

# Practice and Reflection on the Innovation of Tourism Marketing Course Mode Based on PBL of Jiangnan University

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**Abstract:** The core of PBL is the problem-based learning (design and drive), cooperative learning (learning community), exploratory learning (construction and verification), authenticity learning (experience and observe), and the process and result of evaluation learning (reflection and growth). Based on this, PBL project and problem design of Tourism Marketing, teacher training and its role transformation, scientific rationality of teaching evaluation are the important starting points of curriculum model innovation. Through detailed project and problem design, the focus of learning is returned to students, helping students design learning process according to their own interests. Curriculum evaluation and effect tracking pay more attention to the common progress and long-term growth of class and student group.

**Keywords:** Problem/Project based Learning; Tourism Marketing; Curriculum Model Innovation.

## 1. Introduction

Tourism Marketing is the product of tourism market development and competition. The core of tourism marketing is to understand and meet the needs of all marketing parties through mutual fulfillment of promises between buyers and sellers. The focus of Tourism Marketing is to study the organization and planning of marketing activities of tourism enterprises and the basic consumption rules of tourism consumers. But in reality, these laws will transfer with the development of market and the change of competitive environment, technology, strategy, etc., which puts forward great requirements for students' learning, especially the cultivation of transfer ability.

Based on the investigation of 12 Tourism Management Colleges in Wuhan, combined with the author's teaching experience of Tourism Marketing for many years, as well as organizing students to participate in tourism market research and analysis, target market selection and positioning, tourism product development and design, tourism marketing plan design and implementation and other activities and projects, The current curriculum model of Tourism Marketing can not well evaluate and guide students' growth, and it is difficult to expand students' thinking and vision of tourism marketing.

In traditional instructional model, it is so difficult for students to not only understand the theory, but also be good at using the relevant skills, tools and means to analyze and solve practical problems. It is also very difficult to innovate the way of tourism marketing and the concept of thinking. In finally, we have only achieved a small part of our established training objectives, such as let students quickly become the main force of understanding technology, walking in the forefront of the times, thinking positively and serving the local economic and social development soon after graduation. We explore and discover that the Problem/Project based Learning (PBL) curriculum model of Tourism Marketing can make the teaching "problem-based", "student-centered" and "return the learning and training process to the students", which is of great significance to achieve the established training objectives with high quality.

## 2. PBL Based Tourism Marketing Curriculum Model

PBL is a process that focuses on practical problems, organizes students to investigate and explore, applies relevant knowledge and skills, forms solutions and plans, and implements, evaluates and improves them. Students internalize theoretical knowledge and professional skills in the process of

practice, so as to achieve teaching objectives and greatly improve the ability and experience of understanding, analyzing and solving practical problems, and form the consciousness and ability of autonomous learning.[1]

PBL originated from medical education in the 1950s, and achieved fruitful results in a short period of time. It was soon introduced into other areas of education by Edwin M. Bridges and Philip Hallinger, and its effectiveness was widely recognized[2]. In recent years, PBL teaching method and training mode reform[3], PBL and subject teaching[4], PBL teaching system design and curriculum development[5] and other educational application and practice achievements are rich, and are moving towards network, online, even digital and intelligent.[6] At present, the hot areas of PBL include students' performance and attitude[7], teachers and managers training[8], effect evaluation and influencing factors[9], network technology and teaching application[10], online PBL[11], etc., which reflect the difficulties and trends of PBL.

As far as the exploration of PBL course mode of tourism marketing is concerned, most of the former achievements are the introduction and theoretical research of PBL, while the practice and exploration of specific courses, especially the experience summary of PBL course implementation, are relatively scarce. For example, the five core contents of learning and evaluation in PBL based Tourism Marketing curriculum model innovation, such as problem-based learning (design and driving), cooperative learning (learning community), exploratory learning (construction and verification), authenticity (experience and observe), and process and result of evaluation learning (reflection and growth), are still lack of successful and referential experience and model. So we decided to break through from the following three key points for helping students design learning process according to their own interests. Although this paper can not solve all the above problems, but in the process of practice, we have achieved some results and experience, and hoping to benefit the relevant research and practice, and also look forward to peer correction.

### ***2.1. The Exploration of PBL Projects and Problems***

It is necessary to set up PBL projects and problems in the real tourism marketing situation. At the same time, it should be in line with the discipline, curriculum teaching and ability training objectives, and match the reality of students' learning situation, so that students can accept, guide and explore independently. Although there are many difficulties, but we have to face and overcome because it is a basic problem, and also a decisive and critical issue related to the success or failure of PBL and its effect.

### ***2.2. PBL Teacher Training and Its Role Transformation and Positioning***

PBL emphasizes "student-centered", "problem-centered" and "return the learning and training process to the students", which puts forward higher requirements for teachers' comprehensive quality, especially the particularity of tourism marketing, such as strong practicality and dynamic, close contact with industrial production. As the designer of teaching activities, the promoter of teaching process, the director of project plan, the controller of teaching quality, the evaluator of teaching effect and the cooperater of teaching and learning, the PBL Teachers' training and role transformation are particularly important, and it is also crucial to introduce off campus and industry mentors as assistance.

### ***2.3. PBL Teaching Evaluation Related Practice***

A paper can only test "how many test points have been memorized now by students as individual entities", while PBL should evaluate all students "how much knowledge and skills can be used independent and cooperating" to analyze and solve practical problems, which is not only the sublimation from testing knowledge to fulfilling quality, but also the leap from individual excellence to group common growth. The problem of tourism marketing in campus life is around us. Do students form the consciousness of knowledge application and cooperative exploration? It puts forward high requirements for the content and method of PBL teaching evaluation, as well as finding and solving the main problems that hinder the efficient realization of teaching objectives through evaluation.

## **3. Practice Of Tourism Marketing Based On PBL Of Jiangnan University**

The innovation of Tourism Marketing mode based on PBL needs to explore how to return the focus of "learning and training" to students through detailed project and problem design. Teachers act as guides and supervisors to help students design the learning process according to their own interests and cultivate

creative and critical thinking. Students' abilities of analyzing and solving practical problems, reflecting and summarizing experiences and lessons have been effectively trained and improved in the process of completing or failing to complete the project tasks and objectives. Different from the traditional model, PBL curriculum evaluation and effect tracking is a whole and long-term process, which pays more attention to the common and long-term growth of class and student group.

### **3.1. Basic Ideas**

#### **3.1.1. Teaching**

According to the students' learning situation, the curriculum knowledge framework and ability requirements are refined. One feasible attempt is that each knowledge and skill corresponds to a specific project, and each project sets up clear knowledge and ability objectives to guide students to actively participate (freely choose) in the process of learning and solving problems in a certain teaching standard and framework.

Usually, different learning and interest groups have different ideas, methods and approaches to solve the same problem. This kind of different experience based on the same teaching goal, especially the comparison, evaluation and sharing of problem-solving experience, enables students to truly experience the fun of "inquiry learning thinking optimization growth" in the "different ways to the same goal".

#### **3.1.2. Learning**

In solving common learning difficulties, we usually take the following measures:

First, in order to eliminate "free rider" and make lazy students have nowhere to escape, we adopt flexible project member combination and elimination mechanism driven by interest.

Second, in order to prevent giving up halfway and guide students correctly evaluate the failure and its value, we have set up the operation process supervision and management mechanism, and held the experience sharing meeting of "Failure is the Mother of Success" regularly.

Third, in order to put an end to "ideological kidnapping", encourage cooperation and respect innovation and dissent, we have formed a system of fair handling of collective decisions and individual ideas.

Fourth, in order to prevent students from only participating in and caring about the individual projects assigned to them, and to realize everyone's participation and mutual learning in all projects, we have regular and timely project summary and display activities, etc.

Based on these measures, students solve practical problems through cooperative exploration, and unconsciously cultivate the abilities of critical thinking, mutual cooperation, self-management, independent exploration and innovation.

#### **3.1.3. Resources and Support**

Teaching resources and support include the establishment and training of teaching staff, the exploitation and utilization of teaching materials, the construction and utilization of practice bases, and the reform and striving of teaching environment and policies.

There are many measures to improve the effectiveness of teaching resources and the vividness of teaching and learning, and stimulate teachers to actively participate in training and practice effectively, such as teaching supervision, colleagues participation and evaluation of other teachers' teaching, vigorously introducing industry and professional personnel to assist teaching, promote the revision and utilization of real teaching cases in time and so on.

It is a basic and core work that increasing the investment and elimination of practice bases which will be helpful for promoting off campus resources to participate in the process of personnel training and form a virtuous circle.

Universities and education management departments should give full support to the optimization of teaching environment and policy incentives from the aspects of guarantee, implementation, support and service.

In terms of base construction and policy supporting, we have been attached great importance by the collage and given support in many aspects, such as construction and teaching funds, scientific research project approval, teaching plan and program adjustment, and teaching management and evaluation, etc.

### **3.2. Teaching Organization Form**

First of all, grouping and division. Group the whole class, and according to the actual needs of each group, the team members can flow and exchange after the completion of the previous project. Each group must have an odd number of members. Different team leaders should be selected for different projects / problems, and then the team leader should determine the person in charge of each sub project of the group, each member should have the opportunity to be the sub project leader, so that each student has the opportunity to exercise and excel.

Secondly, design and description. According to the teaching objectives, teachers scientifically and reasonably design the teaching plan, decompose the teaching content, knowledge points, ability objectives, evaluation standards, etc. into the specific teaching plan, and make necessary and clear explanation and description to students, clearly put forward the relevant requirements and the final results to be achieved. The specific division of labor of the group is determined by the group leader according to the task and needs. Each team should communicate with teachers at any time.

And then, schedule and arrangement. In order to achieve the final goal, each group designs its own ideas, formulates the project schedule, puts forward the implementation schedule of each sub-project according to the priority, assigns relevant tasks and their responsible persons, demonstrates and optimizes the scheme and implements it. The instructor and deputy tutor give full guidance and provide all necessary support and guarantee.

Next, implementation and execution. The instructor and deputy tutor supervise and guide the implementation plan of each group. The basic principle is encourage innovation and trial, avoid similarity and wait-and-see, especially check and guide the overall project schedule and the implementation task list of each sub-project, supervise and urge the completion of relevant tasks on time and with quality and quantity, and timely correct the stagnant, wrong direction and other projects.

Finally, exhibition and sharing. The instructor and deputy tutor organizes the project exhibition and experience sharing meeting. All of the groups and students have to evaluate each group of schemes, and selects excellent schemes, excellent groups and excellent individuals. We also set up a Special Experience and Lesson Award for the project failed team to thank them for their courage in exploration and valuable experience, we believe that failure and success have their own specific values.

### **3.3. Curriculum Evaluation Scheme**

PBL does not have the concept of "either this or that". The assessment principle of this course is to pay attention to the actual gains of students, that is, never to judge the advantages and disadvantages by examination scores, never to judge the heroes by the success or failure.

There are 12 items in the course, and each item is scored separately. The final score is averaged by 12 items. Excellent group members can score 100 points at most, while the highest scores of other group members decrease in turn. The assessment score and process can be adjusted according to the actual situation, especially the students who with good project implementation and class performance can get extra points.

On the whole, it consists of teacher rating and team member rating. The teacher rating is to score each group and calculate the weight points, and the team member rating is to score individual members. The teachers' evaluation to each group is mainly based on the innovation and operability of the project scheme, goal achievement, social and enterprise evaluation as well as experience sharing quality and value (reference and promotion significance) and other indicators. Team members' mutual evaluation is mainly composed of participation / enthusiasm, cooperation / teamwork, creativity / criticism, individual task completion / contribution rate and other indicators. Students can also design their own scoring standards.

### **3.4. Project Implementation and Effect Tracking**

The instructor and deputy tutor need to grasp the controlling degree of project implementation process: Do not excessively intervene in the demonstration, design, implementation and evaluation of students' projects, at the same time, they should always define the role of teachers as the helmsman to guide the direction. Return the learning and training process to the students, but not let the students play freely, When the students deviate from the teaching objectives and projects, teachers need to remind and correct them in time.

For example, in the project of "Analyzes the tourism consumption behavior of undergraduates in Jiangnan University, and designs a tourism product for the mainstream market", most students think from the perspective of consumers, especially student tourists and the overall condition of student tourism market cannot be viewed objectively. At this time, the teacher timely involved in the learning and project execution process, and the related knowledge points of the teaching objectives and tourists' purchasing behavior are sorted out again, for instance, ①How to use the analysis skills and methods of consumption behavior, including consumption ability, preference, habit, way and mode, etc. ②How to design profitable, marketable products that meet college students' consumption ability, needs and psychology from the perspective of enterprise management. ③It should be clear that the mainstream market is not all or most students, but "rich groups" with consumption ability and desire, their consumption is easy to be socialized and circled, and can be effectively guided, and so on. After revision, the project finally achieved the teaching objectives, students' knowledge mastery, learning interest and research spirit, professional ability and quality have been better exercised and improved.

From the results of graduation design of the first batch of students who participated in the curriculum reform, the influence of PBL on their comprehensive ability and quality has been reflected, especially in the fields of product design and marketing, the mastery and proficiency of knowledge is obviously better than that of previous students..

#### **4. Reflection Of Tourism Marketing Based On PBL Of Jiangnan University**

##### ***4.1. Rethinking the Concept of Teaching***

To educate students well, we should first understand them and make full preparations before class according to the learning situation.

Firstly, teachers should become students' friends and go deep into their reality, investigate and study their learning situation, fully understand and respect students' learning habits, learning ability, learning needs, learning interest, etc.

Secondly, we should deeply understand the teaching practice, study the syllabus, adjust and clarify the teaching objectives, tasks, means, methods and forms according to the learning situation.

Thirdly, we should go deep into the marketing practice of tourism enterprises, extract cases with typical teaching significance.

Fourthly, we should design teaching cases and PBL projects carefully, scientifically and step by step according to the actual situation, especially the situation of learning and teaching.

So we can guide students to be good at using theoretical knowledge to think about the problems and phenomena of tourism marketing around them, and try to design and implement solutions, evaluate the implementation effect, put forward improvement measures by using the research methods of tourism marketing.

##### ***4.2. Reconsideration of Teaching Method***

Firstly, lead students out of the classroom to test their knowledge in the real marketing situation. Traditional teaching methods do not allow students to leave the classroom, Our curriculum reform project allows us to put a large number of teaching activities on campus, such as investigating the consumption behavior of undergraduates, current situation of campus tourism products and so on. The students studied, practiced and tested the basic methods and theories of Tourism Marketing in a real environment. Although it is not as complicated as outside school, students can not only test all knowledge points and learning components, but also better establish marketing confidence by carrying out research and interview activities in a more pure environment.

Secondly, deepen collage-enterprise cooperation and integrate resources of both sides to drive project teaching. We have taken many ways to give full play to the advantages of off campus bases and joint talent training bases, especially the practical cases and experience accumulated in the actual operation and development of enterprise. We also taken many ways to strive for policies to fully mobilize the participation and enthusiasm of off campus resources and tutors, such as strengthen base construction and elimination, employ more off campus tutors are employed to participate in the whole teaching process from training plan and curriculum design, curriculum adjustment, to training effect evaluation

and tracking and so on.

Thirdly, stimulate the enthusiasm of participation and strive to enhance the interest of all students in learning. We have made the necessary changes, especially more flexible and objective assessment and evaluation methods based on rewards and incentives, to enhance the learning interest and practicability of the project. The changes include from independent learning to cooperative learning, from passive acceptance of knowledge to autonomous learning, from judge the pros and cons just with one test to process and comprehensive performance evaluation, etc. Students find their own needs and goals in the process of learning, and take targeted learning methods and ways to improve their comprehensive quality. What teachers need to do is to provide guidance and build a platform and other basic and auxiliary work.

#### **4.3. Re-integration of Educational Resources**

It is necessary and the key to success of PBL project that excavating and integrating educational resources.

Firstly, we strive to study teaching materials and learning plans in depth. Teaching materials are the basis of teaching, learning plans are the basis of the smooth implementation of teaching and learning activities. Studying teaching materials and practicing learning plans are the prerequisite to stimulate students' interest in learning.

Secondly, we strive to improve personal teaching basic skills and teaching quality. We found that the more lectures attending and the more peers attend our classes as well as the more communication with students, the faster our teaching skills and quality are improved, which is also an effective way to stimulate students' sense of role, participation and acquisition in learning activities, and to form the endogenous motivation of active learning.

Thirdly, we fully prepare and use appropriate teaching tools and cases for teaching activities. There are essential differences between teaching activities and actual marketing activities. The former is more idealistic, while the actual conditions and environment are constantly changing. Appropriate teaching tools and cases can greatly shorten the distance between theory and practice, and make the classes vivid and close to reality, so it will greatly and efficiently enhance students' interest in learning.

Fourthly, we also fully tap and integrate other educational resources. In addition to teaching materials, excellent courses, teaching staff, teaching bases and platforms, teaching environment and policies, we should also be good at exploring the teaching resources around us, such as guiding students to think about the topic of "masks as the best advertising position", and draw inferences from one instance.

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