

Comparison of the Impact of Student Management Models in Chinese and British Universities on the Training of Tourism Professionals from the Perspective of Government-Sponsored Academic Exchange

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Abstract: In the context of globalization, the cultivation of tourism professionals faces multiple challenges, including cross-cultural adaptability, innovative practical skills, and industry insight. From the perspective of government-sponsored academic visits, this study employs theoretical analysis and comparative research to explore the impact mechanisms of student management models in Chinese and British universities on the training of tourism professionals. The study constructs a three-dimensional analytical framework of "philosophy-structure-impact," systematically delineating the core concepts and institutional characteristics of two management paradigms: the self-development orientation and the system-support orientation. It further analyzes their distinct approaches in shaping students' autonomous learning capacity, innovative practical skills, and cross-cultural adaptability. The research finds that the self-development paradigm enhances students' self-driven motivation and industry insight through flexible systems and empowerment mechanisms, while the system-support paradigm ensures the foundational quality and normative competencies of talent cultivation via a structured system. These two paradigms exhibit complementarity in the context of tourism education, and their dynamic balance offers significant insights for optimizing the cultivation system of tourism professionals.

Keywords: government-sponsored academic visits; student management models; cultivation of tourism professionals; self-development orientation; system-support orientation; cross-cultural competence

Introduction

With the acceleration of globalization and industrial diversification in the tourism sector, the cultivation of tourism professionals in higher education institutions faces the core challenge of effectively aligning industry demands with educational provision. As an institutional vehicle for talent development, student management models profoundly influence students' knowledge acquisition, skill development, and competency formation through their philosophical design and structural characteristics. However, existing research predominantly focuses on curriculum systems or teaching methodologies, lacking mechanistic exploration of talent cultivation differences from the perspective of management ecosystems. Government-sponsored academic visits, serving as a unique platform for cross-cultural academic immersion, provide an analytical perspective for observing and comparing student management models across different educational systems. By deconstructing the philosophical distinctions and institutional logics of student management models in Chinese and British universities, this study aims to reveal their differential impact pathways on the development of students' professional competencies, thereby offering theoretical foundations and practical references for optimizing the cultivation system of tourism professionals. The necessity of this research lies in transcending management paradigms confined to single cultural contexts and promoting the deep integration of educational management theory with the distinctive characteristics of tourism education through cross-cultural comparison.

1. Theoretical Construction of the Relationship between Government-Sponsored Visiting Scholarship Experience and Student Management Models

1.1 The Academic Value of Government-Sponsored Visiting Scholarship as an Observational Intermediary

Government-sponsored visiting scholarship transcends traditional academic exchange activities; its value lies in constructing a dynamic, immersive comparative analysis field. Visiting scholars, immersed in a heterogeneous cultural higher education environment, are able to perceive and interpret the student management models of their host institutions in an embodied manner. This experience directly connects abstract management concepts and institutional texts with specific campus life, teacher-student interactions, and learning processes.

Visiting scholars are not only recipients of management models but also become keen observers and reflectors of their operational mechanisms and implementation effects. Through this "observational intermediary," researchers can capture the micro-level mechanisms of student management models in shaping daily academic behaviors, stimulating learning initiative, and cultivating specific professional competencies. This internal perspective, based on firsthand experience, provides a rich qualitative cognitive foundation for understanding the deep logic and efficacy differences of student management models in different cultural contexts, which cannot be replaced by literature analysis. This perspective sublimates personal experience into academic insight, enabling researchers to break through the limitations of literature research and form a more explanatory theoretical framework in cross-cultural comparisons^[1].

1.2 Core Interrelated Domains of Student Management Models and Talent Cultivation Quality

There exist multiple intertwined core interrelated domains between student management models and talent cultivation quality. The management model profoundly influences the cultivation process and final outcomes of talent through its inherent conceptual orientation and external structural design. At the conceptual level, the value orientation advocated by the management model, such as whether it tends to foster students' autonomous responsibility or focuses on providing systematic growth support, directly determines the overall atmosphere of the academic environment and students' role perception. At the institutional level, specific arrangements such as the flexibility of credit systems, standards for academic evaluation, and support systems for non-academic activities collectively form the regulatory framework for students' knowledge construction, ability training, and quality development. These regulations not only standardize students' learning paths but also subtly shape their thinking patterns in problem-solving and behavioral habits in facing challenges.

Therefore, analyzing student management models essentially entails dissecting the potential pathways of talent cultivation and the logic of quality generation. From the perspective of organizational behavior, this correlation is also reflected in how management models systematically guide students' cognitive development paths and professional capability formation directions through elements such as incentive mechanisms, resource allocation, and evaluation standards, thereby influencing their future professional performance and development potential in the tourism industry.

1.3 The Unique Characteristics of Tourism Professional Talent Cultivation and Corresponding Management Requirements

The Tourism Management discipline possesses distinct features of applicability, interdisciplinary nature, and global orientation, which impose special demands on student management models that differ from those of traditional disciplines. The cultivation of professionals in this field is dedicated to enabling students to competently serve in the highly dynamic, service-oriented, and culturally diverse global tourism environment. This means that the cultivation process must not only impart solid professional knowledge but also deliberately forge students' abilities in cross-cultural communication and collaboration, practical innovation capabilities for addressing complex real-world situations, and keen insight into industry trends.

A student management model adapted to these requirements should provide sufficient institutional space and resource support to encourage students to engage in interdisciplinary exploration, participate in project-based learning activities, and undertake cross-regional academic and cultural experiences. The tension between the rigid constraints of management models and the flexibility required by the

profession, along with the alignment between the precision of management support services and students' individualized development needs, becomes a key dimension for evaluating its effectiveness in cultivating tourism professionals^[2].

2. Divergent Concepts and Structural Characteristics of Student Management Models in Chinese and British Universities

2.1 Student Management Paradigm Oriented Towards Autonomous Development

The student management paradigm oriented towards autonomous development is founded upon rational choice theory and humanistic educational philosophy, with its core proposition being the treatment of students as responsible agents possessing independent cognitive abilities and self-development potential. The theoretical premise of this paradigm acknowledges the value of individual student differences, maintaining that the educational process should respect and stimulate students' intrinsic motivations and unique developmental trajectories. Conceptually, it emphasizes the priority of academic freedom and individual choice, encouraging students to construct personalized knowledge systems and development paths through trial, error, and reflection. This concept is materialized through multidimensional institutional designs: flexible credit systems allow students to select courses across disciplines and academic years based on personal interests and career planning; modular curriculum structures provide diverse knowledge combination possibilities; formative assessment mechanisms primarily focus on students' learning processes and competency development rather than singular standardized outcomes^[3].

The role positioning of administrators undergoes a fundamental transformation, shifting from traditional supervisors and evaluators to resource coordinators, capability facilitators, and development consultants. Their core functions involve constructing rich learning resource databases, providing professional academic development and career planning advice, and offering necessary intellectual support when students face critical decisions. This management model cultivates students' self-awareness and sense of responsibility through institutional empowerment. Its operational effectiveness depends both on students' individual self-perception and initiative, and on the professionalism and accessibility of the supportive advisory network established by the institution. This paradigm ultimately aims to create an academic cultural atmosphere that encourages exploration, embraces diversity, and stimulates intrinsic motivation.

2.2 Student Management Paradigm Oriented Towards System Support

The student management paradigm oriented towards system support originates from structured educational theory and the comprehensive development educational perspective. Its fundamental stance is to provide systematic guarantees for students to achieve optimal development through well-designed institutional frameworks and service systems. The logical starting point of this paradigm lies in its recognition of various cognitive and non-cognitive challenges students may encounter during their growth process, thus emphasizing the optimization of development paths through external interventions and support mechanisms. At the conceptual level, it pursues orderliness in the educational process, predictability of developmental outcomes, and efficiency in resource allocation, striving to establish a stable, transparent, and resource-sufficient academic environment.

This concept is realized through refined institutional arrangements: systematic course sequences ensure the logicity and coherence of knowledge construction; regular academic progress monitoring mechanisms provide timely developmental feedback; comprehensive guidance systems integrate academic advising, life counseling, and career development services. Teachers and administrators assume more proactive roles in this paradigm, where they deeply engage in students' growth processes through institutionalized teacher-student communication mechanisms, collective academic activity organization, and standardized support procedures. This intervention aims to identify potential developmental obstacles at an early stage, provide targeted resource support, and ensure that the student population progresses steadily along predetermined developmental tracks. Through structured guidance and comprehensive support, this paradigm is committed to achieving fundamental quality assurance and scale benefits in talent cultivation. Its advantages are manifested in establishing solid disciplinary foundations and standardized professional competencies for students, while demonstrating unique institutional value in addressing uncertainties and diversities in student development.

2.3 Preliminary Exploration of the Compatibility of Two Paradigms in the Tourism Professional Context

Examining these two management paradigms within the highly applied, interdisciplinary, and globalized context of Tourism Management reveals their respective distinctive compatibility values and inherent tensions. The institutional flexibility and exploratory freedom provided by the autonomous development paradigm deeply align with the core requirements of the tourism industry for innovative thinking, adaptability, and personalized service competencies. This compatibility is manifested in its effectiveness in motivating students to proactively engage in interdisciplinary knowledge integration, spontaneously organize project-based learning activities, and actively participate in international exchanges, thereby systematically cultivating the pioneering spirit and self-adaptive capabilities required by the industry^[4].

Specifically, students under this paradigm are more likely to independently plan tourism product designs, conduct market research projects, or organize cultural exchange activities. These experiences directly translate into key competencies for addressing complex real-world challenges in the tourism industry. Conversely, the system support paradigm, through its structured curriculum system and stable support network, helps students construct systematic professional knowledge frameworks and standardized professional ethics. This paradigm demonstrates significant effectiveness in organizing large-scale internship training, managing standardized skill certifications, and ensuring basic service quality. It is particularly suitable for cultivating professionals with solid foundational expertise, familiarity with industry standards, and the ability to quickly adapt to organized work environments.

The differential compatibility of these two paradigms within the tourism professional context essentially reflects the dialectical relationship between "stimulating individual innovative potential" and "safeguarding foundational quality for the student population" in the talent cultivation process. An ideal student management model for tourism professionals may need to seek a dynamic balance between these two paradigms: providing necessary freedom to cultivate innovation and adaptability, while maintaining appropriate guidance mechanisms to ensure the solid establishment of professional foundations and ethical standards.

3. Analysis of Influence Pathways of Management Model Differences on Tourism Professional Talent Cultivation

3.1 Shaping Pathways of Autonomous Learning Capability and Industry Insight

Student management models establish distinct pathways for cultivating autonomous learning capabilities and industry insight by setting differentiated boundaries for academic autonomy and frameworks for cognitive responsibility. Their influence mechanisms primarily manifest in two interrelated dimensions: cognitive construction and behavioral orientation.

3.1.1 Cognitive Construction Effects of Academic Autonomy

The autonomous development paradigm creates an academic environment requiring continuous self-planning and cognitive management by granting students extensive decision-making space in course combinations, learning progression, and research topic selection. This environment compels students to transform from knowledge recipients into architects of their learning processes, whereby their higher-order cognitive abilities — including information filtering, critical evaluation, and knowledge integration — undergo systematic development. Conversely, the system support paradigm provides students with predictable cognitive development trajectories through predefined clear learning paths and modular knowledge systems. While this approach helps establish solid disciplinary foundations, it may somewhat diminish students' intrinsic motivation to confront knowledge uncertainty and engage in cross-domain exploration.

3.1.2 Transfer Mechanisms of Self-Driven Behavior and Industry Insight

The self-driven learning habits cultivated through high autonomy possess inherent transferability to professional domains. This transfer manifests as an intrinsic tendency to actively track tourism industry evolution, analyze consumer behavior data, and evaluate emerging business models. Students developing under this paradigm form dynamic, forward-looking cognitive schemas of the industry. In contrast, within highly structured support systems, students' industry understanding predominantly derives from established curriculum content and designated case analyses. Their insight formation

pathway demonstrates more standardized and collective characteristics, presenting different challenges and opportunities in cultivating unique industry perspectives that transcend curricular frameworks.

3.2 Activation Mechanisms for Innovative Practical Capabilities and Project Execution Skills

The cultivation effectiveness of innovative practical capabilities and project execution skills required by tourism professionals exhibits mechanistic connections with the trial-and-error space provided by management systems, methods of resource acquisition, and the inclusiveness of evaluation systems.

3.2.1 Institutional Flexibility and Cultural Atmosphere for Innovative Trial-and-Error

The autonomous development paradigm fosters a cultural atmosphere that encourages academic risk-taking and tolerates exploratory failures through mechanisms including flexible credit recognition, streamlined approval processes for practical activities, and acknowledgment of unconventional learning outcomes. This institutional environment significantly reduces both the initial thresholds and psychological barriers for students to initiate and lead innovative projects in real tourism market contexts, such as customized tourism product design, cultural heritage tourism revitalization proposals, or tourism social media operation experiments. The system support paradigm tends to ensure fundamental quality and scale benefits in practical training through standardized, replicable internships and practice courses. While demonstrating advantages in risk control and process management, it may impose implicit constraints on original practices that break established frameworks^[5].

3.2.2 Execution Capability Forging Through Full-Cycle Project Management

The autonomous development paradigm requires students to assume responsibility for full-cycle project management, from conceptualization and resource integration to team collaboration and outcome evaluation. Such comprehensive project experience not only trains their planning and organizational skills but also profoundly shapes their adaptability and resilience in problem-solving under limited resource conditions and when confronting unexpected situations. This substantially forges their project execution capabilities within complex tourism environments. In contrast, practical activities under the system support paradigm are typically pre-designed and meticulously organized, where students predominantly execute specific assigned tasks. Their pathways to acquiring comprehensive project management capabilities — encompassing autonomous decision-making in ambiguous and dynamic contexts and overall project coordination — demonstrate different developmental characteristics.

3.3 Cultivation Effects of Cross-Cultural Adaptability and Global Professional Competence

The campus cultural ecology and interactive spaces created by student management models serve as crucial domains for subtly cultivating students' cross-cultural adaptability and global professional competence. Its influence is realized through two pathways: daily immersion and structured experiences.

3.3.1 Construction of Immersive Cross-Cultural Interactive Environments

The autonomous development paradigm typically relies on highly internationalized academic communities, where its decentralized management and minimal intervention principles objectively require students to proactively construct their own social networks, integrate into learning groups with diverse cultural backgrounds, and independently handle potential cognitive differences and communication barriers in cross-cultural interactions. This daily, non-preset cross-cultural interaction continuously hones students' cultural empathy, contextualized communication strategies, and negotiational leadership, thereby systematically constructing core professional competencies indispensable in globalized workplaces.

3.3.2 Design Logic of Structured Cross-Cultural Experiences

The system support paradigm primarily provides exposure to heterogeneous cultures through institutionalized international exchange programs, cross-cultural workshops, and buddy programs equipped with dedicated mentors. This design ensures fundamental coverage and quality assurance of cross-cultural learning, with its cultivation effectiveness depending on the systematic nature of curricular design and the precision of guidance interventions. If such structured experiences fail to reserve sufficient space for autonomous exploration and self-reflection, students' understanding of cultural complexity may remain at the knowledge level, making it difficult to transform into intrinsic

qualities and adaptive behavioral patterns that can be stably demonstrated in real, volatile, and uncertain international tourism work scenarios. These cultivation effect differences mediated by management models directly impact the professional competitiveness and career development potential of tourism graduates within the global tourism industry chain^[6].

Conclusion

This study systematically compares the conceptual foundations, institutional designs, and influence pathways of student management models in Chinese and British universities on tourism professional talent cultivation, revealing the inherent logic and operational mechanisms of the two paradigms: autonomous development orientation and system support orientation. The research demonstrates that the autonomous development paradigm stimulates students' self-motivation and innovative potential through empowerment and flexible systems, particularly facilitating the cultivation of cross-cultural adaptability and industry insight. The system support paradigm, meanwhile, consolidates students' professional foundations and normative competencies through structured guarantee systems, exhibiting significant advantages in large-scale cultivation and quality control. These two paradigms are not binary opposites but constitute complementary and symbiotic dimensions within the ecology of tourism professional talent cultivation. Future research could further explore integration mechanisms of the two management paradigms, such as how to achieve synergy between personalized development and foundational quality assurance through dynamic adjustments in institutional flexibility and support intensity. Simultaneously, attention should be paid to new characteristics of student management models in the digital era, as well as the acceptance and adaptation mechanisms of students from different cultural backgrounds to these management models. These explorations will contribute to constructing a more inclusive, adaptive, and forward-looking management framework for tourism professional talent cultivation.

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