

Research on the Cultivation Path of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Awareness for Tourism Management Students in Higher Vocational Colleges

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Abstract: As "Internet+" has become a national strategy, higher vocational tourism management programs must integrate innovation and entrepreneurship education with professional training to cultivate competitive talents. However, current programs face a disconnect between these two educational components, with students lacking innovative awareness and entrepreneurial motivation. This paper proposes a four-dimensional integration framework covering training objectives, curriculum systems, classroom teaching, and faculty development. Key strategies include embedding innovation competencies into talent goals, constructing a four-in-one curriculum cluster, reforming teaching through competition-driven methods, and enhancing faculty industry experience. Practice at the author's institution has yielded positive results, with over 50 innovation projects completed in three years and multiple projects receiving funding. The findings demonstrate that this integrated approach effectively enhances students' innovative capabilities and entrepreneurial spirit, offering a replicable model for tourism talent cultivation in the "Internet+" era.

Keywords: Internet+; Higher Vocational Education; Tourism Management; Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education

1. Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in the Context of "Internet+"

At the close of 2014, the First World Internet Conference articulated that "the Internet serves as a new instrument for mass entrepreneurship and innovation." Subsequently, in 2015, the "Internet+" action plan was formally introduced in the Government Work Report. As a strategic framework, "Internet+" seeks to organically integrate innovative Internet concepts and technologies with conventional industries,

thereby engendering a novel economic paradigm. The cross-sector convergence of the Internet and traditional industries is poised to reshape our daily lives and foster an entirely new developmental ecosystem. At present, "Internet+" has been elevated to the status of a national strategy, exerting profound influence across every facet of socio-economic progress.

As a growing number of "Internet+" enterprises continue to emerge, the market demonstrates an escalating demand for professionals who are well-versed in "Internet+" knowledge and equipped with innovative thinking. Concurrently, bolstered by a range of government incentive policies, a significant proportion of college students have directed their entrepreneurial pursuits toward "Internet+" ventures. In this era of "Internet+"-driven innovation, it carries far-reaching significance to facilitate the transformation, optimization, reorganization, and in-depth innovation of China's university-based innovation and entrepreneurship education, management, and service systems. Such systemic advancements are essential for these systems to establish a precise positioning and articulate a clear developmental trajectory within the emerging, open educational landscape of the future.

2. Current Status of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education in Tourism Management Majors at Higher Vocational Colleges

The student body in higher vocational institutions predominantly comprises individuals from economically disadvantaged regions or low-income households. Constrained by their upbringing, these students possess only limited exposure to emergent Internet technologies, including big data, cloud computing, and the Internet of Things. Having undergone examination-oriented secondary education, they exhibit a notable deficiency in innovative consciousness, and their innovative design

thinking—a cognitive modality that synthesizes logical reasoning with intuitive perception—remains in urgent need of cultivation. Moreover, the tourism management major enrolls a disproportionately high number of female students, who generally prefer stable and comfortable career paths, thereby demonstrating weak entrepreneurial drive and insufficient motivation for venture creation.

Furthermore, the talent cultivation frameworks of higher vocational colleges tend to be excessively uniform, with undue concentration on vocational skill acquisition. Innovation and entrepreneurship education has yet to be systematically integrated into the curricular structures of individual majors, remaining largely peripheral and confined to the domain of ideological and political instruction. Compounding this issue, institutions exhibit inadequate promotion of innovation and entrepreneurship competitions, which results in low rates of student participation and award attainment, ultimately contributing to the absence of a vibrant entrepreneurial culture on campus.

3. Integration of Innovation and Entrepreneurship Education with Tourism Management Professional Education

Exploring pedagogical approaches that effectively integrate disciplinary professional education with innovation and entrepreneurship education—characterized by the strategies of "promoting learning through competitions" and "integrating curricula with competitive activities"—while simultaneously cultivating a vibrant campus culture of innovation and entrepreneurship, can significantly contribute to the development of students' entrepreneurial ethos, innovative consciousness, and innovative design thinking capabilities.

3.1 Integration of Training Objectives

The Tourism Management Professional Talent Cultivation Plan (2020 Edition) requires students to possess key abilities that support lifelong development and adapt to the demands of the times, including cognitive ability, cooperative ability, innovative ability, and professional ability. It also requires strong employability and entrepreneurial skills, as well as team spirit and a collaborative spirit. Detailed requirements for innovation and entrepreneurship capabilities are proposed in the training objectives.

3.2 Integration of Curriculum Systems

First, in general education, a foundational course on "Internet+" innovation and entrepreneurship is specifically offered for students. Combined with the background of the tourism management major, this course introduces the concepts of innovation and entrepreneurship, enabling students to understand how to apply their professional knowledge to innovate and start businesses. Through specific examples, students can initially develop an awareness of innovation and entrepreneurship.

Second, in professional education, innovation and entrepreneurship courses for the higher vocational tourism major allow students to fully understand tourism-related knowledge, such as tourism brand creation, tourism marketing, creative tourism product design, tourism team management, hotel management, etc. Specialized course content is also offered, such as Food Culture and Suzhou Garden Culture from the cultural and creative industries, and Tourism Human Resource Management from the management category, aiming to cultivate versatile "all-rounders" for the tourism industry.

Third, in comprehensive practice, courses include travel agency operation and management, tour guide script writing, commentary training, hotel operation and management, star-rated hotel housekeeping service training, and Chinese and Western table setting training. All of these are designed to cultivate students' independent thinking and hands-on abilities, as well as their innovative thinking and practical skills.

Fourth, the second classroom is expanded. Students are encouraged to participate in the selection for innovation and entrepreneurship competitions such as the "China International 'Internet+' College Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Competition" and the "Challenge Cup National College Students' Extracurricular Academic Science and Technology Works Competition," helping students establish innovative awareness and stimulate entrepreneurial enthusiasm. Students are also organized to participate in the "Jiangsu Provincial College Student Innovation and Entrepreneurship Training Program" to learn social research and demonstration methods, allowing them to improve their innovative abilities through practice. An experiential tourism entrepreneurship environment is created through activities such as visiting innovation

expos and cultural and creative industry parks, better guiding students to think about and explore tourism entrepreneurship education and acquire corresponding professional innovation capabilities.

3.3 Integration of Classroom Teaching

In teaching, we shift our approach and implement the teaching reform of "integrating courses with competitions," organizing classroom teaching using the paradigm of innovation and entrepreneurship competitions.

3.3.1 Integration of Teaching Content

Considering the relevance of courses to "Internet+", the selection of course content leans towards "Internet+" cultural and creative services, showcasing Chinese culture and national heritage, presenting China's magnificent landscapes, and promoting positive social values, while ensuring a certain degree of openness and challenge. Additionally, given that there are relatively more female students in higher vocational tourism majors, content such as female entrepreneurship cases has been added, supplemented by psychological counseling, to better guide female college students into entrepreneurship.

3.3.2 Integration of Teaching Organization

Innovation and entrepreneurship competitions at all levels generally require participation in teams, with each team consisting of 3-5 members. This paradigm can also be adopted in classroom teaching, changing the traditional teaching method where the instructor explains knowledge points. Instead, using innovation and entrepreneurship projects as a guide, students are divided into several groups to collaboratively complete project topic selection, design, and production, submitting the optimal solution through multiple iterations. This approach not only trains students' innovative design thinking but also enables them to learn mutual respect, active communication, and complementing each other's strengths through teamwork.

3.3.3 Integration of Teaching Methods

Against the backdrop of "Internet+" education, higher vocational tourism programs are expected to leverage diversified teaching platforms to realize the deep integration of online and offline instruction. Prior to class, micro-lecture videos are employed to deconstruct and visualize core knowledge points in a fragmented yet accessible manner, thereby facilitating students' independent preview. During class sessions, the

institutional online teaching platform is adopted to host thematic discussions, project presentations, and peer assessment activities, thereby strengthening classroom interaction and active participation. Following class, students are directed to China University MOOC platforms for knowledge consolidation, review, and supplementary learning, ensuring alignment with cutting-edge industry developments. This tripartite blended instructional model—characterized by the organic synergy of pre-class micro-lectures, in-class platform-based interaction, and post-class MOOC extension—transcends the conventional constraints of time and space, enables targeted and data-informed instruction, effectively cultivates students' self-directed learning competencies and inquisitive mindset, and markedly improves their motivation and efficiency in acquiring innovation and entrepreneurship-related knowledge and skills.

3.3.4 Integration of the Teaching Faculty

Teachers of tourism management professional courses should actively participate in enterprise practice, stay informed about the latest innovation and entrepreneurship trends in the industry, and integrate these into professional course education. For example, rural tourism talents who contribute to rural revitalization; digital talents equipped with tourism internet operation skills; and tourism broadcasters who use self-media technology to present and sell tourism products—these represent the latest trends in tourism talent demand and can effectively guide students' innovation, employment, and entrepreneurship.

4. Conclusion

The tourism management program at our college has yielded positive results through its ongoing exploration of integrating entrepreneurship and innovation education with disciplinary professional training, as evidenced by the marked improvement in students' innovation and entrepreneurial competencies. In the past three years, upwards of 50 innovation and entrepreneurship training projects have been successfully accomplished, among which multiple projects have secured funding at both institutional and provincial levels. This has effectively cultivated a cohort of interdisciplinary and innovative tourism professionals capable of meeting the evolving demands of the "Internet+" era.

References

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