

Research on the Cultivation of Tourist Guide Talents in Ethnic Areas in the Context of Firming the Consciousness of the Chinese National Community

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Abstract: In the context of frequent exchanges and exchanges and integration of various ethnic groups, tour guides are not only promoters of tourism, but also cultural communicators and promoters of national unity. However, there are shortcomings in the quantity, quality, curriculum and practical teaching of tour guide talents in ethnic areas at present. This paper focuses on the importance and existing problems of tour guide talents training in ethnic areas, aiming at exploring and proposing effective tour guide talents training strategies to realize the high-quality development of tourism in ethnic areas.

Keywords: Firming the consciousness of the Chinese national community; Tour guides; Talent development

1. Introduction

After entering the 21st century, China's population migration and mobility has gradually accelerated, forming a pattern of ethnic population distribution with large diaspora, small settlements, and interlaced mixed settlements, and the interaction, exchange and blending of ethnic groups in the context of large mobility and large blended settlements has become more and more frequent, especially since the new era, the casting of a firm sense of community of the Chinese nation has become the main line of China's ethnic affairs, and has become a driving force to promote the development of various undertakings in the ethnic areas. The Opinions on the Implementation of the Tourism Promotion Plan for the Interaction, Exchange and Integration of ethnic group, jointly issued by the National People's Committee, the Ministry of Culture and Tourism and the Development and Reform Commission in 2022, aims to "promote the all-round embedding of all ethnic groups in the spatial, cultural, economic, social and psychological dimensions with the high-quality development of the tourism industry, to cast a firm sense of the Chinese national community, and to strengthen the construction of the Chinese national community".^[1] Tourism is an important way and industrial support for the high-quality development of industries in ethnic areas, and at the same time, it is a practical way and important content of the "Three Intercourses" of various ethnic groups, while tour guides, as the promoters of tourism and shapers of tourism brands, also play the roles of cultural transmitters, shapers of ethnic images, promoters of ethnic relations, and mediators of cultural conflicts in the process of tourism in ethnic areas. In the process of tourism in ethnic areas, tour guides, as promoters of tourism and shapers of tourism brands, also act as cultural transmitters, image builders, promoters of ethnic relations, and mediators of cultural conflicts, whose behaviors and attitudes not only influence tourists' experiences, but also affect their perceptions of the local ethnic groups and cultures, and in fact influence the actual effects of exchanges and communication of various ethnic groups in the tourism venues of ethnic areas.

China's 14th Five-Year Plan for Tourism Development clearly states that by 2035, the comprehensive functions of the tourism industry will be fully realized, its overall strength and competitiveness will be greatly improved, and a world tourism power will be built. The construction of a strong tourism country cannot be separated from the strong support of high-quality tourism talents, and the professionalism and image of tour guides are not only related to the sustainable and healthy development of China's tourism, but also of profound significance to the casting of the sense of community of the Chinese nation.

2. Literature review of tour guide talents in ethnic areas

Although some scholars have explored the research on tour guide talents, the number of studies is relatively small overall. Cao Liu analyzes the problems in the cultivation of tour guide talents and puts forward specific measures to strengthen the cultivation of tour guide talents from multiple dimensions such as schooling policy, cultivation objectives, curriculum, and teacher strength.^[2] Wu Xiaoyi, on the other hand, adopts the empirical analysis method to explore the multidimensionality of tour guide's professional ethics, and thoroughly researches the specific contents of professional ethics such as image maintenance, reasonable shopping guide, service quality guarantee and law-abiding behavior, which enriches the connotation of tour guide's talent quality research.^[3]

There are fewer studies on tour guides in ethnic areas, but some scholars pay attention to this field. Wang Yali first explored the cultivation of tour guide talents in ethnic areas, laying the foundation for subsequent research.^[4] From the perspective of ethnic minority regions, Ma Hua studied the advantages and shortcomings of local tour guides in tour guide services and proposed targeted talent cultivation strategies, emphasizing the importance of local cultural background in tour guide services.^[5] Bai Yang et al. on the other hand, focused on the analysis of the current situation of the tour guide team in Xinjiang, pointed out the specific problems of tour guide talents in the region, and put forward suggestions to improve the training and education of tour guides.^[6]

Overall, although existing studies cover the training and professionalism of tour guide talents, they still have certain limitations. The perspective of the study mainly focuses on the curriculum, professional ethics and the current situation of tour guides in some ethnic areas, lacking a more systematic and comprehensive analysis. In addition, there are fewer studies based on empirical data, and there is a lack of in-depth exploration of the dynamic process of tour guide career development. Therefore, future research should further expand the research field and introduce more empirical research methods in order to more comprehensively reveal the problems of tour guide talent cultivation and development, and to provide scientific basis for improving the overall level of the tour guide industry.

3. The significance of cultivating tour guide talents in ethnic areas

In tourism, the cultivation of tour guide talents is a key factor in promoting the development of tourism in ethnic areas. Tour guide service is not only an important part of the tourism industry, but also attracts more tourists through high-level explanation and service, thus driving local economic development and employment growth. At the same time, tour guides need to constantly learn and improve their professional ability in the service process, and this self-improvement not only improves the individual professionalism, but also promotes the professionalization and standardization of the tour guide industry. In addition, the professional services of tour guides enable tourists to experience and understand the natural landscape and cultural characteristics of various ethnic groups in a more in-depth manner, which enhances travel satisfaction and travel experience and further promotes the sustainable development of local tourism.

In terms of cultural endeavors, tour guides, as a bridge of cultural dissemination, play an important role in promoting national unity and cultural transmission. In the course of their services, tour guides demonstrate the unity and harmony of China's various ethnic groups, enhance tourists' sense of identification with ethnic cultures and national pride, and lay the foundation for building socialist ethnic relations of equality, unity, mutual assistance and harmony. The tour guides help tourists understand the values, beliefs and social customs of different ethnic groups, reduce cultural barriers and misunderstandings, and promote mutual respect and understanding among ethnic groups. At the same time, by introducing the history, customs and lifestyles of different ethnic groups, tour guides effectively promote the dissemination and inheritance of ethnic cultures, and enhance the public's awareness of minority cultures and their protection.

The cultivation of tour guide talents also plays an important and positive role in ethnic work. In the process of introducing national culture to tourists, tour guides strengthen the sense of Chinese national community, help tourists realize that all ethnic groups are an important part of the Chinese national family, and enhance their identification with the Chinese national community. At the same time, the tour guides emphasize the importance of cultural heritage protection in the process of spreading ethnic culture, which enhances the tourists' awareness of protection and promotes the inheritance and protection of ethnic minority cultural heritage. In the context of interaction, exchange and integration of all ethnic groups, the training of tour guide talents not only promotes the development of tourism and culture in

ethnic areas, but also plays an irreplaceable role in promoting national unity and cultural protection.

4. Problems of tour guide talents in ethnic areas

4.1 Outstanding structural contradiction between supply and demand of talents

From the supply side perspective, there is a lack of effective supply of tour guide talents in ethnic areas in terms of both quantity and quality. In terms of the quantitative supply of tour guides, on the one hand, there is a relative shortage of tour guides during the peak tourist season; on the other hand, there is a relatively large shortage of new industry talents in the fields of rural lodging, study travel, and in-depth experience tourism, and the industry's talent demand is not well met. In terms of the quality of tour guides, the existing tour guide talents in ethnic areas may not be able to fully meet the expectations of tourists for a high-quality tourism experience in terms of professional knowledge, service skills, cultural literacy, etc. Some tour guides do not have enough understanding of ethnic culture, poor language skills, etc. will make the tourists' experience decline.

From a demand-side perspective, the tourism industry has shown many new features in recent years, and the development potential of new forms of tourism such as intelligent tourism and in-depth experience tourism has been accelerated, and the development trend of tourism has led to changes in the demand for talents. First, the diversification of skills requirements, tourism activities in ethnic areas not only require tour guides to have traditional tour guide skills, but also need to master the use of drones and other equipment for video photo shooting, emergency rescue, ethnic languages, outdoor hiking and other skills. Secondly, the service requirements are specialized, which require deep knowledge and understanding of ethnic culture and customs, the professional quality of patience, affinity and adaptability, and the service quality of thoughtfulness and meticulousness. Thirdly, in terms of ideological cognition, the tour guides are required to have an open and tolerant thinking and vision, and a sense of pluralistic integration of the Chinese national community.

4.2 Inadequate curriculum and content development

The cultivation of tour guide talents in ethnic areas is special, which not only requires tour guides to have the professional knowledge and service skills of general tour guides, but also requires a deep understanding of local ethnic culture, customs, beliefs and ecological environment. The deficiencies of the current curriculum and teaching content mainly include: First, the curriculum lacks pertinence, the existing tour guide courses mainly focus on general knowledge areas, such as introduction to tourism, tour guide foundation, scenic spots and service etiquette, etc., and lack of professional knowledge of the culture and history of ethnic areas, folk activities and intangible cultural heritage, etc., which makes it difficult to meet the needs of tour guides in ethnic areas for deeper professional knowledge in practice. It is difficult to meet the needs of ethnic area tour guides for deeper cultural knowledge in practice. Secondly, the interdisciplinary support is insufficient. In addition to regular training, there is insufficient training in photography, image processing, driving skills and emergency rescue and other comprehensive abilities, which makes it difficult to meet the current increasingly personalized and diversified tourism needs. Thirdly, the dynamic tracking of tourism policies and market demand in institutions is insufficient, resulting in a disconnect between the curriculum content and talent training objectives and the actual needs of the tourism market, weakening the practical ability and market adaptability of tour guides, and making it difficult to meet the requirements of high-quality development of the tourism industry in ethnic areas.

4.3 Dilemma of industry-teaching integration and practical teaching

The insufficiency of industry-teaching integration and practical teaching has become an important bottleneck that restricts the quality of tour guide training in ethnic areas. On the one hand, the cooperation mode between universities and tourism enterprises is loose and lacks an effective linkage mechanism. Part of the school-enterprise cooperation is just a formality, and there is a lack of planning and evaluation of internship and practice, which can't effectively realize the cultivation goal of "learning to do, doing to learn". Due to the geographical conditions and economic level of some ethnic areas, the number and scale of tourism enterprises are small, which can't provide enough internship positions and training opportunities for students. On the other hand, in the practical teaching system, students are mostly responsible for low-end auxiliary work in the internship process, unable to get effective practical training. Moreover, tour guides in ethnic areas need to face complex cultural backgrounds and diversified

tourists' needs, while the existing practice courses lack of relevance, students also lack of in-depth contact with the local culture and social environment, which makes students lack of resilience and practical experience when facing complex real-life scenarios such as multi-ethnic cultural exchanges and emergencies after graduation.

5. Strategies for the Development of Tourist Guide Talents in Ethnic Areas

5.1 Multiple initiatives to alleviate the imbalance between the supply and demand of tour guides

Cultivating high-quality tourism talents who can adapt to and lead the development of the modern tourism industry is an important goal of tourism education to help the high-quality development of the tourism industry. In terms of the supply of tour guides, the government should explore cross-regional deployment mechanisms. For example, during the winter tourism peak season in northeastern China and Xinjiang, tour guides can be deployed from Tibet and other regions that are in the off-season to effectively alleviate the shortage of tour guide resources during the peak season. In addition, the ethnic structure of the tour guide team should be optimized, and major ethnic groups in ethnic regions should be actively encouraged to participate in tour guide work and focus on upgrading their language proficiency, cultural literacy and service level, so as to meet diversified tourists' needs and rising service standards. These initiatives will help realize the rational allocation of tour guide resources and the overall improvement of tourism service quality.

Colleges and universities should adjust and optimize their professional structure in accordance with the development trend of tourism industry, and establish a long-term mechanism to match the supply and demand of tourism talents. Colleges and universities must be based on the needs of the tourism industry in ethnic areas, real-time attention to the dynamic changes in the tourism industry, in-depth professional research, to understand the development trend of the tourism industry and the scale and quality of the demand for talents. It is essential to make dynamic adjustments to professional settings in order to achieve an optimal alignment between professional construction and market demand. This should be done in a manner that is consistent with the school's own development orientation and characteristics.

5.2 Educational Reform to Cultivate Composite Talents

In the context of casting a firm sense of the Chinese national community, the cultivation of tour guide talents in ethnic areas needs to promote the integration of business ability and ideological education through multi-level educational reform and innovation, and cultivate composite tour guide talents with solid professionalism and firm ideological beliefs. On the one hand, it is necessary to strengthen ideological and political education, to forge a firm sense of Chinese national community, to join the study of the course "Introduction to Chinese National Community", to enhance the tour guide's own knowledge of the Chinese national community and a sense of belonging, and to display the cultural achievements and harmonious coexistence of various ethnic groups in the process of serving tourists, and to disseminate the concept of national unity. On the other hand, institutions should keep pace with the development of the industry, and the curriculum design should take into account both traditional and modern needs. For the tour guide profession, courses such as ethnic culture explanation, tourism new media marketing, travel photography skills, intelligent tour guide service, AI tour guide practice, etc. should be opened to build a curriculum system of "basic sharing, professional sharing, and expanding mutual selection", so as to realize the transition from knowledge-transferring education to cultural and tourism education.

5.3 Integration of industry and education and practice-oriented education

The practice-oriented education mode not only helps to cultivate students' professional ability and resilience, but also deepens their cognition and dissemination of national culture in practice, providing a strong support for forging a strong sense of Chinese national community. On the one hand, it is necessary to reform the teaching mode, broaden the channels of industry-education integration, and focus on the "four contexts of experiential teaching" to increase learning and practice opportunities. Specifically, the first is contextual teaching, through the simulation of tourism scenes in the classroom, through the learning of WeChat public number tweet production, short video editing and live broadcasting and other new communication media, so that students can master the new media communication skills, in order to show the foundation of national culture. Second, on-campus contextual simulation training, using on-campus resources such as the tourism information technology training room to provide students with

a near-real professional environment, so that students can master professional skills in a simulated context. Thirdly, on-campus and off-campus context enhancement is achieved through activities such as on-campus and off-campus tour guide activities, tour guide competitions, and other similar initiatives. These activities aim to strengthen students' language expression and cultural presentation skills, thereby helping them become competent in multicultural communication tasks. Fourth, off-campus contextual training involves undertaking practical tasks in government projects or scenic publicity activities. Examples of these tasks include writing publicity planning programs, shooting videos, and crafting tweets. This training provides students with real workplace experience, bridging the gap between the learning field and the workplace.

On the other hand, it is necessary to promote the integration of culture and tourism practice, casting a firm sense of Chinese national community. In practical teaching, the formation of a tourism publicity team or a cultural and tourism volunteer team, along with in-depth explanations of national culture and new media promotion activities, serves as a link through the tour guide's explanation. This approach allows tourists to experience the integration and unity of multiculturalism. Not only can they master the professional skills of tour guides, but also disseminate national culture and enhance their own and tourists' sense of identification with the Chinese national community.

5.4 Multi-party linkage and convergence of synergies

Under the background of casting a firm sense of the Chinese national community, the cultivation of tour guide talents in ethnic areas requires the linkage and synergistic development of the government, industry associations, schools and enterprises. The government provides special financial support and improves the system construction, guides the training of tourism talents to integrate with the market demand, develops in the direction of casting the Chinese national community, and promotes the deep linkage of culture and tourism integration education and industry development. As the main position of tour guide training, schools, through innovative curriculum system, deepening ideological and political education and integrating ethnic culture, train tour guide talents with professional skills and cultural identity to meet the new needs of the tourism industry and the development of ethnic areas. The tourism industry association helps the innovative development of tour guide talent training through the preparation of tour guide training materials, talent standard development, evaluation system construction, teacher training and building school-enterprise resource docking platform, while organizing activities such as tour guide competition in ethnic areas, gold medal tour guide lecture hall, etc., to show the professional elegance of excellent tour guides, exchange experience of tour guide service in ethnic areas, give play to the demonstration and leading role of the advanced tour guides in ethnic solidarity, and promote the high-quality development of tourism in ethnic areas. Enterprises, as an important practice platform for tour guide talents training, should actively participate in education reform, build internship bases together, and promote the integration of production and education to the deep development. At the same time, enterprises and schools can jointly develop training courses, teaching materials and practical training programs for tour guides in ethnic areas, promote the close convergence of theoretical teaching and industry demand, and establish a school-enterprise "dual-education" institutional mechanism.

Through the joint efforts of multiple parties to cultivate ethnic tour guide talents, the synergy between the government, schools, and enterprises not only meets the demand for high-quality talent in the tourism market but also lays a solid foundation. This foundation is crucial for fostering a strong sense of community among the Chinese nation, and for injecting enduring momentum into the development of the culture and tourism industry in ethnic regions, as well as for national unity

6. Conclusion

Based on the background of casting a firm sense of Chinese national community, this paper discusses the significance of the cultivation of tour guide talents in ethnic areas, existing problems, and puts forward specific development strategies. Although this paper analyzes the importance of tour guide talent cultivation from multiple perspectives, the study still has limitations: one is the lack of empirical analysis based on large-scale data, and the other is the lack of more in-depth regional comparisons of tour guide development issues in different ethnic regions.

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