

# Analysis of the Current Situation of Career Development in the Tourism Industry

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**Abstract.** Human resource management in tourism has always been one of the concerns of tourism development. With its high coverage, tourism links jobs in multiple industries. There are many problems in the previous tourism industry that have not been resolved until now, which has formed a bad customary perception. The current tourism industry is affected by the pandemic, and the talents in the market have also seen the instability of the tourism industry. Changing people's perceptions of jobs in the tourism industry is an important task in retaining talent and ensuring the positive development of the industry. There is still a lack of summarization and solutions to the existing problems, so this study discusses these two aspects. Different divisions of labor in the tourism industry face different difficulties and solutions. Front-line employees should be more inclined to improve skills and accumulate experience and maintain a positive attitude towards the industry. Program managers should apply the principles of sustainable talent development to the current state of human resource management.

**Keywords:** Tourism industry; occupational condition; management.

## 1. Introduction

The contribution of tourism to global employment is well documented. Before the world fell into pandemic in 2019, the tourism industry provided 334 million jobs [1]. Creating jobs is the most direct and beneficial help that tourism can provide to the host country, but with jobs in the sector consistently considered unattractive, employment in the tourism industry itself is not in good shape. Low salaries, difficult working conditions and limited future development prospects have always existed in this industry, so there will be a considerable loss of professional talent [2]. The epidemic has dealt a severe blow to the tourism industry. Due to the fact that the tourism industry itself is vulnerable to external interference, the epidemic has subtracted nearly 62 million jobs, and by 2020 there will be 272 million jobs left [1]. After the epidemic, both those who are still working in the industry and those who are about to enter the industry are hesitant to work in this industry [3].

As an industry that provides a large number of jobs, its employment situation and the resolution of existing problems have a great effect on the development of the overall employment situation. At the same time, some long-standing problems or new problems arising from changes in the environment also need to be fundamentally resolved. As a result, research on human resource management in the tourism sector has been published. These include an analysis of high turnover and high resignation rates among frontline workers and the management of professionals by corporate management [4]. The problem of human resources in the tourism industry has been repeatedly mentioned for a long time, which means that the actual problem has not been properly resolved. And there is relatively little literature that proposes specific solutions. The sustainable development of the tourism industry in the future includes the sustainable development of talents. From cultivating talents in schools to gaining experience in practice, and how to retain talents are all current problems [5].

The subject of this study is to analyze the current status of human resource management in the tourism industry, the different problems existing in the industry before and after experiencing covid-19 and analyze the current situation of career development in the tourism industry, aiming to make suggestions for the sustainable development of talents in this industry.

From a personal point of view, due to the poor image of the tourism industry, most students studying this major have a negative attitude towards the tourism profession. Second, the individual's

competitiveness is insufficient. The skills that must be learned cover a larger spectrum because tourism is connected to many other businesses. Overall, workers in the tourism industry may face a range of challenges, however, individuals who are adaptable, creative and committed to continuous learning and development may be able to find fulfilling careers in this industry.

## **2. Development of the Tourism Industry**

### **2.1. Before Covid-19**

The growth and development of the tourism industry were evident before the COVID-19 pandemic. The convenience of transportation, the rapid progress of globalization and the growth of people with stable incomes make travel the choice of most people. In addition to leisure travel, there is also business travel due to the growing foreign trade [6].

One of the major developments in the travel industry prior to the pandemic was the rise of online travel agencies (OTAs). The world's leading OTA platforms include booking Expedia, etc. These platforms make itinerary planning easier for travelers. Collaboration between OTAs and suppliers, as well as competition among different travel agencies, drives down prices and makes travel easier for more people.

Sustainable tourism development is another significant trend in the industry. There is an increasing demand for ecologically friendly travel as people become more conscious of how travelling affects the environment and local communities. As a result, efforts for responsible and sustainable tourism have been created and promoted. The sustainable growth of the industry staff is another example of how this concept is expressed. Article 8 of the UN 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states clearly that "full and productive employment and decent work for all" should be the goal. People have gradually learned the value of ensuring the sustainable growth of tourist human resources in addition to the sustainable development of nature [7].

### **2.2. After Covid-19**

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant detrimental impact on the travel and tourism sector, with impacts significantly worse than those seen during previous pandemic crises [8]. As the world begins to recover from the pandemic, the tourism industry is undergoing further development and changes.

One of the major developments in the travel industry in the wake of the pandemic has been the adoption of new health and safety protocols. Many travel companies, such as airlines, hotels and cruise lines, have implemented new measures to ensure the safety of their customers and employees, such as enhanced cleaning and hygiene, social distancing and other requirements. In order to meet customers' demands on health, more diverse rules are established than before [2].

After the epidemic, the important role of new technology in the tourism industry has been accepted by more people. The use of virtual and augmented reality technologies has increased, enabling travelers to experience destinations and attractions from the comfort of their homes. Although the current technological development is not mature enough, it shows its advantages for future development. In addition, contactless technologies such as mobile check-in and digital payment systems have become more common, catering to customers with less physical contact.

## **3. Challenges Faced by Tourism Practitioners**

### **3.1. Macro Development**

The general perception of career development in the tourism industry is that tourism jobs are low-skilled and low-paid, and the income of tourism practitioners around the world has been lower than the average level of all industries [5]. Tourism careers generally do not require long-term. As well as the perception that high-input training is sufficient, the tourism industry is highly accessible, and this

perception can lead to a lack of investment in worker training and development, further exacerbating problems within the industry.

Due to the nature of the travel industry, many travel jobs are seasonal or part-time, which can limit opportunities for career growth and advancement. For college students who are new to this industry, their attitudes are mostly negative. The tourism industry, including the hotel industry, usually places more emphasis on practical skills than general education, which means that higher education has not played its due role in development and promotion to a certain extent [9].

Tourism is vulnerable to external factors such as political instability, natural disasters, and epidemics. These events can lead to job losses and reduced opportunities for career advancement, especially for workers at the bottom of the industry. Those at the forefront of the industry are the most affected. Due to the special nature of the tourism industry, any activity that causes social fluctuations will affect the industry. Due to the stagnation of tourism, supposedly new entrants to the industry lose confidence in the industry [6].

### 3.2. Micro Development

Tourism practitioners can be roughly divided into two categories: front-line workers and managers. Frontline staff includes those who deal directly with tourists, such as hotel staff and tour guides. The services these individuals provide directly impact the customer experience. The rest are professionals such as tourism route planners, destination designers, and management practitioners. These people do not come into contact with tourists and do the work behind the scenes, including managing and planning all matters related to tourism.

The development status of tourism practitioners varies according to their roles and responsibilities. Front-line employees usually need professional skills and knowledge in their respective fields, and there will be corresponding skill requirements in different stages of tourism services. Examples include language skills, customer service, and problem-solving skills. What this part of practitioners pursue is a rich experience and the rules summarized from experience. More practical experience will bring them higher benefits. But front-line tourism practitioners rely heavily on young people, such as recent graduates, who often see them as short-term work plans rather than long-term career plans. Young practitioners are still in the early stage of experience accumulation, relatively inexperienced, and short-term work cannot guarantee the high-quality development of the entire industry's frontline [4].

In recent years, more and more attention has been paid to the cultivation of soft skills of front-line employees. These skills include communication, problem-solving, adaptability, and empathy. At the same time, the industry is known for its professional characteristics of multicultural integration, and people from different regions and cultural backgrounds will meet during travel. The ability to communicate effectively with tourists from different cultural backgrounds, handle unexpected situations and provide personalized service is becoming increasingly important in the tourism industry. And these skills need to be improved more effectively through systematic training. The training of employees in tourism enterprises, especially small and medium-sized enterprises, has not been well implemented due to various reasons, so professional skills are not enough [4].

Another group of related practitioners is professional managers. Management professionals need a wider range of skills and knowledge, including strategic planning, marketing, financial management, etc. They must be able to analyze market development trends and formulate different strategies according to consumers' consumption habits and characteristics to attract tourists to their destinations under various circumstances. In order to ensure the sustainable growth of tourism, they also need to have a thorough awareness of the region's culture, environment, and community. They must also be able to strike a balance between the needs of many stakeholders, including tourists, locals, and companies. There are many related industries linked to the tourism industry, so there are high requirements for the construction of the knowledge system of practitioners. A considerable number of positions need to understand the content of other industries and combine them with tourism to complete management tasks [10].

The rapid development of technology and its application in industry places new demands on practitioners. Technology can replace general-based repetitive work, and with the support of technology, basic repetitive work is gradually transformed into highly automated autonomous services. Thus, although tourism is a low-skilled and labour-intensive industry, opportunities are being created for highly skilled professionals. These high technologies created new careers while killing some occupations. The addition of technology allows human resources to focus on more complex tasks that require a higher degree of interaction and problem-solving. On the other hand, this could lead to job losses, especially for the types of jobs that do not have the skills needed to adapt to technological change and that can be replaced by technology. Additionally, the introduction of technology has increased the pace of work and customer expectations for quick response and service. This leads to increased stress and workload for tourism workers, who need to keep up with technical feedback and client demands.

## **4. Recommendation**

In this section, the main content of the discussion is the suggestions for the development of human resources in the tourism industry. Advice from both industry and personal perspectives.

### **4.1. Industry**

For the entire industry, if the relevant practitioners want the industry to be in a positive state, they need to get rid of the current sluggish word-of-mouth, so that more professional talents are willing to stay in the industry. At the same time, it is suggested to increase the enthusiasm of school students for this major, to give the source of talent guarantees self-confidence. A considerable number of tourism and hotel majors are not optimistic about their majors, especially after experiencing the severe blow of the epidemic to the industry, their current employment attitude is even more depressed [9].

Therefore, only by reversing the word-of-mouth of the entire industry can the integrity of the talent chain be guaranteed. Therefore, adequate policy support is needed. The tourism and hotel sector, where the tourism industry is located, shoulders the heavy responsibility of economic growth for many countries. From the perspective of talent cultivation, the government is suggested investing a lot in the training and education system to ensure the continuous cultivation of talents. The curriculum and teaching methods should keep pace with the times. The tourism industry is developing rapidly and is characterized by change and flexibility under the influence of technology and trends. Talents in the industry must maintain a high degree of flexibility from the teaching stage.

In order to guarantee experiential course content for students, it is also advised that institutions with tourism and hotel management majors offer pertinent and timely internship practise programmes. Particularly field trips, visits, and other skill-based courses as well as internship programmes.

For enterprises that are already in operation, they should guarantee a lifelong training plan for employees to ensure the quality of development. In addition, policy support should also be reflected in the improvement of the industry's current "low income, low social status, and low security" status.

### **4.2. Individuals**

For individuals working in this industry, the accumulation of experience is very important first. Combined with the above suggestions for the industry, practitioners need to ensure that they have rich practical experience in order to have better development in the industry. They should also rely on the support of the school or the outside world to improve professional skills and learn soft skills. Second, the technology orientation is obvious. According to the above analysis, the tourism industry has an obvious tendency to use various high-end technologies, and professionals who have mastered the technology will have certain competitiveness in their careers.

## 5. Conclusion

The study summarizes the current situation and existing problems of human resources in the tourism industry. Comparing the changes in tourism employment before and after the epidemic. Before the epidemic, the tourism industry was developing well, and the addition of new technologies formed a new tourism enterprise model (OTA), allowing more people in related fields to participate in the tourism industry. After the epidemic, people saw the fragility of the tourism industry and their confidence in entering the industry declined. Because of the epidemic, many new occupation types have been added or subtracted. Also, with the development of technology and changes in scenarios, contactless services have received a lot of attention. In addition, the tourism industry is analyzed from a macro perspective and a micro perspective, and the existing problems are described from the perspective of the upper level and the lower level. From a macro perspective, the tourism industry as a whole presents a state of low wages, low skills, and low stability. From a micro perspective, both front-line workers and behind-the-scenes planners face different challenges. Workers who have close contact with consumers are required to improve their soft skills, and at the same time face the threat of simple jobs being replaced by technology. Those working behind the scenes must continue to be sensitive to sustainable development. This article puts forward suggestions on the current situation. From the perspective of the tourism industry, changing the current sluggish word-of-mouth is the key to attracting talents. Relevant government departments should provide effective policy assistance to reverse this situation. At the same time, it is suggested to invest more energy in the talent training system to allow more professionals with suitable abilities to enter the industry. Personal advice, rich experience and diverse skills will be advantages for future development.

The two suggestions put forward in this study provide solutions to the existing problems, which are helpful for management professionals to develop a talent management mechanism suitable for the current situation and for staff in the industry or about to enter the industry to find their own development directions. There are some problems in this study, including insufficient details, which can be discussed in depth in the future, for example, how to make companies pay more attention to employees and gradually change the word-of-mouth of the entire work industry.

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