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DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM EDUCATION AND TRAINING IN CHINA: Progress and Limitation

中國觀光教育訓練的發展: 進展及侷限

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摘要

在十九世紀早期中期,因為內政的不穩定混亂和國家安全考量,觀光業在中國 呈現停滯的現象。當領導者轉而視觀光業為一個通往發展的通行證時,觀光發展在七 零年代末重新恢復並在二十年中成為快速成長的經濟產業之一。本論文經由觀光相 關政策評估,檢視中國人力資源發展策略的合宜性。更進一步從於海南島從事實例 調查所收集的資料來探討成長旅遊區面臨的工作人力需求的挑戰以及觀光教育訓練 機會提供的現況。研究重心主要檢視限制觀光教育訓練發展的因素和業者所面臨人 員配置的困難。本文研究結果發現觀光人才資源的培養未得到應有的重視使其人力 發展遠落後於觀光發展速度。 再者,觀光教育訓練發展的目標層面界定通常是狹窄 的,因為太過偏重對於服務訓練及狹隘的專業化定位,一個錯置的觀念而忽略觀光的 寬廣面可在眾經濟事業體系中創造各式各樣的工作及所需的各種知識和技術層次。

關鍵字: 觀光教育與訓練、觀光就業、政策。

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ABSTRACT

Tourism in China was halted in the early and mid-19 century because of civil turmoil and national security concerns. Tourism was then resumed in the late 1970s and become one of the leading growing economic sectors in the last two decades as the leadership favoured tourism as a passport to development. The paper, through an evaluation of tourism-related policy documents, examines the adequacy of China's human resource development approach for tourism. The study further uses information derived from empirical studies conducted in Hainan to explore challenges confronting a growing destination's workforce demand, and current status of tourism education and training opportunities. The constraints that limit the development of education and training programs in a fast growing destination and challenges faced by the operators in meeting their staffing needs are presented and discussed. It is argued that the cultivation of required human resources for tourism does not receive due attention and lags far behind the pace of development. Furthermore, the goals of tourism education and training are generally quite narrowly defined because of overwhelming hospitality focus and narrowly defined professionalism orientation – notion that may be misplaced given the accommodating nature of tourism as a job creator in a wide range of economic sectors and diverse knowledge and skill levels required in the tourism sector.

Key words: Tourism education and training, tourism employment, policy.

1. INTRODUCTION

The field of tourism studies worldwide has grown in proliferation and attracted an increasing numbers of commentators and participants, albeit with questionable credibility as a discipline that is worthy of study in its own right. Tourism education often emerges as a result of the increased recognition of its economic significance by both the public and private sectors (Cooper *et al.* 1994). It is further elevated with the continuous prosperity of travel traffics in recent years. A major consequence of this phenomenon is that many tourism programs are predominately industry-driven and draw heavy emphasis on hospitality management, while the understanding of the multi-faceted nature of tourism is still premature. The development of tourism education and training programs in China reflect the assertion.

Since the inception of "open door policy" in 1978 by the Deng Administration, China has turned increased attention to economic opportunities afforded by the development of tourism. Correspondingly, higher education in the discipline of tourism management is regarded as an area of study with good career prospects. There are approximately 1,200 post-secondary schools offering tourism programs across the country. However, because of the diffused distribution of educators, teaching materials, facilities and capital, the standard of teaching and research is in need of improvement. At the same time, perpetuating prominence placed on socialist doctrines and communist ideological tenets has led to a situation in which the tourism education and training are circumscribed in that the entrepreneurship and individualism are not fostered. Few mechanisms have been deployed to support tourism employment opportunities for many who seek work in tourism for a livelihood.

The paper, through an evaluation of tourism-related policy documents, examines the adequacy of China's human resource development approach for tourism. The study further uses information derived from empirical studies conducted in Hainan to explore challenges confronting a growing destination's workforce demand, and current status of tourism education and training opportunities. Of course, examples drawn from one single study area cannot be entirely representative of other regions across China. However, the study is significant as Hainan has long been regarded by the Chinese national tourism authority as one of the priority destinations in China. The results will shed light on tourism's human resource issues in an emerging tourism destination. Finally, discussion concerning the adequacy of education goal and objectives as identified by tourism operators, students and educator is included.

2. TOURISM IN CHINA

Tourism in China, which has gradually developed to a massive scale, was a direct product of this economic reform era initiated in the 70s' and 80s' (Chow 1988). In the last two decades, tourism has been widely adopted as a major economic strategy to facilitate a move from the Soviet-style heavy industry driven economy to a complex amalgam of a services based economy. Tourism became a national issue when the China Travel Affairs and Administration was established in 1964 with two principles: "expanding external political influence" and "absorbing free foreign exchange" (He 1999). However, tourism prior to 1976 was not considered as an industry nor as an economic activity, "because of its scale, purpose and method of operations" (Gao and Zhang 1983:76). At the same time, tourism policy was largely negative in nature, controlling rather than stimulating tourism; the fewer foreigners, the better state of control (Richer 1983). Tourism, with the promise of foreign currency yields, was cosseted by the economic reform policy known as "the open door policy" promulgated by the Deng Administration in 1978.

In recent years, the Chinese authority, similar to many countries that are keen on tourism, has also swiftly adopted measures to help keep pace with the growing demands of tourism. These have included strengthening of the material foundations - - more hotels, increased accessibility and the "creation" of attractions. The strong mobilization power of the state has made Chinese tourism remarkable. There have been very few incidences of civilian resistance to clog the accelerated pace of tourism development, even under the circumstances of competing needs for resources. Today, tourism growth in China continues to be robust. However, in China's collectivist framework operating under the state's hegemony, the Chinese's participation in tourism has been sluggish. Furthermore, failure of the tourism cadres to respond effectively to employment structural shifts induced by tourism and to transform proactively the Chinese to adapt to tourism jobs, has hampered the continued expansion of the tourism industry in China.

From 1978 onward, annual arrivals and tourism receipts have consistently sustained impressive growth varying between annual rates of 7.4 percent to 70.9 percent with the exception of 1989 when a decrease of about 17 percent occurred as a result of the Tiananmen Square event that happened on June 4. According to the World Tourism Organization (WTO), the Asian and the Pacific regions are projected to be the fastest growing areas in tourism activities up to the year 2005. In particular, China is expected to become the most popular tourist destination in the world with increasing visitation growth at an annual rate of 8 percent, ahead of the US, France and Spain, by year 2020 with estimated tourism receipts of 3,300 billion RMB (399.5 billion USD). An estimate by WTO indicates that, in 2002, 703 million people traveled to a foreign country with total tourism receipts of USD 474 billion. China received 36.8 million foreign tourists which generated USD 20.4 billion in tourism receipts (WTO 2004). This means China attracted 5.2 percent of the world's cross-border visitation and 4.3 percent of the world expenditures in 2002 (Figures 1 and 2)..

Rank				tional Tou als (millic	al Tourist million)		ange %)	Market share	Population 2002	Arrivals per 100 of
			2000	2001	2002*	2001/2000	2002*/2001	2002*	(million)	population
	World		687	684	703	-0.5	27	100	6,228	11
1	France	TF	77.2	75.2	77.0	-2.6	2.4	11.0	60	129
2	Spain	TF	47.9	50.1	51.7	4.6	3.3	7.4	40	129
3	United States	TF	50.9	44.9	41.9	-11.9	-6.7	6.0	288	15
4	Italy	TF	41.2	39.6	39.8	-3.9	0.6	5.7	58	69
5	China	TF	31.2	33.2	36.8	6.2	11.0	5.2	1,279	3
6	United Kingdom	VF	25.2	22.8	24.2	-9.4	5.9	3.4	60	40
7	Canada	TF	19.6	19.7	20.1	0.3	1.9	2.9	32	63
8	Mexico	TF	20.6	19.8	19.7	-4.0	-0.7	2.8	103	19
9	Austria	TCE	18.0	18.2	18.6	1.1	2.4	2.6	\$	228
10	Germany	TCE	19.0	17.9	18.0	-5.9	0.6	2.6	\$2	22
11	Hong Kong (China)	VF	13.1	13.7	16.6	5.1	20.7	2.4	7	227
12	Hungary	VF/2	15.6	15.3	15.9	-1.5	3.5	2.3	10	158
13	Greece	TF	13.1	14.1	14.2	7.3	0.9	2.0	11	133
14	Poland	TF	17.4	15.0	14.0	-13.8	-6.8	2.0	39	36
15	Malaysia	TF	10.2	12.8	13.3	25.0	4.0	1.9	23	59
16	Turkey	TF	9.6	10.8	12.8	12.5	18.5	1.8	67	19
17	Portugal	TF	12.1	12.2	11.7	0.6	-4.1	1.7	10	116
18	Thailand	TF	9.6	10.1	10.9	5.8	7.3	1.5	64	17
19	Switzerland	TF	11.0	10.8	10.0	-1.8	-7.4	1.4	7	137
20	Netherlands	TCE	10.0	9.5	9.6	-5.0	1.0	1.4	16	60
21	Russian Federation	TF	7.0	7.4	7.9	5.3	7.3	1.1	145	5
22	Saudi Arabia	TF	6.6	6.7	7.5	2.1	11.7	1.1	24	32
23	Sweden	'CE/T	2.7	7.2	7.5	160.5	4.3	1.1	9	84
24	Singapore	TF	6.9	6.7	7.0	-2.8	4.0	1.0	4	157
	Croatia	TCE	5.8	6.5	6.9	12.2	6.1	1.0	4	158

World's Top Tourism Destinations (absolute numbers)

Source: World Tourism Organization (WTO) ©

(Data as collected by WTO September 2003)

Figure 1: World Tourist Arrivals

Note: On http://www.world-tourism.org/facts/tmt.html. Date of retrieval: September 1, 2004

Rank			ational To pts (US\$			ange %)	Market share	Population 2002	Receipts per capita
		2000	2001	2002*	2001/2000	2002*/2001	2002*	(million)	(US\$)
1	World	473	469	474	-2.9	3.2	100	6,228	76
1	United States	82.4	71.9	66.5	-12.8	-7.4	14.0	288	231
2	Spain	31.5	32.9	33.6	4.5	2.2	7.1	40	837
3	France	30.8	30.0	32.3	-25	7.8	6.8	60	539
4	Italy	27.5	25.8	26.9	-62	4.3	5.7	58	465
5	China	16.2	17.8	20.4	9.7	14.6	4.3	1,279	16
6	Germany	18.5	18.4	19.2	-0.3	4.0	4.0	82	233
7	United Kingdom	19.5	16.3	17.6	-16.7	8.0	3.7	60	294
8	Austria	9.9	10.1	11.2	1.9	11.1	2.4	8	1375
9	Hong Kong (China)	79	8.3	10.1	5.0	22.2	2.1	7	1385
10	Greece	92	9.4	9.7	2.4	3.1	2.1	11	915
11	Canada	10.8	10.8	9.7	-0.6	-10.0	2.0	32	304
12	Turkey	9.4	7.4	9.0	-21.7	22.0	1.9	67	134
13	Mexico	83	8.4	8.9	1.3	5.4	1.9	103	86
14	Australia	85	7.6	8.1	-9.8	6.1	1.7	20	414
15	Thailand	75	7.1	7.9	-5.5	11.7	1.7	64	124
16	Netherlands	72	6.7	7.7	-6.8	14.6	1.6	16	480
17	Switzerland	7.6	7.3	7.6	-35	4.4	1.6	7	1045
18	Belgium	6.6	6.9	6.9	4.7	-0.2	1.5	10	671
19	Malaysia	4.6	6.4	6.8	39.7	6.4	1.4	23	299
20	Portugal	53	5.5	5.9	4.2	7.5	1.2	10	587
21	Denmark	4.0	4.6	5.8	13.9	25.8	1.2	5	1078
22	Indonesia	5.7	5.4		-5.9			231	24
23	Republic of Korea	6.8	6.4	5.3	-6.4	-17.2	1.1	48	110
	Singapore	6.0	5.1	4.9	-15.6	-2.9	1.0	4	1108
	Poland	6.1	4.8	4.5	-21.1	-6.5	0.9	39	117

World's Top Tourism Earners

Source: World Tourism Organization (WTO) ©

(Data as collected by WTO September 2003)

Figure 2: World Tourism Receipts

Note: On http://www.world-tourism.org/facts/tmt.html. Date of retrieval: September 1,, 2004

Yet beyond the impressive tourism growth, many complained about local defects in meeting tourists' expectations (e.g. Choy and Gee 1983, Hall 1994, Oudiette 1990, Liu and Wall 2003). Domestic concerns and resistance have also emerged related to the fears of subordinating Chinese authenticity to foreign demands and tastes. Other issues have also risen as a result of the lack of experience and skills in dealing with tourism development e.g. dominance of the state authorities in planning tourism without mobilizing local involvement, loss of control and proprietorship of tourism facilities as well as failure to carry out necessary measures to improve services and create a trained workforce.

Zhang (1987) attributes such chaos and China's inability to fully capitalize on tourism development to the absence of an adequate response from the education systems. Human capital

needs of the industry have been traditionally constrained by a bureaucratic aberration that has a first and foremost concern in strengthening tourism personnel's socialist values and uncontaminated ideology. This has resulted in an unfavourable situation in which China appeals to massive foreign capital and expertise for prospecting tourism and the competition for tourist expenditures among the state, prefectural authorities, collective sector, and corporate business, while small-scale enterprise and individuals are often deterred from direct involvement in tourism.

China has attempted a self-styled or a genuine Chinese tourism, which has progressed with the active involvement of the government through "government-led" types of development decisions. He Kuangwei, Director of China National Tourism Administration (CNTA), claims that, over the course of the last 5 decades, a set of effective mechanisms has been explored by China that has proven to be adequate for the Chinese culture and inherent socialist disciplines for economic development (He 1999). Conversely, the present dilemma confronting the Chinese policy makers is to determine an appropriate level of foreign investment (Hall 1994) and, at the same time, to help state- and collective-owned tourism operators fight for a greater gain of the market share.

China's current tourism phenomena also suggest that, over the expansionary period of the 1980's and 1990's, a more balanced investment in tourism supporting infrastructure and personnel training was more desirable rather than exclusively concentrating on the increase of accommodation capacity, particularly luxury establishments. As Schrock *et al.* (1989) reported: "even after ten years of being open to international tourists, such basics as confirmed reservation, property maintenance, quality control, sanitation, and staff training are large hurdles to overcome" (cited in Hall 1994:127). This observation remains valid today. Another problem arises from the domestic incapability to cater to the material needs of the industry and over-reliance on foreign capital in fostering the commercial accommodation sector. This has led to a leakage of up to 80 percent from the foreign exchange garnered from tourism at the initial stage of massive construction of international standard hotel premises (Richter 1983). It appears that the benefits of tourism which the Chinese authority had expected under its socialist doctrine, to be realized in its own best interests socially, culturally and economically, remain very much intangible.

Nevertheless, tourism has been a driving force that mitigates the daunting pressure brought by increasing capitalization (or commercialization) in the Chinese economy. China's economic growth in the last two decades was phenomenal. GDP reached 8,940 billion RMB (USD 1,082 billion) in 2000, ranking 7th in the world. That is a six-fold growth when compared with the GDP in 1980. Ambitious movements toward modernization and dependency on mobile investment (largely foreign capital), however, have inevitably led to an uneven development across the regions. Regional development and resources allocation have appeared to be asymmetric in that, aside from the major cities and special economic zones (SEZs), the remainder of the country is characterized as areas of low productivity with high rates of illiteracy and high unemployment, resulting in an uneven distribution of employment opportunities. In the five years from 2001 onwards, an anticipated 40 million jobs in urban areas are expected to help absorb the equivalent amount of labour moving from rural areas or the agricultural sector (China Times 2001). At the same time, urban unemployment is projected to reach 12 million, whereas the surplus labour force in rural areas is to be over 100 million people (*ibid*).

There is a growing size of urban-ward migration which is termed by Chinese as *liudong renkou* (flowing population), moving from their peasant jobs to seek more lucrative employment opportunities, of which tourism destinations have become one of the magnetic poles of employment to the migrants (Xu 1999, Figure 3). It is in this context, though somewhat misinterpreted, that tourism was considered by the central government as an industry that "requires less investment, yet has quicker results, better efficiency, larger employment potential and a greater prospect for improving people's livelihood than many other tertiary service sectors" (Zhang 1995:9). According to an estimate by Liu (1998), in 1988 the labour productivity of tourism in China surpassed by 6 percent that of the average of all industrial sectors. In early 2000's, an estimate by CNTA indicates that there were 5.6 million people employed in the tourism sector with secondary employment effects of 28 million jobs generated in other industrial sectors that support the tourism industry.

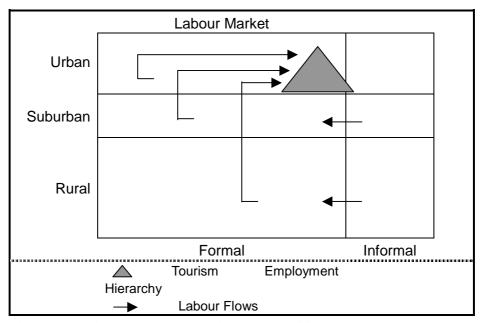


Figure 3: Tourism Employment and Labour Mobility Source: Xu (1999:204)

2.1 DEVELOPMENT OF TOURISM EDUCATION AND TRAINING

The preceding discussion indicates some of the factors that have led to a "passive" involvement of Chinese in tourism. China undoubtedly has an ample labour supply (an estimated 700 million work population), albeit with a labour surplus of primitive skills and low productivity. Tourism's workforce requirements at the initial stage of PR China's establishment were minimal, given the relatively small scale of tourism activity and the fact that distribution of labour was directed by the state and particularly with the state's ability to mobilize labour at the drop of a hat.

Tourism training and education were non-existent prior to 1978 (Zhang 1987). It was then germinated with the establishment of Jiangsu Technical School of Tourism (Xiao and Liu 1995). As tourism quickly expanded, pressing needs for an adequate workforce to cater to ever-increasing visitation were not properly met: "investment has been made in infrastructure, e.g. hotels, tourist attractions and purchase of vehicles and airplanes, while education and training for tourism has (sic) been neglected" (Zhang 1987: 264). Not surprisingly, many writers have been critical of China's capacity in satisfying travelers' needs and requirements, with most referring to the very low standard of services (see Uysal *et al.* 1986, Choy and Gee 1983, Oudiette 1990, Hall 1994). This problem has arisen from tourism workers' lack of knowledge and means to understand and meet what visitors need.

As a means of alleviating this problem, the government instituted crash programs (mainly foreign languages programs) to help tourism service personnel to eliminate communication barriers. At the same time, some costly training opportunities abroad were also provided: e.g. "cooks are being trained in Hong Kong; travel experts are studying at Cornell University" (Richter 1983:406). This was followed by a series of tourism education and training initiatives maneuvered jointly by the State Education Commission and the Department of Personnel, Labour and Education of CNTA, through syllabus and guidelines design, quality monitoring, teaching material editorials, and resources allocation.

Initially tourism education courses/programs at tertiary level outpaced those of secondary and vocational categories. By 1986, according to Zhang (1987:263), there were 4 tourism institutes and 10 universities/colleges offering courses related to tourism, together with 4 tourism secondary schools, producing a total of 3,896 graduates (2,426 at tertiary level and 1,470 at secondary level) since the introduction of tourism education. By 1987, tourism workers who had undertaken training courses instituted by the state accumulated to 27,700 (CNTA 2004a) and, in the early 2000's, tourism workers with college qualification and above have increased to 24.1 percent of the total workforce as compared to 17.5 percent in the 1990's (CNTA 2004b). Licensing systems for tour guides, tour operators and managers of star-rated hotels were also stipulated to regulate the Chinese tourism market.

Progress, however, suffered from lack of familiarity with tourism by teaching staff, lack of teaching materials and information sources, and poor hardware for technical practices. Statistics released by CNTA (2001) indicate that tourism studies have grown in proliferation. Until the end of 2001, there were 1,152 institutes (311 tertiary level institutes and 841 secondary schools) involved in tourism education with total enrollments of 342,793 (102,245 enrolled at tertiary level and 240,548 at secondary level). There was a drastic increase of 39 percent in the enrollments at tertiary level between 2001 and 2002. But regional disparity in tourism education opportunities was apparent. The tourism programs/courses were concentrated in large metropolitan areas or most visited Chinese cities, such as Shanghai, Beijing and Guangdong. The West suffers from inadequate facilities and human resource drains and thus, the lack of tourism education and training opportunities available in less developed areas.

It also appears progress to date has been merely that tourism semantics are interpreted with intimate association with economic phenomenon, rather than in political or diplomatic tones. Thus, complementing the propaganda requirements, tourism education and training objectives have gradually been transformed to be situated within the needs of the travel trades (Zhang 1987). Tourism education and training opportunities in China have grown in proliferation and attracted an increasing numbers of commentators and participants, albeit with a narrowly defined service standard focus and professionalism orientation (Liu and Wall 2003). Human resource development initiatives for tourism encompass pre-employment and skill-upgrading and are hospitality-driven in nature (Table 1), primarily catering to the staffing needs of the hotels, tour operators and travel agencies, cruise operators and tourism administrative bodies. Recent development is that there were over 30 specialties or majors offered at higher education in tourism, covering areas of research, management, the exploitation and management of tourist resources, the construction and design of attractions, hotel management, cuisine and food and beverage management, travel agency management (Liu 2000).

Availability of training opportunities has also been broadened through collaboration with foreign institutes, personnel exchange programs with other affiliated hotel ventures and more tourism personnel/educators are dispatched abroad for advanced tourism studies. Intellectual exchanges are forged through frequent visits of foreign experts commissioned both by local and foreign resources. In-house training for senior staff of tourism administration at provincial, autonomous region and municipal levels, is also in place to improve "the professional quality".

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Tertiary Level Institutes	Secondary Level Schools
(3- or 4-year programs)	(2-year program)
Political Economics	Hotel Housekeeping
Western Economics	Food and Beverage Management
Management Theory & Practice	Front Desk Operations
Accounting	Hospitality Accounting
Quantitative Methods	Introduction to Hospitality Management
Computer Applications	Introduction to the Travel Industry
Travel Psychology	
Introduction to the Travel Industry	
Travel Laws and Regulations	
Introduction to Hotel Management	
Property Management	
Good and Beverage Management	
Guest Services Management	
Human Resources Management	
Hotel Engineering and Maintenance	
Hotel Safety and Security	
Hospitality Marketing	
Source: A dented from Vice and Lin (1005)	111)

Table 1: Provision and Coverage of Tourism Programs in China

Source: Adapted from Xiao and Liu (1995:111)

Wei (1999:24), in an overview of tourism development in China in the last two decades, states: "what is most gratifying about the tourism growth in China is what one sees as the emergence of the first group of professionals" who are marked by the CNTA as being dedicated (love what they do), professional (know what they are doing, know how to do their jobs and observe work ethics) and open-minded (ready to learn). However, Oudiette's (1990:128) observation, which was quite otherwise, still legitimately describes the current weaknesses that exist among the tourism personnel: great training efforts are required to facilitate "a real change of mentality" to make Chinese tourism workers aware of the knowledge and essence of services.

Most significantly, while the tourism authority's focus on planning tourism human capital has become market-oriented and somewhat switched to a system of catering to structurally diverse demands by the industry, the lack of practicality remains the dominant explanation for China's failure to manipulate tourism as an effective unemployment saviour. Examples are elicited from a case study of Hainan Province of China to exemplify the education and training needs, sources and quality of tourism workers, confronted by a rapidly growing destination and the adequacy of measures taken to address such issues.

3. PERSPECTIVES FROM HAINAN

3.1Background

Hainan is an island province of China which is geographically peripheral, economically disadvantaged and historically and politically inferior (a place of exile in the imperial era) in comparison to the mainland regions. Its isolation from the Chinese heartland made Hainan one of China's poorest and most backward regions - until 1989, it did not even own a single taxi. However, it has undergone a swift transformation that has vaulted its profile in the nation's consciousness. This process continues today as Hainan seeks to leverage its bounty of natural beauty and abundant sunshine to turn itself into an international travel destination to rival Phuket and Bali (Koumelis 2003).

The prospects for tourism development in Hainan were first raised officially in 1983 and were centrally directed by the Chinese State Council, aiming to use tourism as a tool to achieve higher levels of development. In 1986, Hainan was designated as one of the seven major tourist areas in China. In 1989 Hainan was upgraded to provincial level and its status as a special economic zone, established in 1988, renders Hainan prerogatives in facilitating connections with the outside world. It was intended that considerable industrial development would occur, but this strategy has met with only mixed success. Population growth, fuelled by immigration from the mainland, coupled with slow economic growth has resulted in a shortage of employment opportunities. Nevertheless, a substantial tourism industry has been established based on both natural and cultural resources. Entry formalities have also been eased in that landing visas were made available at the entry points to spur the growth of visitor arrivals, and the requirement was eliminated entirely in 2001 for visitors from some countries.

Since 1996, Hainan's tourism has benefited from extensive attention from all levels of government. The influx of foreign investment in the mid-1990s further enhanced the quality and variety of the tourism offerings. As well, the emergence of Hainan Airlines as the fourth largest and most profitable carrier in China is another indicator of tourism's economic significance to Hainan island (Dolven 2002). Expenditures by tourists give rise to the generation of employment. According to Hainan Provincial Tourism Administration (HPTA), direct employment in the tourism sector doubled from 20,000 jobs in 1992 to 40,000 jobs in 1997. It is expected tourism jobs will continue to grow between 16.7 percent and 17.9 percent per annum between 1995 and 2010 and, by 2010, direct employment in tourism will reach approximately 80,000 to 100,000 jobs. Adding the multiplier effects of tourism employment, HPTA estimated that tourism contributed to the creation of 320,000 to 400,000 jobs. The high share of tourism in total employment resulted in a significant change in the overall labour force structure - - 8.8 percent growth in the tertiary sector

and 12.7 percent decrease in the primary sector over the last decade. Although agriculture is still the dominant sector, tourism has gradually diversified Hainan's economic base through growth in services.

Hainan requires substantial employment opportunities to meet large job demands from its massive work population of 3.4 million, or nearly half of its total population (7.2 million). In spite of a high unemployment rate and a significant growth in tourism employment, the industry has experienced difficulties in balancing supply and demand in the workforce. In some instances, people residing in the rural areas are not even aware of the employment opportunities available in the tourism sector. The recruitment dilemma can best be described by quoting the frustrated statement of a General Manager from the hotel sector: "when we opened our four-star hotel in 1994, we had serious problems in meeting our employment demands; the newly recruited were predominately from agricultural work. Virtually, all of our staff only knew rice plantations".

Tourism appears to capture the relatively well-educated when taking into account the local education standards - - the students in the total population accounted for only 20 to 22 percent in the last decade and the student population is predominately constituted by those in elementary schools (73.7 percent). According to HPTA, in the tourism sector, workers with high school diplomas (60 percent) comprise the majority of the workforce and the remainder is constituted of 23 percent of secondary school and 17 percent of college graduates. More significantly, the information available from state-owned hotels indicates that gaining access to tourism jobs is very competitive for women and minorities. For example, for which data is available in 1998, 57.2 percent of the 11,654 jobs were taken by females and as little as 5 percent were taken by the minorities.

The provision of tourism human capital is a complex issue in Hainan, as generalized by HPTA (1993) in the following statements:

- (1) the shortage of qualified tourism workers, particularly for the higher level positions that require skilled workers;
- (2) the tourism industry's limited capacity to absorb college graduates from tourism programs;
- (3) the lack of systematic institutional systems for the cultivation of tourism manpower at all levels; and
- (4) the absence of a match between the supply and demand in the middle and higher level managerial positions of the tourism workforce.

It becomes apparent that, although the needs for a competent workforce has been recognized to some extent as being fundamental to Hainan's tourism industry, such identifications reveal that the efforts and investment in workforce cultivation were manifested in a "tourism enterprises" framework (a so-called supply-oriented approach). Too often, aspirations to replicate an Hawaiian image has also led the development approach to tourism education and training. Types, levels and expected outputs of tourism programs remain a matter of considerable concern that needs to be dealt with to suit the specific situation in Hainan and, ultimately, the best interests of both current tourism workers and prospective participants.

3.2 Nature and Availability of Tourism Education

In China, the area of "tourism study" has emerged as a result of increased recognition of the economic importance of tourism by the public sector. Tourism has become one of the most rapidly growing areas of education, particularly at the level of higher education. The growth of tourism education in Hainan accords a similar trend. In Hainan, at tertiary level, out of 5 universities, there are 4 institutes offer tourism programs: Hainan University (Department of Tourism), Hainan Normal University (Department of Geography), Hainan Television University (Department of Hotel Management) and Qiongchou University (Department of Tourism). Tourism education at secondary level did not correspond to such a growth situation. Out of 45 secondary institutes, there were only 7 involved in tourism education in 2000.

Hainan University (HU) was the first institute of its kind that innovatively introduced tourism education at tertiary level. In 1992, tourism-related courses, as a supplementary area of study, were initially used as an illustration to enrich the study of English literature - - as a sub-section in the English Department, College of Liberal Arts. Students registered in the tourism section are required to take tourism courses as core units in their third academic year.

The tourism program at Hainan University came to existence in its own right in 1996 and, in 1999, almost 300 students, perhaps excessive, were enrolled in two, three and four-year programs. With funding retrenchment from the public sector, the provision of the tourism program has contributed significantly to the finance of the HU, while at the same time helping to achieve the targeted number of students. Growth plans are poised to offer a four-year degree and Master's programs. A ten-year development plan proposes further expansion to 2010 with some innovative ideas such as flexible programming, internship certification, accreditation system, and partnerships with the industry. The College of Tourism was established in March 2000 and currently has over 3,500 full-time students. It well exceeded what was originally planned that the College would have the capacity to accommodate 2,700 students by the year 2009 (Table 2).

Year		2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
4-year Program	New enrollments	100	100	100	150	150	150	200	200	200	200
	Registered students	100	200	300	450	500	550	650	700	750	800
3-year Program	New enrollments	200	200	200	300	300	300	400	400	400	400
	Registered students	200	400	600	700	800	900	1000	1100	1200	1200
Continuing	New enrollments	100	150	200	250	300	300	300	350	350	350
Education	Registered students	100	250	350	450	550	600	600	650	700	700
Total num	400	850	1250	1600	1850	2050	2250	2500	2650	2700	

Table 2: Student recruitment plan 2000-2009 year

To secure the stable sources of new enrollments and employment opportunities for graduates, the College plans to set up:

- (1) Department of Tourism Management (Bachelor's level): aiming to cultivate management personnel in the areas of planning and tourist development, design and management of attractions, tourism administration and management, tourism economics and management, tourism marketing, consultation services, tourism investments, tourism education, hotel management and tour operation, etc. It is expected that such an approach not only helps upgrade the teaching and research standards at HU but also facilitates the launch of Master's program in a very short timeframe.
- (2) Department of Hotel Management (Post-secondary vocational (high school) and continuing education): cultivating managerial personnel, supervisors and entry and mid-level management personnel for the accommodation industry.
- (3) Department of Tourism Information Management (Post-secondary vocational education): cultivating sound technical personnel specializing in software design, operational skills of computers and the management of tourism information technology, including hotel and restaurant reservation networks/systems, market research and forecasting, accountancy and finance management, food and beverage cost control, tour routes design, tourism economic development and forecast, feasibility studies of tourism projects and multi-national franchise operations, etc.
- (4) Tour Operation and Tour Guide (Post-secondary vocational (high school) and continuing education)
- (5) Restaurant Management and Food Production (Post-secondary vocational (high school) and continuing education)

- (6) Consultation Centre for Travel and Hotel Management
- (7) Research Centre for Tourism Culture, and
- (8) Language Training Centre for Hotel Profession.

The design of the curriculum at HU bestows intimate attachment with industrial relevance, while local social and cultural integrity are also incorporated. The mandate is to prepare students with "managerial capabilities that meet the needs of the social market economy and to develop students' potential in order that they may work independently at managerial levels in the tourism field". This approach, which has a central focus on technical and operational competence, is very much in line with the majority of institutes involved in tourism education in China. HU is committed to equip students with the following knowledge and capabilities:

- the fundamentals of tourism management theories and knowledge;
- the fundamental skills and technical knowledge of tourism management;
- the capability of management and goal attainment;
- the capability of analyzing and problem solving in the real world;
- the innovation spirit and global vision.

The leadership at HU envisaged that HU has to undertake the responsibility for developing itself as a leading tourism training centre as well as the main provider of managerial personnel for local tourism industry. HU also expected to take part in the provision of consultation services that will contribute to a healthy and rapid development environment for tourism in Hainan. To achieve the goals, steps initiated involve:

- (1) Absorbing external resources to overcome the shortages of land, capital and facility: A "one school two systems" system was intended by incorporating shareholder concept, that is, the College is managed by a board of directors that is jointly formed by investors and faculty members. Brand name and trademark of the major investors could be preceded to the title of the College.
- (2) Collaborating with foreign tourism institutes in the areas of faculty member exchange, teaching materials, curriculum planning, faculty management and further studies and internship opportunities for students; and to make the best use of partner institutions' teaching materials and expertise as well as reputations to strengthen the position and publicity of the College of Tourism at HU.
- (3) Establishing the College as an economic entity (production centre) or a practitioner exercising the functions of teaching, research, management and consultation: The establishments of on-campus hotel facility, tourism and hotel management consulting company, research centre for tourism culture and commercial travel agency were intended. It is expected that the professionalism of faculty members will be enhanced and students' capacity will be realized to perform outstandingly in the real-world while more income resources are being generated.
- (4) Using the growing reputation of the College as an invisible asset to expand outreach effects, including: subsidiary campuses, remote education centres and distance learning opportunities.

The local tourism authority is somewhat less optimistic on such an expansion, primarily

because of the flimsy faculty base (7 teaching staff versus 300 students in 1999 and 17 versus 3,500 in 2003). A 10-year Tourism Education Development Plan has been prepared to be implemented in three phases (1999-2001, 2002-2004, 2004-1010). For example, by 2010 it is expected that the number of staff will rise from 17 (1999-2001) to 44 (2010) and that 50 percent will hold doctorate. There is also an intention to upgrade a small library into a tourism library and information centre. Thus, the University of Hainan has committed itself to strengthen and expand its tourism offerings. However, it will require assistance for these plans to be realized. Nevertheless, the leadership possessed by Hainan University in tourism education has been remarkable in:

- Raising government and the industry's willingness to invest in tourism education/training;
- Providing prospective participants and existing tourism employees an access to further their tourism education;
- Increasing the number of students at the higher education level; and
- Contributing to the sustainable tourism development in Hainan with faculty members' involvement in tourism planning projects.

3.3 Industry's Response to Training Needs

The shortage of trained staff and the generally low education level of the population, create problems for the tourism sector and add to the operational difficulties of providing quality service. This section examines the views of tourism employers in Hainan concerning their employment needs and the challenges that they face in meeting these needs, as well as their responses to these challenges. Data were gathered in June - July 1999 through in-depth-interviews with informants of HPTA and questionnaire surveys with individuals responsible for personnel and human resources management in larger-scale tourism operations, e.g. travel agencies of over 10 employees, hotels of over 100 rooms.

The survey included representatives of 28 hotels, 1 carrier and 9 travel agencies/tour operators. Interviewees were first contacted by phone to inquire of their willingness to collaborate by completing a survey and self-administered questionnaires were then distributed. The exclusion of smaller operators is based on the advance inquiries made to the hotels with less than 100 rooms regarding their training programs. The hoteliers indicated that they seldom conduct training of any kind; their staff learns what they should perform by following senior co-workers.

When the surveyed representatives of the tourism industry were asked the kind of challenges they experienced in personnel management, the quality of workforce (mean = 4.21 on a five-point scale, 1 being not significant at all and 5 being most significant) was reported as being the most important factor affecting the performance of their firms, followed by employee turnover (mean =

3.50) and competition for tourism personnel within the industry (mean = 3.32) (Table 3). On the other hand, labour costs (mean = 3.13) and sources of recruits (mean = 3.11) were of much less concern. This indicates that the tourism employers have started to demand a level of productivity that depends much more upon the qualifications and the personal involvement of the employees, rather than on their quantity.

Considerations	Mean	Std. dev.
Quality of workforce	4.21	0.70
Employee turnover	3.50	1.20
Competition for manpower within the industry	3.32	1.12
Labor cost	3.13	1.09
Willingness in joining tourism jobs (sources of recruits)	3.11	0.95

Table 3: Challenges in Tourism's Personnel Management

Note: 5 = most significant, 1 = not at all.

Regarding criteria used by tourism employers for recruitment, as shown in Figure 4, education (mean = 4.21) was rated to be the most important criterion for a successful candidate to possess, followed by personality traits (mean = 3.97) and work experience (mean = 3.95). In addition, due to the high visibility of tourism workers to their clients, appearance (mean = 3.55) was also regarded as being an important criterion for selection. The issue of gender (mean of 2.28) appears to be of minimal concern to the tourism sector in Hainan as it was rated the lowest by the respondents.

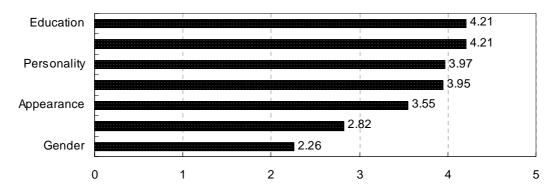
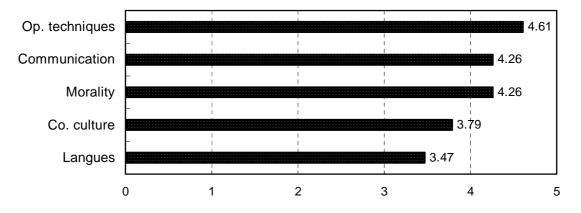


Figure 4: Level of Importance of Recruitment Criteria

Tourism employers generally feel that there is an urgent need for improvement in the capabilities of their workforce. Training programs, therefore, have been implemented widely as a means of achieving this goal. All of 38 tourism employers interviewed offer training programs.

Training is primarily offered to correct service failures. The training programs typically focus on providing employees with technical skills and knowledge (mean = 4.61), strengthening communication and interpersonal skills (mean = 4.26), developing appropriate behaviours or attitudes (mean of morality = 4.26), indoctrination into the company culture (mean = 3.79) and language training (mean = 3.47), as illustrated in Figure 5.





Despite the fact that training programs appear to be popular in Hainan, the frequency with which they are offered varies significantly, as shown in Figure 6. Almost half of the employers (47.4 percent) organized less than 5 training programs in 1998, implying that those programs were a job orientation type of training to cover short-term specific tasks rather than employers' committeemen to personal growth of their staff. Only 31.6 percent (12 firms) organized training programs on at least monthly basis, for the purpose of developing a competent workforce.

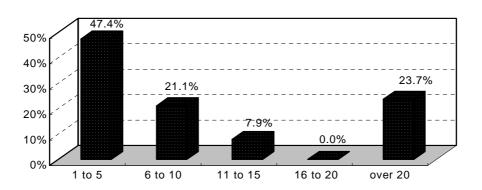


Figure 6: Frequency of Organizing Training Programs, 1998

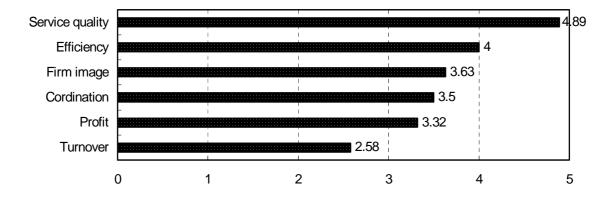
There is a tendency towards a collaborative approach to the provision of training programs (Table 4). Of the 38 tourism employers interviewed, 24 (63.2 percent) offered some of their training programs in collaboration with other tourism-related organizations. HPTA (41.7 percent),

educational institutes (27.8 percent) and tourism-related firms (25.0 percent) are active partners in the development of joint training programs. The HPTA's involvement in the development of the tourism workforce appears to be of some significance as 15 firms (41.7 percent) received assistance from them in the preparation of their training programs.

Some tourism employers complained that training programs create a financial burden to their firms, as they often have to seek help from external sources, such as foreign language tutors, industry experts and academic institutions. Thus, HPTA is expected to be more proactive in organizing the collective efforts of the industry in the preparation of training programs and to take responsive actions to meet the industry's demands for a skilled and well educated workforce. Overall, tourism employers indicate that the training programs have been effective in upgrading service quality (mean = 4.89), increasing labour efficiency (mean = 4.0) and also promoting a good image for their firms (mean = 3.63) (Figure 7). However, training appears to contribute little to employee stability (mean = 2.58) and staff turnover continues to be an important concern.

Collaborative Approach to the Provision of Training	Count (firm)	Percent	Collaborative Partners	Count (firm)	Percent
Yes	24	63.2%		× /	
			HPTA	15	41.7%
			Education institutes	10	27.8%
			Private training centres	2	5.6%
			Tourism related firms	9	25.0%
No	14	36.8%			

 Table 4: Collaborative Approach to the Provision of Training





3.4 Education-Industry Interactions

In Hainan, the oversupply of tourism graduates with a tertiary education background is an indication of lack of systemic planning for the tourism workforce. While nearly all the universities in Hainan offer tourism or hospitality programs, the trained personnel output from vocational schools is comparatively insignificant and certainly insufficient to fully satisfy the industry's workforce demands. Because of the difficulties in employing the tertiary-level graduates, tourism employers are blamed by the public sector for their failure to absorb the proliferation of students emerging with relevant tourism or hospitality qualifications.

However, there is a considerable positive inclination for hiring workers endowed with a tourism background; over 60 percent of the employers surveyed indicate that they often employ people with a tourism education background. Tourism employers interviewed were also enthusiastic about helping students acquire practical experience. Job placement opportunities are available at most of the firms interviewed. There were only 3 tourism employers who were reluctant to offer job placement, mainly due to concerns for declined profitability. The types of jobs that the tourism industry provides to students during their industrial placement period generally include front-line positions and operative types of jobs.

Employers indicated that, given the fact that students do not have substantial practical skills and job placement is for a limited time, it is risky for them to empower the students to perform more sophisticated jobs. Contrary to many tourism educators and students, employers do not regard industrial placement as a way of acquiring new skills. Also, tourism employers feel that the ultimate value of industrial job placement for students is the opportunity of being in a real working environment where they can observe what goes on and get acquainted with actual work situations. In any case, industrial placement is also a way of employers gaining cheap help. What has been neglected by the tourism employers is to consider the industrial placement as an integral part of tourism education, because of its short duration, as well as the long-term benefits to the industry.

Considering the relatively low education levels, the tourism industry in Hainan generally emphasizes the importance of education for the managerial level positions with prominent requirements for solid training in the relevant field. Table 5 indicates that a high school and above education level with 4-year plus work experience are essential for a candidate to be considered as an entry-level manager. This suggests that tourism education not only helps students enhance their employment potential, but also serves as a well-founded base for good career progression for the tourism graduates.

Education	College &	High	Secondary	Primary	Not	
Level	higher	school	school	school	required	
	31.6%	34.2%	10.5%	13.2%	10.5%	
Work	Over	4	3	2	1	
Experience	4 years	years	years	years	years	
	53.0%	10.5%	13.2%	23.7%	15.8%	

Table 5: Requirements for Entry-level Managers

Tourism studies and training are in great demand in Hainan due to the fact that tourism offers better employment prospects than the other economic sectors. The economic importance of tourism is well acknowledged by the HPTA, whose efforts have been apparent in raising tourism awareness and the overall local capacity to better respond to the commercial opportunity provided by tourism. Key policy decisions made in an authoritarian manner have immense influences but exert disturbing effects on devising education and training infrastructure. Fundamentals of workforce training deployed by the HPTA are somewhat lopsided with concerns for political doctrines: to reinforce workers' obedience of socialist tenets with adroit skills and to be ethically disciplined in the tourism professions.

Some concerns were expressed by the industry that such a scheme does not best suit their specific interests or requirements. Recent reinforcement of licensing measures and the mandatory training hours involved for chief management personnel, aggravated the irritations as "good sum was paid over to HPTA for practitioner admission", but "the quality of training programs and training staff was not very elaborate", as stated by a Human Resources Manager from a 4-star hotel.

3.5 Implications

Awareness of tourism in Hainan is profoundly affected by a "Chinese Hawaii" aspiration, although few have actually been to Hawaii. Even the taxi drivers are capable of expressing this image by frequently alerting tourists' attention to their impression that "Hainan is very similar to the Hawaii island, very beautiful". Tourism students are trained by describing the geographic and climatic similarities with Hawaii. Tour guides can even move further to demonstrate Hainan's superiorities over Hawaii: Hainan has longer coastlines of natural white sandy beaches and the transparency level of sea water reaches 7 to 9 meters with a pleasant all-year-round water temperature at 25 Celsius, etc. The attributes that should make Hawaii a "honey-pot" destination are vague notions that cannot be fully appreciated by the locals with their limited exposure to, and even alienation from, places other than Hainan.

Therein lies the paradox of using an Hawaii image as a means to promote Hainan as a comparable product. Accelerating the liberalization of the islanders' mindset to adapt to international tourism paradigm overrides individuality and personal attributes. Concurrently, tourism personnel are required to be familiar with an "ultra-sophisticated western custom" (a mandatory change of mentality as expected by the foreign visitors, Oudiette 1990:128), but remain in adherence to socialist dogma. At the present, higher education in China in the discipline of tourism management is experiencing drastic growth and is generally well received. Similarly, in Hainan a few post-secondary and vocational schools have tourism programs focusing on tour business and hotel management. Hainan's dependence on tourism as a main income source has made people cautious concerning the quality and competitiveness of local tourism offerings. Thus, the public sector, academic sector and the industry as a whole has recognized education and training as vital components in the achievement of substantial growth and the improvement of the quality of services. Unfortunately, efforts devoted to the development of tourism education have been overwhelmingly centered on the attainments of service excellence with scant consideration on the integrity and variety of tourism's human capital requirements (Liu and Wall 2003).

Thus, it may be fair to generalize that in Hainan, the approaches to tourism education development have grown substantially both in quantity and quality, albeit with a narrowly defined service standard focus. As well, the organization of tourism training and education is asymmetric in that it overlooks the immediate demands of qualified tourism educators as well as students' concerns to acquire operational skills at the expense of a broader education (Liu and Wall 2000).

4.CONCLUSIONS

Tourism is a latecomer to China's modernization plans, but it has been maneuvered by the state as an important means of reducing regional disparities. Tourism initiatives in Hainan are good examples that illustrate efforts to improve a peripheral region's marginal economic status. However, while tourism is embedded with much policy precedence, with planning efforts directed towards the international clientele's tastes, the resultant disproportionate distribution of resources has left very little room for the local Chinese to become involved in the tourism commerce. As well, perpetuating prominence placed on socialist doctrines and communist ideological tenets has led to a situation in which the tourism policies and planning are highly circumscribed in that the citizenry and individualism are not fostered.

As evidenced from the Hainan case study, among major issues identified are the shortage of qualified candidates, particularly for higher-level positions requiring skills and experience, the lack of a well-organized institutional system for the education and training of tourism personnel at all

levels, and the inability of the tourism industry to absorb the college graduates that are currently being produced. Hence, tourism, being a relatively young sector, is affected in that lack of awareness and inadequate qualifications preclude Hainan islanders from pursuing mundane tourism jobs, let alone more senior managerial level jobs. A corollary to this problem is the need for the introduction of basic skill training programs that not only make the locals aware of tourism employment opportunities but also broaden their choice of employment. China's human resources development approach tends to be concentrated in higher education and is inadequate in vocational training. Even though education and training provision relating to tourism has been portrayed as a prerequisite in the tourism plans, the fragmented characteristics of tourism that require a variety of employment types across many sectors have not been differentiated by the policy-makers. Such an omission has hampered China's ability to transform its economic base from an old agricultural and recently manufacturing dominated economy to a services-oriented one. Perhaps this explains the asymmetric organization of tourism education and training which neglects the industry's requirements as well as host population's employment needs at the expense of a broader education. At the same time, tourism employers have reluctantly embraced the responsibility to deal with the transformation of labour from unskilled primary sector work to semi-skilled/skilled tourism work since governmental (including the tourism administrative body) and educational authorities have not given high enough priority to employment issues (Liu and Wall 2000). It is imperative the provision of tourism education and training caters to local needs sufficiently, whether it be skill and knowledge deficiencies, low level of entrepreneur involvement or cultural adaptation, that would facilitate the removal of entry hindrances for the host populations.

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