more positive the attitude. See Statistical Table 2 for details.

Table 2. Statistics on the importance and satisfaction evaluation of the tourism and hotel undergraduate graduates from the industry

| Capabilities and qualities                               | Importance evaluation |                    |      | Satisfaction evaluation |                    |      | T test |        |                             |
|--|-----------------------|--------------------|------|-------------------------|--------------------|------|--------|--------|-----------------------------|
|  | Mean                  | Standard deviation | Rank | Mean                    | Standard deviation | Rank | Mean   | Tvalue | Significant value (2 sides) |
| Teamwork capability                                      | 4.54                  | 0.791              | 1    | 3.37                    | 0.746              | 14   | 1.17   | 9.384  | 0.000                       |
| Oral communication skills                                | 4.37                  | 0.892              | 2    | 3.38                    | 0.816              | 12   | 0.99   | 6.948  | 0.000                       |
| Self-study capability                                    | 4.34                  | 0.987              | 3    | 3.24                    | 0.831              | 24   | 1.1    | 6.879  | 0.000                       |
| Communication capability                                 | 4.33                  | 0.971              | 4    | 3.38                    | 0.799              | 13   | 0.95   | 6.049  | 0.000                       |
| Work planning capability                                 | 4.28                  | 0.810              | 5    | 3.24                    | 0.764              | 25   | 1.04   | 8.232  | 0.000                       |
| Time management capability                               | 4.26                  | 0.971              | 6    | 3.26                    | 0.915              | 21   | 1      | 5.825  | 0.000                       |
| Customer service capability                              | 4.26                  | 0.943              | 7    | 3.43                    | 0.899              | 7    | 0.83   | 5.431  | 0.000                       |
| Flexibility and adaptability                             | 4.24                  | 0.831              | 8    | 3.39                    | 0.850              | 10   | 0.85   | 6.933  | 0.000                       |
| Relationship coordination and processing capability      | 4.21                  | 0.899              | 9    | 3.20                    | 0.833              | 27   | 1.01   | 7.848  | 0.000                       |
| Analyze and solve problems capability                    | 4.20                  | 0.849              | 10   | 3.28                    | 0.759              | 19   | 0.92   | 6.308  | 0.000                       |
| Critical thinking and innovation capability              | 4.17                  | 0.870              | 11   | 3.45                    | 0.737              | 6    | 0.72   | 5.486  | 0.000                       |
| Incident response capability                             | 4.14                  | 0.890              | 12   | 3.26                    | 0.806              | 22   | 0.88   | 5.795  | 0.000                       |
| Independent judgment capability                          | 4.09                  | 0.897              | 13   | 3.30                    | 0.800              | 17   | 0.79   | 5.255  | 0.000                       |
| Decision making capability                               | 4.08                  | 0.845              | 14   | 3.30                    | 0.783              | 18   | 0.78   | 5.714  | 0.000                       |
| Professional ethics and professional awareness           | 4.07                  | 1.170              | 15   | 3.47                    | 0.973              | 5    | 0.6    | 3.310  | 0.001                       |
| Self-confidence and psychological balance capability     | 4.05                  | 1.057              | 16   | 3.33                    | 0.839              | 15   | 0.72   | 4.128  | 0.000                       |
| English communication and writing capability             | 4.04                  | 0.871              | 17   | 3.39                    | 0.750              | 11   | 0.65   | 5.148  | 0.000                       |
| Leadership and management capability                     | 4.00                  | 1.033              | 18   | 3.12                    | 0.816              | 28   | 0.88   | 6.181  | 0.000                       |
| Image and temperament                                    | 4.00                  | 0.833              | 19   | 3.74                    | 0.839              | 1    | 0.26   | 2.109  | 0.038                       |
| Information technology and computer operation capability | 3.97                  | 0.979              | 20   | 3.55                    | 0.737              | 3    | 0.42   | 3.417  | 0.001                       |
| Writing communication capability                         | 3.91                  | 0.867              | 21   | 3.42                    | 0.717              | 8    | 0.49   | 3.771  | 0.000                       |
| Capability to implement change                           | 3.88                  | 0.979              | 22   | 3.28                    | 0.741              | 20   | 0.6    | 4.240  | 0.000                       |
| Marketing and sales business knowledge and capability    | 3.86                  | 1.003              | 23   | 3.32                    | 0.752              | 16   | 0.54   | 3.507  | 0.001                       |
| Economic knowledge and financial knowledge               | 3.84                  | 0.910              | 24   | 3.26                    | 0.822              | 23   | 0.58   | 4.449  | 0.000                       |
| Hotel and tourism related industry knowledge             | 3.80                  | 1.083              | 25   | 3.51                    | 0.721              | 4    | 0.29   | 2.032  | 0.046                       |
| Research capability                                      | 3.71                  | 0.977              | 26   | 3.22                    | 0.776              | 26   | 0.49   | 3.694  | 0.000                       |
| Related working experience                               | 3.71                  | 0.977              | 27   | 3.42                    | 0.753              | 9    | 0.29   | 1.920  | 0.059                       |
| Academic achievement                                     | 3.59                  | 0.996              | 28   | 3.58                    | 0.638              | 2    | 0.01   | 0.115  | 0.909                       |
| Composite average  |                       | 4.07               |      |                         | 3.36               |      |        | 0.71   |                             |

The data in Table 2 shows that the average scores of industry executives' importance evaluation with the capability is from 3.59 to 4.54. The overall average is 4.07. Industry executives believe that the three most important capabilities for engaged in tourism and hotel industry work are: teamwork, verbal communication and self-learning. And the three most unimportant capabilities are: academic achievement, relevant work experience and research capability. The evaluation results of oral communication skills, research capability, academic achievement, and relevant work experience are basically consistent with the findings of Australian scholars Jie Wang, Helen Ayres and Jeremy Huyton (2009) [6]. It shows that in the domestic and international tourism and hotel industry, students' academic performance, research ability and related

work experience are generally not valued. But the oral communication skills of students are generally valued. Various research and practical experiences have shown that industry-related work experience is very important for students' employment success and future career success. But industry managers don't pay attention to it, analyzing the reasons: First, managers position the posts of students' internships and graduate employment in low-skilled posts. They only position students in the perspective of interns and newly graduated college students, not by the supervisors and future business managers; Second, tourism and hotel companies do have their own set of work standards and processes. Many managers believe that people with work experience are more likely to question and deviate from the standards and processes required by the company.

The importance and satisfaction level of capabilities

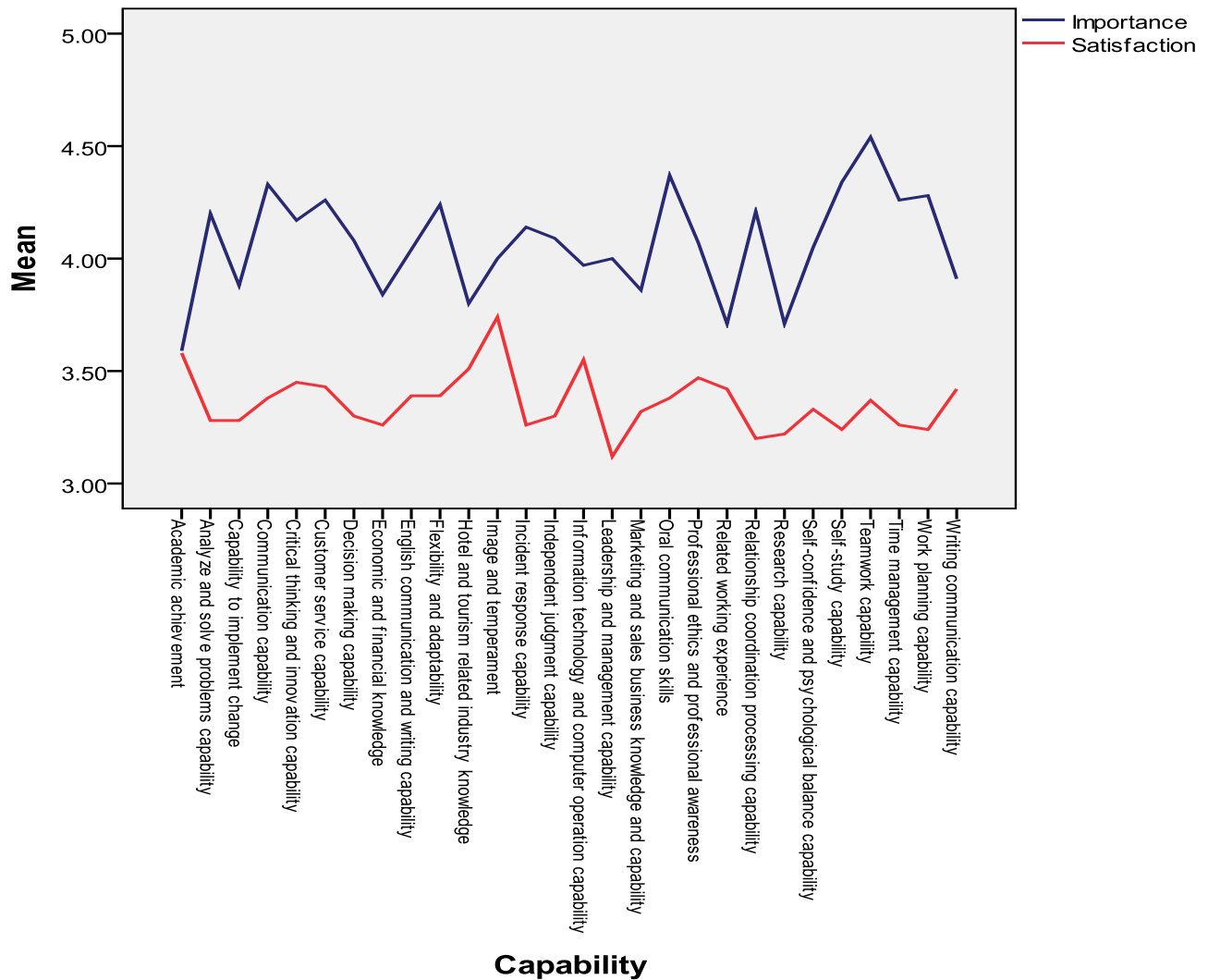


Figure 1: Importance - Satisfaction level difference map for the capabilities and qualities needed tourism undergraduate graduate to work

The average scores of industry executives' satisfaction with the capability of colleges and universities to train students are from 3.12 to 3.74. The overall average is 3.36. Industry executives are most satisfied with the students' three capabilities: image temperament, academic achievement, information technology and computer operation ability; the three most dissatisfied capabilities are: leadership and management capability, relationship coordination processing capabilities, and research capabilities. There is a big difference between the total importance average (4.07) and the total satisfaction average (3.36), indicating that the importance of each capability is not at the same level as the industry's satisfaction with the capability to train talents in colleges and universities.

Two-sided significant values are obtained by the importance-satisfaction paired sample T test. 21 of the 28 two-sided significant values are 0 (Sig.=0.000), indicating that the importance-satisfaction difference of the 21 capabilities was extremely significant; 5 significant values greater than zero and less than 0.05 (Sig.<0.05), indicating that the importance-satisfaction difference of the five capabilities is significant; The two significant values of relevant work experience and academic achievement are greater than 0.05

(Sig.>0.05), indicating that there is no significant difference in the importance-satisfaction of the two capabilities. The T values of each capability in Table 2 are greater than zero, indicating that the importance of each capability exceeds its satisfaction. The Cultivation of Students' capability by the tourism undergraduate education of related colleges and universities has not met the expectations of the industry. The importance-satisfaction difference is shown in Figure 1 for details.

Figure 2 is a scatter plot drawn from the importance and satisfaction standardized values of 28 capabilities. There are 8 capabilities and qualities in the second quadrant. Their corresponding numbers are: 3- Self-study capability, 5- Work planning capability, 6- Time management capability, 9- Relationship coordination processing capability, 10- Analyze and solve problems capability, 12- Incident response capability, 13- Independent judgment capability, 14- Decision making capability. Explain that these eight capabilities and qualities are issues that universities need to pay special attention to and solve. The training level of these eight capabilities and qualities is improved, the overall satisfaction of the industry and society in tourism management undergraduate education will be greatly enhanced.

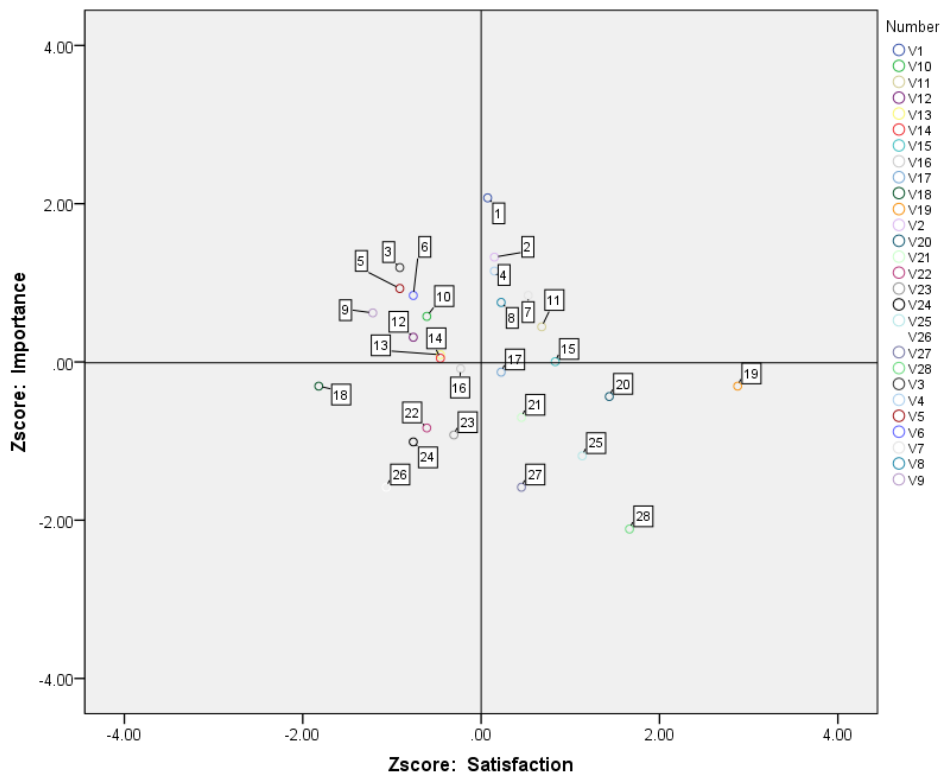


Figure 2: Importance - Satisfaction scatter plot for the capabilities and qualities needed tourism undergraduate graduate to work

## **The entry points and countermeasures for the supply-side structural reform of China's tourism undergraduate education**

### **Entry point 1: Teaching plan formulation and revision reform**

In many colleges and universities, teaching plan is generally formulated and revised by the professional director, department head or teaching director, and then submitted to the higher level for review and implementation, it remains basically unchanged after a few years or ten years. This status quo should be changed. Because of the individual's knowledge, subject, academic and other perspectives, each has its own merits and limitations. The adjustment of the existing teaching plan for China's tourism undergraduate education is basically related to factors such as whether the course can be opened, whether the teaching conditions are available, and whether the school policy is adjusted. It is not an inevitable demand for the development of tourism education itself. Key stakeholders should be involved in the formulation and revision of the teaching plan. These main stakeholders of education include: school education experts, industry experts in enterprises and institutions, students and graduates, etc. And the work flow for formulation and revision should be standardized, the form should be solemn, and the events should be normalized.

The Australian scholar Jennifer Bird, Thea Van de Mortel, Julianne Holt, Maree Walo [7] proposed the "Continuous and collaborative curriculum review (CCCR)" teaching plan real-time monitoring method. That is, the revision of the teaching plan and teaching objectives is carried out at the end of each semester in conjunction with the teaching summary discussion, once every six months. During the seminar, all CCCR members gathered to review and summarize the teaching materials and data related to the curriculum and learning projects for half a year, analyze problems and share topics of education, paying attention to students' feedback and evaluation of teaching, and feedback collected questions to specific teachers or personnel. Using the CCCR mode of teaching detection methods, the entire teaching plan and the life cycle of each course from the initial approval to the subsequent revisions are systematic and scientific, problem-driven, focused on solving key problems and well-founded.

The connection between universities and industry companies affects the quality of their talents cultivation. Industry companies should be encouraged to participate in the formulation and revision of

teaching plans. Foreign practices that can be used for reference include: Establish an administrative advisory committee composed of senior executives of enterprises, and carry out concentrated events 1-2 times a year; At the same time, form a lower-level regional committee composed of senior managers and representatives from industry associations, participate in a number of school events on a regular or irregular basis throughout the year [8]. Such as: guest lectures, holding tourist days or hotel open days, etc.; It can also set up a curriculum development committee, invite senior managers of the companies to become their main members, and build old courses or develop new courses together with the school. These senior managers can also become a course teacher or a professional tutor of the students.

### **Entry point 2: Capability and quality goals reform based on future work needs**

Since the 1960s, cultivating talents based on capability has always been a hot topic. People usually divide the capability of tourism and hotel undergraduates should to have into general and management skills. Most scholars affirm the cultivation for students' general capabilities. But whether it is necessary to cultivate their management capabilities, some foreign scholars are controversial. It is obvious that only general capabilities are inadequate for undergraduate students who want to be leaders in the tourism and hospitality industry in the future. From the start of tourism and hotel undergraduate majors, America have proposed their talent training goals as "Meeting the growing talent needs of the industry and cultivating the industry leaders; making them become managers, owners and operators of the future hotel and tourism industry in the United States". Therefore, it should emphasize both general and management capabilities when setting capabilities for tourism and hotel undergraduate students.

A comparative study of Indian scholars Anjana Singh and Kirty Dutta [9] on internships between British and Indian tourism and hotel students found that: Indian students are doing first-line service work during internships, while British students are mainly manager roles; Indian students have low internship satisfaction and a large psychological gap after the internship; However, the UK students have high satisfaction with their internships. After the internship, they are very positive and more recognized for their profession. This research result shows that: cultivating students' management ability and management

knowledge is not only the requirement of undergraduate education, but also the key to satisfying students' growth and future career development needs, improving the effective supply of education, and even improving professional reputation and professional appeal.

Christine Kay and Elisa Moncarz [10] also did a good empirical study of the knowledge and capabilities required for tourism and hospitality students to succeed in the management position of the tourism and hospitality industries. The two scholars surveyed 184 senior managers, and got the conclusion that many scholars agree on: Human resource management knowledge, financial management knowledge, marketing knowledge, and information technology knowledge contribute to the success of tourism and hotel management works. Especially important for the success of management positions above the middle manager. Information technology knowledge and skills, human resource management capabilities are more common and useful for managers below the intermediate level. It is more important for senior management positions such as directors and general managers to have financial management knowledge and capabilities. Financial management knowledge and skill have a positive impact on senior managers' income and job promotion. The higher the level of managers, the more they need to improve their financial management capabilities. Therefore, China's tourism undergraduate education aiming to cultivate managers and leaders in the future industry, must pay attention to the cultivation of students' financial management, human resource management, marketing, information technology and other knowledge and capabilities. The curriculum practice of the undergraduate program in Lausanne International Hotel Management in Switzerland is consistent with the findings of these scholars. In its curriculum plan, there are up to 19 compulsory and elective courses related to the development of financial management skills. And there are also relatively more courses in human resource management, marketing, and information technology.

### **Entry point 3: Teaching methods and means reform**

In recent years, foreign education and academia have emphasized the importance of student experience [11], because the changes in the individual characteristics of students and the development of science and technology are bound to have an impact on educational methods and learning patterns. Educators

need to keep up-to-date with teaching methods and means. And continuously develop and implement effective teaching methods and means suitable for students' growth needs, so that students are willing to actively participate in various teaching activities. Scholar Zhang Sumei [12] pointed out that "China's tourism professional teaching methods are seriously backward", "student passively learn" and "lack of training of students' practical ability". China's tourism undergraduate education needs unique teaching methods and means that meet its professional characteristics, academic characteristics, industry characteristics and student characteristics. Traditional university teaching focuses on impart theoretical knowledge. Yet travel and hotel employers need students with good practical skills and experience. It is difficult for student to get a good job opportunity without work experience when he graduates. Most researchers, such as Johan R. Edelheim [13], insist on one point: Tourism and hotel undergraduate education needs to find a balance between professional knowledge impart and vocational skills development.

Teachers should be encouraged to incorporate applied research into teaching. Teachers are the designers, organizers, and implementers of teaching activities. In China, teachers engaged in tourism undergraduate education generally have less scientific research results and lower professional titles. Most teachers are academic-oriented teacher. They lack the necessary industry experience and industry frontier knowledge. And a small number of full-time or part-time practical teachers introduced from the industry are mostly teaching-oriented teacher. They have a lot of industry work experience but lack research awareness and skills. The teachers in China's tourism and hotel undergraduate majors need to be structurally adjusted and optimized. First, teachers must have the dual teacher quality and ability, and have at least a few years of industry experience and the latest industry frontier knowledge; Second, teachers need to do more applied research, and guide students to do more applied research projects, integrate applied research into teaching to let students understand why it is very important to apply scientific theories in business operations and managements. The Hong Kong Polytechnic University's tourism and hotel professional teachers have done a great job in this area and it is worth learning.

Encourage the use of case studies and assessment methods in teaching. Liu Zhanhui [2] advocates "incorporating cases into teaching". Many scholars and



institutions in the West also advocate the use of case teaching methods in tourism and hotel undergraduate education. Universities and businesses collaborate to develop problem-based learning cases that complement, guide, and evaluate teaching. Through case teaching, teachers can effectively integrate theory and practice. A large number of practices have proved that the case teaching method can significantly improve students' comprehensive ability in management, decision-making, communication, problem-solving, and critical thinking [8].

Guide students to deep study through project design. The traditional teaching method is the easiest to form a situation in which students generally learn at the surface. Deep learning is a way for students to actively and critically understand the teaching content. And truly understand how theoretical knowledge is applied in practice. One of the main goals of undergraduate education is to ensure that students can find the ideal job in their professional field in the future. Undergraduates should also have certain research capabilities and lifelong learning skills. Therefore, education should strive to guide students into deep learning and lifelong learning, Emphasis on the integration of theoretical knowledge they learned and the practical application [14]. This requires teachers to demonstrate the transition from theory to practice, with solid professional knowledge, the latest industry knowledge, skilled work ability, and good application research capabilities, in order to effectively help students to achieve the effect of deep learning. Western educators have some successful practices in guiding students to deep learning, such as project-based teaching methods. That is, the teacher intentionally develops the teaching content into a series of research projects for the students to complete. That is, the teacher intentionally develops the teaching content into a series of research projects for the students to complete, exerts the subjective initiative of the students, and cultivates the basic ability that students need to work in tourism and hospitality industry in the future and research ability [14].

Implement a teaching model that allows students to do it. American scholars David P. Stevens, Miranda Kitterlin, John R. Tanner [15] conducted empirical research on the learning styles preferred by tourism and hotel students. The results show that: Tourism and hotel undergraduate students the most like "hands-on" teaching method (34.6%), and the least like "listening" teaching method (8.1%), boys prefer the "hands-on" approach to teaching than girls. Moreover, most of the

students' learning styles are single dominant. Contemporary Chinese tourism undergraduate students are emerging humans, active in thinking, energetic, and like to learn by doing. Therefore, the universities and teachers must work hard to create a simulated learning environment for them, give them more opportunities to practice in teaching, let them carry out a large number of hands-on simulation practices. In addition to the hands-on teaching methods, teachers must also supplement the use of listening, reading, seeing, writing and other teaching methods to meet the learning needs of students with different learning habits. At the same time, pay attention to the evaluation method of each learning styles, and not only the traditional evaluation method of single reading and writing mode.

#### **Entry point 4: Internship orientation and internship management reform**

Tourism and hotel undergraduate education attaches great importance to student internships, and generally arranges for students to enter the company to exercise during their studies. Internship is a short-term practical work experience for students. The students receive training and gain valuable work experience in a particular career area. Internship is a bridge connecting the university to the labor market. Internship programs benefit all stakeholders in higher education. However, at present, there are many internship problems for Chinese tourism undergraduate students. The root of many problems is internship positioning and internship management issues. To solve the outstanding problems of student internship, first, it's necessary to correctly position the role of the intern. Interns are college students, not cheap labor. Internship is a practical teaching activity in which the school places the class in the enterprise, transfers the place of study from the school to the enterprise, and the students study at the enterprise while working. The main purpose of internship is to learn. Both the school and the enterprise are responsible for the internship content, internship arrangement, and internship effect of the students. Internship is an important comprehensive practical course for students during their studies at the university. The school must stand in the students' perspective and follow the education rules to design, organize, manage and guide this course; Secondly, it's necessary to reposition the internship posts. Most internship for tourism and hotel students start with grassroots service works, which are front-office operations departments with serious resignation culture. Schools should consider expanding the students' internships and future

work options to some back-office management and technical positions, such as: marketing, revenue, human resources, finance, information technology, public relations, office, reservations, etc. These positions have higher comprehensive ability requirements for students, and have more information technology and knowledge content, which are more challenging. Therefore, it will be more in line with the individual needs of contemporary college students. It is foreseeable that internships at these positions will improve the student's internship satisfaction, and students will also have a longer career in the travel and hospitality industry.

The school and the enterprise jointly manage the student internship effectively. First, the school and the enterprise jointly develop a comprehensive and detailed internship plan for each intern. Including specific time, place, content, personnel, methods, assessments, etc., the plan is to be given to each intern. It is important to point out that companies are willing to spend time, effort, and cost to train and guide interns with the school, based on long-term good cooperation and intercommunication between schools and enterprises. Schools must attach great importance to the cultivation and construction of high-quality off-campus practice bases. On this basis, companies can sit down and patiently discuss the student's internship plan with the school, treat interns as students, help them apply the theoretical knowledge they have learned to work practice, and position the students as future managers to train; Secondly, equip students with excellent internship tutors. Chinese tourism undergraduate colleges usually assign internship instructors to students. These teachers are generally served by full-time teachers or teaching and student management personnel at the school. They regularly visit the company to guide the interns during the student internship. However, the student internship location is in the enterprise, and the content is practical, so the supervisory leader of the student internship department is more suitable as an internship tutor. Indian scholars Anjana Singh and Kirti Dutta (2010) surveyed the internships of tourism and hotel undergraduate students, showing that the internship tutors students most anticipated are: Carefully teach them how to effectively do their work in an internship position; Observe their internship performance and be able to provide internship feedback and advice on a regular basis; Have extensive knowledge and sufficient ability to help them deal with all important issues in the internship; Can help them understand the situation of

other departments of the company; Pay attention to their suggestions and requirements; Adjust their internship goals by discussing and consulting with the internship tutor, find the positions that they are really interested in, and adjust to the positions that they are suitable and like. The internship tutors with the above requirements are not fully competent for the current internship instructors which appointed by Chinese universities. They must be the enterprise managers or senior experts who carefully selected by the school and the enterprise, very experienced in the industry and pay enough attention to the intern training; Finally, effective process monitoring and feedback on internships is also very important. Intern instructors should be able to help students evaluate their strengths and weaknesses based on their performance and provide constructive feedback on a regular basis. During the internship, when the student wants to communicate with the supervisor, manager or intern tutor, the approach is smooth and convenient. Students must not only have a detailed internship plan, but also have detailed study materials. The learning materials are informative and wide-ranging so that students can learn from them and expand their own knowledge [9].

Actively develop international internship programs. Tourism and hotels are very foreign-related industries. Arrange students to practice in well-known foreign or international tourism and hotel companies, their relatively good working environment, advanced management concepts and international vision, standardized operating standards and regulations, advanced management systems and technology applications, effective training and promotion channels, etc., will help improve the effectiveness of student internships and enhance student professional satisfaction.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

With lots of literature analysis and extensive empirical research, applying scientific methods such as importance-satisfaction (IPA) analysis theory and SPSS statistical software, this paper systematically sorts out the history and important achievements on reform and development of tourism and hotel undergraduate education at home and abroad, and analyzes the importance and satisfaction evaluation results done by the industry executives about the capability and quality for students' future work. From the operational level, the ideas and suggestions for the supply-side structural reform of tourism undergraduate education in China are given systematically and

comprehensively. This paper strives to provide enlightenment and reference for universities and colleges which setting tourism undergraduate majors on the teaching plan formulation and revision, talent training goal setting and talent training, teaching methods and means innovation, effective positioning and management of internship and other aspects. However, the running of each colleges and universities has its own characteristics and positioning, serving their respective local economic and social development needs, accumulated their own valuable school-running experience, and there are many their own unique reform and development initiatives and strategies. Combined with the limitations of the author's research perspective, therefore, there are still many valuable domestic and international school-running experiences that are worthy of exploration and summary by scholars. There are many more scientific and forward-looking reform ideas and measures that waiting for the scholars to design and plan to jointly promote the development of China's tourism undergraduate education.

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