

# รูปแบบการพัฒนาคุณลักษณะที่เหมาะสมต่อการได้รับการจ้างงานสาขาการท่องเที่ยว

## Tourism Employability Attribute Development Model

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### บทคัดย่อ

การวิจัยนี้มีวัตถุประสงค์เพื่อนำเสนอรูปแบบการพัฒนาคุณลักษณะบัณฑิตที่เหมาะสมต่อการได้รับการจ้างงานสาขาการท่องเที่ยว เก็บข้อมูลจากกลุ่มตัวอย่าง 5 กลุ่ม คือ 1. ผู้เชี่ยวชาญด้านการท่องเที่ยว 2. ผู้บริหารในสถาบันอุดมศึกษา 3. ผู้ประกอบการธุรกิจนำเที่ยว 4. ผู้ปฏิบัติงานในธุรกิจท่องเที่ยว และ 5. ผู้ทรงคุณวุฒิด้านการอุดมศึกษา ดำเนินงานวิจัยโดยการวิเคราะห์สาระ การวิเคราะห์ความต้องการเรียนรู้ และสถิติที่ใช้ คือ ค่าความถี่ ค่าร้อยละ ค่าเฉลี่ย และส่วนเบี่ยงเบนมาตรฐาน ซึ่งผลการวิจัยสรุปได้ดังนี้ 1. ปัจจัยที่ส่งผลกระทบต่อวิชาชีพด้านการท่องเที่ยวและตลาดแรงงานไทยมากที่สุด คือ การเคลื่อนย้ายแรงงานเสรีในภูมิภาคอาเซียน ส่งผลให้แรงงานไทยต้องเร่งพัฒนาทักษะการทำงานและทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ 2. คุณลักษณะที่พึงประสงค์ของผู้ปฏิบัติงานในอุตสาหกรรมท่องเที่ยว 9 ด้าน ประกอบด้วย (1) ความรู้ด้านอาเซียน (2) การจัดการอารมณ์และความโกรธ (3) การบริหารเวลา (4) ทักษะภาษาอังกฤษ (5) ความรู้เกี่ยวกับแหล่งท่องเที่ยว (6) การคิดอย่างเป็นระบบและเป็นเหตุเป็นผล (7) การทำงานอย่างมีกลยุทธ์ (8) ความอดทนต่อสภาพตึงเครียด และ (9) ความรับผิดชอบต่อความผิดพลาดในงาน 3. คุณลักษณะที่เหมาะสมต่อการปฏิบัติงานสายอาชีพท่องเที่ยว ประกอบด้วย 4 องค์ประกอบ (WISE Model) คือ ลักษณะการทำงาน (W) คุณภาพส่วนบุคคล (I) ทักษะเพื่อการปฏิบัติงาน (S) และบุคลิกผู้มีการศึกษา (E) (ค่าเฉลี่ยองค์ประกอบ 4.28 4.18 4.10 และ 4.05 ตามลำดับ) 4. รูปแบบการพัฒนาคุณลักษณะบัณฑิตที่เหมาะสมต่อการปฏิบัติงานสายอาชีพท่องเที่ยว ประกอบด้วย องค์ประกอบคุณลักษณะ WISE Model กลยุทธ์การพัฒนาคุณลักษณะ การจัดการเรียนรู้ และการประเมินการเรียนรู้ ด้วยผลงานการพัฒนาคุณลักษณะส่วนบุคคล

**คำสำคัญ :** การได้รับการจ้างงาน คุณลักษณะที่เหมาะสมต่อการได้รับการจ้างงาน รูปแบบการพัฒนาคุณลักษณะ สาขาการท่องเที่ยว

## Abstract

This research aims to study the current situations and trends of human resources in tourism both in Thailand and other countries, analyze and assess the trend of desirable attributes for tourism professionals, and propose a tourism employability attribute development model for undergraduate students. Employability framework and Career EDGE model (Dacre Pool and Sewell, 2007) are used in conducting the component analysis of employability attribute for tourism. Data for the research are collected from the following sample groups: (1) 5 tourism experts who are responsible for tourism policy and planning; (2) 9 university executives who are responsible for employability development of students especially in tourism; (3) 20 entrepreneurs of authorized travel agencies; (4) 413 tourism professionals who are working with travel agencies; and (5) 15 specialists who are administrators and experts in the tourism attribute development for university students and new graduates. Data analysis and learning need analysis are done in the first part of this student, and later statistical analysis using frequency, percentage, means, and standard deviation are applied to define key components of employability attributes. The research results are as follows: 1. The current situations and trends of human resources in tourism: Factors, affecting the competitiveness of Thailand tourism industry the most, are the liberalization of trade and services and the free movement of labor within ASEAN region as a result from ASEAN Economic Community. On one hand, the positive effects are the increase of local labor employment, the need for Thai labors to develop and improve their skills, and the possibility of increasing wage rate. On the other hands, the negative effects are the outflow of local skilled labors, the massive inflow of immigrant labors, and the comparative disadvantage of Thai labor regarding English skills and proficiency. 2. Desirable attribute of tourism graduate: According to the opinion of tourism experts, there are 9 attributes that are important for tourism graduate which are (a) ASEAN knowledge (b) Emotions and anger management skills (c) Time management (d) English skills (e) Knowledge of tourist destinations (f) Systematic and logical thinking (g) Strategic working (h) Stress tolerant and (i) Responsibility taking for mistakes in work. 3. Graduates' employability attribute for tourism professionals: There are 4 key components (WISE Model) which are (a) Working characteristics: W (b) Individual quality: I (c) Skills for working: S and (d) Educated personality: E (Component mean value 4.28, 4.18, 4.10, and 4.05 accordingly) 4. Graduates' employability attribute development model for tourism

professionals: There are (a) 4 components of WISE Model (b) Attribute development strategies (c) Learning arrangements according to the Learning ladder and (d) Learning assessments using the Personal Attribute Development Profiles (PAD Profiles)

**Keywords :** Employability, Employability Attribute, Attribute Development Model, Tourism

## Introduction

For the past decades, tourism industry of Thailand has been facing major changes both in terms of threat and opportunity as the country is now going downhill from being one of the top of tourist destinations worldwide to being the third in ASEAN region, after Singapore and Malaysia. According to the Travel & Tourism Competitiveness Index 2013 (World Economic Forum, 2013), Thailand is ranked 9th in the Asia Pacific region and 43<sup>rd</sup> from the overall of 140 countries. Given that there were some resilience to the natural disasters and political unrest with which the country has been grappling, the country still endowed with rich natural resources and a strong affinity for Travel & Tourism with a very friendly attitude of the population toward tourists. However, some weaknesses remain. The question arises whether Thailand has completely loosed its advantages in the industries or merely lack of development sustainability.

Tourism is a labor-intensive service industry that relies heavily on the availability of quality personnel (Zagonari, 2008). Much attention has been placed on the development of human resource for tourism industry and there has been much debate on how education sector could play a better role in meeting up with the labor needs. The origin of tourism workers training was emerged from vocational education. According to the need to produce trained workers for the industry, tourism curriculum has been focusing on the development of students' occupational and operational skills. As the industry grows and becomes more complex according to today's sophisticated needs and expectations of international tourists, both vocational and higher education institutes together play a different part in producing tourism workers and professionals with variety of skill levels and job positions. However, most discussions today tend to form around the question of how to balance the vocation and academic focus. Being able to produce employable students is clearly an ultimate goal for every stakeholders, yet this paper attempts to suggest that academic and sociological perspectives should be addressed in

curriculum development. The purpose of tourism education at university level should be focusing on not only to satisfy the industry's need but also to educating future tourism professionals.

In case of Thailand, among the 166 higher education institutions countrywide (13 limited admission public universities, 2 open admission universities, 13 autonomous universities, 69 private higher education institutions, 40 Rajabhat Universities, 9 Rajamangala Universities of Technology, An Institute of Technology, and 19 Community Colleges), more than a hundred of them provide degrees, certificates, and/or training courses in Tourism. This does not simply mean that all 200,000 job positions in tourism could be filled by local workers. All education providers in Thailand can only put 30,000 tourism degree and non-degree graduates in to the market per year. However, from an industry perspective, key problems regarding human resource in tourism in Thailand are as follows:

There is little evidence of public and private commitment to initiate well-coordinated long-term investment in tourism training and education in Thailand. The tourism industry council and other private enterprises once decided to set up their own tourism training schools with an attempt to tailor made the own workers but the operation of those schools were half-successful and eventually closed down due to the fact that investment in education and training need a huge amount of suck cost with low rate of financial return. There is also a lack of intra-governmental policy alignment for tourism in Thailand. There are 3 Ministries that are responsible for the development of tourism human resources: Ministry of Tourism and Sports, Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare, and Ministry of Education. Integration in planning and actions between those related ministries is very essential for Thailand to be able to successfully develop and manage local workforce for tourism industry.

Numbers of other issues in tourism sector are the nature of small size businesses, the job security both employers and employees, the availability of skilled staff, rewards and benefits, working hours and conditions, use of immigrants and foreign workers, and a traditionally low level of training and education (Peacock & Ladkin, 2002). The tourism industry is characterized by a rapid turnover of staff, with a persistently contingent workforce, employed under very flexible conditions, on non-standard terms and on a seasonal basis. The nature of the employment in tourism industry is flexible hiring either

part-time working, freelancing, or working on temporary contracts. On one hand, this flexible workforce tends to fit well with today youth culture in which rapid job changing is seen as a more desirable work comparing to other rigid careers; on the other hand, the businesses suffer from frequent staff turnover and are unable to retain those with a dedicated background, a proper set of attitude, and clear career ambitions. Thus, it is important that a career in tourism should be a personally specified path that suits free spirit lifestyles, yet produces future entrepreneur for the industry.

Also, there has been a negative perception towards the nature of service job. Since student consider the tourism industry as a first step (in case of career ambitions) or a temporary occupation (in case of young people). Small firms cannot afford effective on-the-job training for the new or loyal employees, while large firms cannot retain their skilled staff. Both small and large firm; thus, do not offer formal in-house training for their staff due to the high drop-out rates. Consequently, there has been minimal advanced career opportunity for people with the right tourism skills and professional competencies, especially at supervisory and managerial level. Moreover, the levels of education in the tourist industry are generally low, with a tough competition with non-skilled employees (Hjalager and Anderson, 2000). Since tourism is the highest income generating sector for Thailand, both education and government sector must take full responsibility in dealing with these HRM and HRD dilemma in tourism on one hand, while on the other hand encouraging the industry to take part in in setting and arranging education and training programs for students in tourism.

Diversity of different job positions in tourism industry required people with several skill levels, ranging from a very low skilled worker for basic works up to a very talented one with management skills and leadership quality. Moreover, employers perceived uncertain nature and character of tourism degree graduates, and unclear differences from other related service sector programs, offered by universities (Knowles et al, 2003). They are inclined to choose non-graduate employees and feeling reluctant to replace their qualified non-graduate personnel with inexperienced university graduates (Collins, 2002).

Nevertheless, the most pronounced problems still is an inadequate job readiness of tourism graduates. Newly graduates either not sufficiently be equipped with knowledge and skills needed for a career in tourism or simply are not suitable for the job because of their personal quality. There has always been certain level of expectations towards quality

and qualification of tourism graduates. Higher education institutes are expected to produce skilled and reflective persons who are ready to function in the job market right after the graduation. The industry needs tourism professionals, who can work efficiently, think innovatively, and act responsively are the valuable assets for the industry in improving common practices and developing new approach for the country to be more competitive with others in the world of tourism.

Apart from generic skills and knowledge requirement, the industry seeks employees with personal skills (communication, adaptability, and leadership) and foreign language ability. The business sector tends to accuse educational institutes of providing too broad-based, generic knowledge linked with other disciplines, and of molding tourism graduates with wrong qualification (Esichaikul & Baum, 1998). Employers then fill their needs by choosing to hire people with practical experience (2-year degree students with work experience) over those with university degrees. The situation for university graduate employment has been worsening due to the national policy on minimum wage of degree graduates in Thailand. Employers are forced to pay certain salary level for a newly graduate with no working experience, while employing people with the lower educational level give them freedom in the salary offering process. Balancing the vocational and liberal aspects of tourism education is vital to produce a well-rounded graduate (Lewis, 2005) since the concentration only on the vocational part weaken student's intellectual capacity by not allowing them to be able to adapt themselves to respond to stakeholders' need. Even though there is no absolute distinction between vocational and higher education, yet for the purpose of human resource development, there is a need to make their roles clearer to each other and to the business. Schools for non-degree level are likely to teach well-identified transferable skills that students are able to demonstrate for course completion, while universities produce graduates who know how to learn in order to be flexible enough to cope with the changing skill requirements and technological advances (Zagonari, 2009).

Thus, for Thailand tourism industry to grow and develop sustainably, cooperation between major stakeholders is a compulsory condition. There is a strong need for Thailand tourism industry to be able to identify specific and generic knowledge and skills required for those who qualify for the service job and a career in tourism. The weighing of

importance between specific and generic attributes of tourism graduates is also crucial. This study aimed at gathering information regarding views, needs, expectations, and limitation of the three stakeholders in tourism: the government sector, the education sector, and the industry sector; then propose ways in which university and other training bodies can be mutually support the human resource development for tourism industry of Thailand.

## Objectives

There were 3 main objectives of this paper. First, to explore and review current situations and trends regarding tourism human resource both in Thailand and other countries. Second, to analyze and determine the set of desired attributes for tourism professionals. Third, to propose a tourism employability attribute development model.

## Research Methodology

### 1. Population and Samples

The population of this study included stakeholders mainly involved in designing, developing, implementing tourism programs, and employing tourism graduates which are (1) tourism experts (2) university executives (3) entrepreneurs of authorized travel agencies (4) tourism professionals and (5) tourism specialists. The determination of sampling size of questionnaire respondents for this study can be summarized as follows,

The total population of Tourism professionals working in 11,951 authorized travel agencies in Thailand (TAT, 2014) is unknown; thus the statistical calculation of Khazanie (Khazanie, 1996) was applied for the sample size determination, with the 95% level of confidence and 10% standard deviation. The 420 samples of tourism professionals proportionally covered all types of travel agency businesses in Thailand (general, inbound, domestic, specific areas).

### 2. Data Collecting

The data collecting process started with identifying the emerging jobs or workplace needs in Thailand tourism using the industry perspective, and followed by two sets of data collection:

2.1 Interview of 5 experts in tourism, 9 university executives, 20 entrepreneurs in tourism business regarding their views on job readiness and strengths and weaknesses of newly graduates in tourism, and future needed skills of the tourism professionals

2.2 Likert scale-questionnaire responses from 413 working professionals in tourism whose possess at least 5 years of experience in tourism business to discover their views on the applicability of knowledge derived from academic subjects of tourism curriculum for the world of tourism work and the level of importance of a comprehensive list of 124 graduate attributes

Once the related range of skills, knowledge, and other employable qualities were determined, an employability attribute development model was formulated with details in student employability development strategies, learning arrangements, and attribute assessment criteria.

### 3. Research tools and quality testing

In order to determine tourism employability attributes for graduates, the data collecting process was consist of 4 steps based on the primary information obtained from the interviews and questions, and combined with the content analysis of existing research findings.

3.1 Developing 3 sets of interview questions for tourism experts, university executives, and travel agency entrepreneurs

3.2 Conducting interviews and analyzing the data

3.3 Synthesizing data from the interviews with the content analysis results from the literature review to develop a draft questionnaire for tourism professionals, verifying the content validity and Item Objective Congruence (IOC), and trying out 30 set of questionnaires with non-sample group respondents

3.4 Distributing 500 sets of questionnaire to travel agencies, collecting them back

### 4. Analysis of data

The categorization of tourism employability attributes are determined based on literature reviews and interviews of stakeholders in producing and using of tourism graduates that consists five (5) tourism experts who are responsible for tourism policy and planning, nine (9) university executives who are responsible for employability development of students especially in tourism and twenty (20) entrepreneurs of



authorized travel agencies and four hundred and thirteen (413) tourism professionals working in travel agencies. The content analysis was conducted in the literature review to determine the lists and groups of tourism employability attributes while statistical analysis using frequency, mean value, and standard deviation was conducted for the analysis of data from the questionnaire.

## Research findings

### 1. The current situations and trends of human resources in tourism

Factors, affecting the competitiveness of Thailand tourism industry the most, are the liberalization of trade and services and the free movement of labor within ASEAN region as a result from ASEAN Economic Community. On one hand, the positive effects are the increase of local labor employment, the need for Thai labors to develop and improve their skills, and the possibility of increasing wage rate. On the other hands, the negative effects are the outflow of local skilled labors, the massive inflow of immigrant labors, and the comparative disadvantage of Thai labor regarding English skills and proficiency.

### 2. Desirable attribute of tourism graduate

According to the opinion of tourism experts, there are 5 attributes that are important for tourism graduate which are (a) Having service mind and be passionate about travelling (b) Being flexible, capable of self-adjustment and problem solving (c) Enthusiasm about learning and searching information on tourist destinations (d) Capable of planning and organizing travel programs and (e) Being a good communicator who loves explaining and elaborating on places and things. Two out of five attributes (c) and (d) are also identified as core competency and functional competency of travel services professional. (Institute for Tourism Personnel Training, 2013) As for Thai tourism graduates, there are 9 specific attributes that are considered to be the weak from the point of view of tourism entrepreneurs which are (a) ASEAN language knowledge (b) Emotions and anger management skills (c) Time management (d) English skills (e) Knowledge of tourist destinations (f) Systematic and logical thinking (g) Strategic working (h) Stress tolerant and (i) Responsibility taking for mistakes in work. Again, several of them were mentioned in numbers of literature on the subject of working competencies and desirable career attributes (British Council, 2004; York & Knight, 2004; P21, 2011).

Regarding the administrations of higher education institutes and the occupational preparation for tourism graduates arrangement they provided, business entrepreneur perceived that universities are performing well on building the network and relationship with business units and enterprises in order to arrange work placement and internship for their tourism students. However, much can be improved by allowing business sector to work more closely with university in delivering and developing tourism curriculum. However, much attention should be paid to the teaching arrangement of two particular subjects in the tourism curriculum that were considered to be most needed for tourism students to master (a) English for Communication in Hospitality Industry and (b) English for Presentation in Tourism business.

### 3. Components of Employability Attributes in Tourism: WISE model

According to the data that were collected and statistically analyzed using mean and standard deviation value, it was found that there are four components of tourism employability attributes: Working characteristics, Individual quality, Skills for working, and Educated personality. Each component comprises groups of attribute and list of attributes. The details can be summarized as the following table.

**Table 1** Components of tourism employability attributes

Components (4)	Groups of attribute	List of attributes (48)
<b>C1: Working characteristics</b> (Component mean = 4.28)		Punctuality Honesty and Credibility Being responsible Ethics and morals Interpersonal relationship Shared responsibility and decision making Self-management Attention to details Willingness to work overtime Service mind and willingness to help Be lively with a sense of humor

Table 1 (Continued)

Components (4)	Groups of attribute	List of attributes (48)
<b>C.2 Individual quality</b> (Component mean = 4.18)	Work attitude (Group mean = 4.21)	Flexibility and adaptability Be passionate about service work Organizational loyalty
	Self-attitude (Group mean = 4.18)	Self-awareness Ability to part work & personal matters Accurate perception of self-capacity
	Personality and expression (Group mean = 4.18)	Politeness and Gentleness Soft speaking and proper word choices Personality and character for the job
	Way of living (Group mean = 4.16)	Humbleness Ability to follow and comply with rules Generosity
<b>C.3 Skills for working</b> (Component mean = 4.10)	Entrepreneurial skills (Group mean = 4.15)	Be decisive Positive response to challenges Ability to see crisis as opportunity Be innovative
	Operation skills (Group mean = 4.14)	Ability to response to situations at hands Ability to learn new things Problem solving skills
	Leadership skills (Group mean = 4.10)	Respect superiors Be tactical Negotiation skills Conflict settlement
	Specific work skills (Group mean = 4.07)	Sales management Emotions management Public relation management Technology related skills Presentation and explanation
	Process skills (Group mean = 4.06)	Time management Ability to detect other's feelings Building good working atmosphere

Table 1 (Continued)

Components (4)	Groups of attribute	List of attributes (48)
<b>C.4 Educated personality</b> (Component mean = 4.05)	Intellectual ability (Group mean = 4.09)	Systematic and logical thinking Emotional intelligence Cultural intelligence Backward thinking
	Disciplinary knowledge (Group mean = 4.05)	English/ foreign languages proficiency Knowledge of travelling destinations

As listed in the table above, this study revealed a comprehensive list of 48 employability attributes of tourism graduate. The most important component is the Working Characteristics with Punctuality, Honesty and Credibility, and Being responsible are the most required attribute for employees in tourism business. The second most important component is Individual quality, meaning that to be able to work successfully in tourism industry; one must acquire proper attitude, personality, expression and way of living. Not surprisingly due to the nature of service work, attributes like Flexibility, Adaptability, Politeness, Gentleness, Humbleness, Soft speaking, and Generosity are much favorable. Skills for working consists number of attributes related to the scope of work and job positions in tourism. Interestingly, intellectual ability and language proficiency, although crucially important for the job in tourism, were the last in the component rank. These results are quite consistent with previous studies on desirable attributes for tourism graduate (Office of Higher Education Commission, 2009), yet the component ranking contradicts general perception towards the level of attribute importance. Much effort spent on student development activities concentrates on how to improve student language and communication ability (English proficiency, in particular for Thai students), nevertheless the attributes that are considered less measurable and rather intangible such as Punctuality, Honesty and Credibility are placed in the highest rank of importance when it comes to student employability.

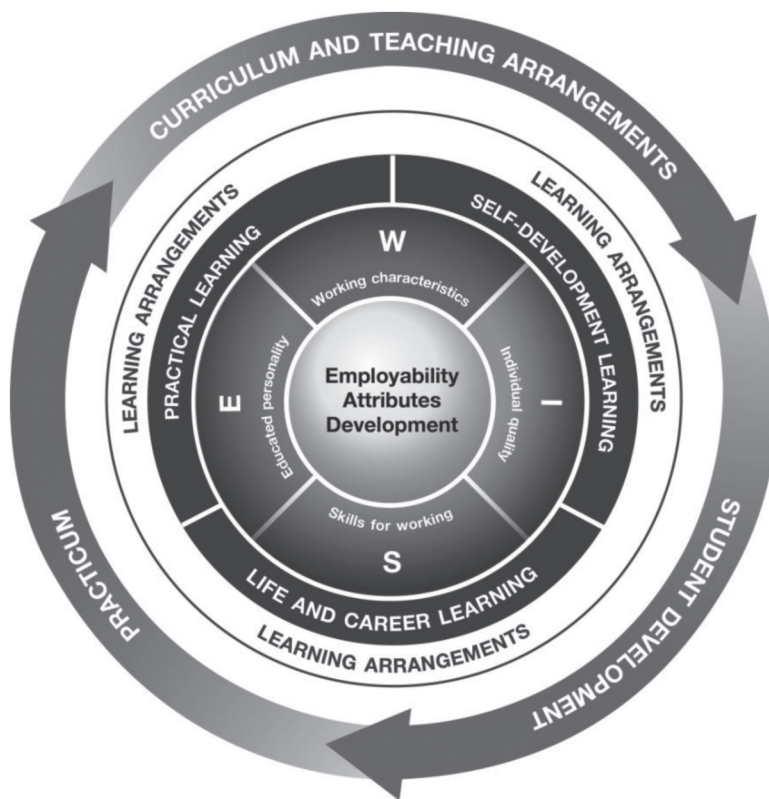
It is clear that attention must be paid to personality development (Grooming process) to ensure professionalism. Internships and apprenticeships in the industry, as well as academic subjects that are closely related to occupation needs are important parts of student competency development. Educators must give a strong emphasis introducing and applying all the Working characteristics into student's learning process, in the hope that they could be absorbed and presented in their way of work in the future. Also, education sector should be aware that there is need to train more generalists than specialists to widen the career opportunity and to be able to achieve a more sustainable career goal for individuals.

#### 4. Employability Attributes Development

Like any other industry, tourism business needs and expectations define the core of tourism curriculum that is based on practices and application. For long-term growth and stability of tourism industry, related education and training requirements to support WISE Model can be summarized as follows;

**Table 2** Summary of the WISE Model

Strategies	Curriculum & teaching arrangement	Student development	Practicum
Learning process	Life & Career Learning	Self-development learning	Practical learning
Assessment	Professional development	Personal quality	Practical experience



**Figure 1** Proposed Tourism Employability Development Model

To support the three learning process of students, activities that allow students to reflect on what they learnt is an effective learning mechanism. In the process of reflection students should be guided to create meanings from and about what they learn through reflection. It's a process of seeing themselves 'outside in' (Bruner, 1996). For students to become employable, they must be equipped with management knowledge, interpersonal skills, and hands-on experiences.

## Discussion

How can national policies best ensure that education and training options to support an important local industry get the right balance between (a) university and vocational learning options for accreditation, and (b) focus on specific skills and knowledge versus the importance of generic skills. This study proposed the “Joint effort between the stakeholders” in three aspects.

### **1. Higher Education Institutes and Tourism Industry in developing students in tourism**

As graduate users and developers, higher education institutes must develop strong connections with tourism industry, especially regarding students’ internship opportunity. Educators and industry professionals could jointly form apprenticeships and work projects for students or provide counselling to each other on issues of syllabus framing and in-house training. It is true that low cost employees, locals and immigrants, remain available in the country. However, for the industry to grow sustainably, tourism labor productivity must be enhanced. Tourism businesses and entrepreneurs must perceive the need to change their role in human resource development from minimal investment in training to active participation in preparing, retraining and development of tourism graduates and improving professionalism.

### **2. Higher education and vocational institute in offering education and training in tourism**

The objective of organizing professional training programs is to balance employment and training, whether it is the number of employees that have to be trained or the level of skills that need to be developed. However, it is important to differentiate between education and training. The former is principle-based such as a classroom exercise that seeks to contribute towards holistic development while the latter is more perceptive in nature such as a hands-on exercise for skill development. Both aspects of instruction have equal weightage and neither can be a substitute for the other. Thus, both universities and vocational institute must work in parallel in achieving public objectives (global citizen, well-rounded graduate), yet taking into account private characteristics (employment, employability) of students in tourism.

A focus on how to balance university and vocational learning is a holistic approach in dealing with human resource development of tourism professionals. Although tourism education proves its strong focus on the vocational aspect, there is a need for degree-level tourism programs that enable students to think critically about the future of the industry, as well as to train them for required skills and knowledge. Students need to develop self-awareness, motivation, imagination and creativity. In brief, while vocation education can equip students with the right skills and specific knowledge, higher education should educate students to be able to create and manage the future.

### **3. Intra-governmental agencies in planning and aligning tourism development policy**

A vertical and horizontal classification of institutes and programs for tourism professional's development is recommended. Vertical integration means that training centers may be geographically located so as to serve the local/regional/national level of training. This may be done in accordance with the localization of tourist zones. Hierarchical distribution would ensure wider opportunities for different skills/professional categories. Horizontal classification indicates sectorial divisions of the industry.

### **Suggestions**

For Thailand tourism industry to develop sustainably, there is a need to move the tourism labor market towards a quality enhanced tourism services, for firm to compete internationally in the global tourism market, by raising the quality standards and gaining competitive advantages, and for students to be reflective practitioners, with a harder learning effort today for satisfactory occupation tomorrow. Tourism is in need of a comprehensive framework within which to design and deliver education and training programs in a more effective manner. There is a need to formulate an integrated strategy that could incorporate both the planning and developing aspects of a tourism education and training system. The goal of such integration is to ensure a greater degree of interdependence among different levels of the total education system so as to provide well-defined alternative career paths for present and future students. Basic requirement for quality tourism-service delivery systems include the following;



### **1. Integrated tourism industry support policy between related government agencies**

The clear and aligned scope of responsibility between government agencies is necessary. *National Economic and Social Development Board* could outline the national policy to promote a sustainable tourism industry of Thailand so that the inter-ministry policy alignment on HRD for tourism industry between *Ministry of Commerce, Ministry of Sports and Tourism, and Ministry of Education* could be made possible. *The National Statistical Office* could provide a common data set and/or statistics on tourism industry especially those figures related to industry growth and the labor market, while *The Institute of Trade and Development* may adopt an industry-led approach to expand the study on human resource need analysis of tourism industry and provide recommendation for Thailand.

### **2. Integrated tourism education policy between higher education and vocational institutes**

Tourism educated and trained students play different role in responding to business needs and tourist demands in order to meet up with international tourist preference. For the industry to function properly, both tourism non-graduated workers and tourism graduated employees are equally demanded. Education providers both vocational and university level should broaden their perspectives in ensuring that their students are trained and educated based on the value placed on both employability, professionalism, development purposes. In sum, educational Policy on balancing roles and responsibilities of the two options of tourism accreditations is also a prerequisite for Thailand.

### **3. Integrated tourism training policy between academic and business sector**

Tourism educators and professionals are well aware of the interconnectedness between education sector and the tourism industry. Develop the interface between the industry and the training/education systems that ensure two-way interaction of the supply and demand sides of the tourism labor market. Primarily a service industry, employee training and development are fundamental to remain competitive in the global arena. Continuing education of employees, to be able to keep up with mature and sophisticated tourists, will require specialization and know-how; finally, that professional and well-educated workforce is essential in the provision of quality service and enhancing overall

service delivery in a global market. The business could pursue this goal by working with universities to promote student employability and life-long learning

At the same time, businesses and private sectors should play a more active role in the HRD of tourism personnel businesses and professionals must adapt their skills and strategies to the new market environment, by investing more in workforce, streamlining the entrepreneurial culture, and also instilling a method for total quality control in services.

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