Research of Competence-Based Tourism Educational System’s Conformity with Requirements of a Modern Business-Society

Kharitonova Tatyana Viktorovna and Chkhikvadze Nelli Avtandilovna

Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education “Russian State University of Tourism and Service” Russia, Moscow region, Pushkino district, Cherkizovo

Abstract: This article’s materials are dedicated to matters of the professional education in tourism sphere. Nowadays these matters are quite topical, because we can see a clear discrepancy between tourism sphere labour market needs and quality of to-be specialists training. To find causes of the existing situation, workers of the Federal State Budgetary Educational Institution of Higher Professional Education “Russian State University of Tourism and Service” carried out a research of competence-based tourism educational system’s conformity with requirements of a modern business-society.

Key words: Competency building approach to personnel training • Tourism sphere • Quality of education

INTRODUCTION

This research was aimed at the matter of improvement of quality of education in the tourism sphere via identification of problems and directions of improving competency building approach to personnel training. It is worth noting that implementation of procedure of control and qualitative assessment of education under modern conditions requires recognising of degree of competence-based educational system’s conformity (in particular in the tourism sphere) with economy’s needs – both on the part of graduates (young specialists) and of business-society representatives (prospective employers).

According to the aim, as research objects we took gradutes of educational institutions of higher professional education, who mastered education programmes of directions “Tourism”, “Hotel industry”, “Socio-cultural service and tourism”, “Management in tourism and hospitality” and also tourist firms representatives (business-society).

The research topic was a competence-based model of tourism industry young specialists [1].

MATERIALS AND METHODS

To study graduates’ opinions, we used the method of blanket canvassing in web-space for entire assembly of university graduates community and thorough personal interview for selection of graduates community. To study employers’ opinions, we used expert review methods [2] As main instruments of research we used graduate questionnaire and “expert notebook” [3].

RESULTS

The research we carried out allowed to obtain the following results. The interview showed that most of employers in tourism sphere (nearly 93%) are regularly in want of skilled personnel. This situation stems from several reasons. One of the main reasons is annual growth of tourism industry in Russian Federation. From the viewpoint of economic branches life cycles theory, tourism industry in our country is at the growth stage, which is characterized by increase in volume of services’ realization, which exceeds inflation annual rate dramatically, increase of economic entities amount,
mastering of new markets etc. Also we should note that tourism sphere personnel training is quite new for our country, so need for staff in many cases was satisfied by unskilled specialists went in for tourism from other industries. Absence of necessary knowledge and skills is bound to influence quality of tourist services. Also we should consider the runoff which exists in practically all branches of economy. Skilled personnel runoff can be caused by various factors of not only socio-economical, but also of psychological character. Tourism industry enterprises managers believe that it is quite natural that at least 20% of employees have a strong desire for career growth [4]. And that means that after 3-5 years of work in a company they will strive for own business start-up and so will be “lost” for a current employer.

The research showed that in most cases (94%) experienced specialists are more preferred. This choice was explained by the following reasons:

- There is no need for spending time and money for additional education (retraining) of experienced specialists;
- Basic knowledge and skills;
- Own bases of clients and partners;
- Ability to share experience and new ideas.

However, 62% of the employers we interviewed pointed at a possibility of engaging educational institutions’ graduates (mainly 1-2 persons) with specialized training, if needed. This choice has such advantages as graduates’ ability to learn quickly (81% respondents pointed at this fact) and their knowledge about new methods and technologies of work (62.5%).

Among all professional competences, acquired by graduates, employers pay most of attention to practical skills, professional knowledge and striving for continuous perfection. In addition to that we should note that at the moment of the research most of employers (nearly 47%) estimated graduates’ competences mastering level as middle one and 12% of respondents answered that higher educational institutions graduates training satisfies enterprises’ needs (and in 100% of cases they were talking about graduates of state institutions).

The research showed that the most popular type of cooperation between business and higher educational institutions is engagement of students for practice, but looking forward, 80% of the interviewed employers showed their willingness to participate in higher educational institutions graduates training quality assessment and in selection of personnel for their enterprises.

Questionnaire survey of graduates showed that nearly 79% of higher educational institutions graduates obtain employment by background, that is in enterprises of tourism industry and related branches.

Higher educational institutions graduates believe that mastering of the main educational programme favoured the development of various professional competences, but these competences level should be estimated in different ways.

For example, level of the following competences was quite high:

- Creative operational activities competences;
- Service activities competences;
- Engineering and manufacturing activities competences;
- Project activities competences.

And such competences level was below the average: organizational managerial, information analysis, scientific methodical, scientific research and pedagogical activities.

Among main reasons of skills system underdevelopment we can mention minor practical component of the training and insufficient labour intensity of disciplines mastering (intensity in hours).

Thus, minor component of the training entails that graduates have problems in cross-cultural communication (poor knowledge of foreign languages), composing of professional documents, team work and independent solving of professional tasks; they do not know professional etiquette and lack a knowledge of innovative and service technologies in tourism sphere.

Insufficient amount of hours designated to mastering of some important disciplines led to that graduates have practically no skills of speech communication in system of national intercourse, they are not able to structurize and integrate information, they lack a knowledge of tourism sphere functioning legal platform.

CONCLUSION

Summarizing this research, we can draw the following main conclusions. Firstly, obtained results are very important for creation of competence-based model of a to-be specialist in tourism sphere, founded on educational standards of the third generation “Federal State Educational Standard 3+”. Secondly, the main reason of higher educational institutions low competitive ability in the labour market is poor practical skills (as a rule,
because of work experience absence). This speaks for necessity for practice-oriented approach to personnel training in tourism sphere. For that aim, curriculum teaching load should have more hours for practical classes and also after the end of every academic year obligatory practices should be put – they will give students an opportunity for tourism sphere work skills testing. Thirdly, during to-be specialists training a special attention should be given to disciplines developing such professional competences as ethics and culture of business communication, speech communication, knowledge of computer technologies and their using in practice, skills of team work, independent making of decisions within given powers and readiness for bearing responsibility for them and also striving for continuous professional and personal growth [5].

The article’s authors believe that fulfillment of all above mentioned recommendations will lead to labour market competitive growth of higher educational institutions graduates of direction “Tourism” and all that are related to it and their being in demand of business societies representatives.

REFERENCES