

Analyzes the Human Resource Development of Ecotourism in Thailand for Chinese Senior Tourists from Multiple Perspectives

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Abstract: *With the increase in the number of senior Chinese tourists going to Thailand for ecotourism, human resource development is crucial to enhance their tourism experience. By using the methods of literature review, case analysis and questionnaire survey, this study deeply analyzed the current situation and problems of human resource development in Thailand's ecotourism from the four perspectives of culture, economy, society and technology, and proposed multi-perspective human resource development strategies such as cultural integration, economic balance, social adaptation and technology application. It is found that strengthening cross-cultural training, optimizing the cost structure of human resources, improving the adaptability of social environment and promoting the application of technology can effectively improve the tourism experience of Chinese senior tourists and promote the sustainable development of China-Thailand senior eco-tourism market. These strategies provide practical reference for relevant tourism enterprises and management departments, and help to promote the high-quality development of ecotourism in Thailand.*

Keywords: Chinese senior tourists, Ecotourism in Thailand, Human resource development, Multiple perspectives, Development strategy

Introduction

Research Background

Recently, the number of Chinese senior tourists traveling to Thailand for ecotourism has been rising. Over the past five years, it has grown at an average annual rate of roughly 12%. The share of ecotourism projects has climbed from 30% to 45% (Liu & Chamaratana, 2024). This is mostly due to Thailand's abundant and diverse ecotourism resources. Thailand boasts 155 registered nature reserves, covering around 16.4 million hectares, about 32% of the country's land area (Leksakundilok, 2004). The Kangkachan National Park and the southeast coast with its 1,430 islands are among the famous tourist attractions. Thailand also has extensive mangrove resources. The country is rich in biodiversity, including many rare species (Li & Ruangnapakul, 2022). In this context, the importance of human resource development is becoming increasingly prominent. Language barriers, medical and health needs, and itinerary arrangements are among the issues that need to be addressed. High-quality human resource development can better meet the special needs of senior tourists, improve their travel experience, and enhance their satisfaction and loyalty. From an economic perspective, every 10% increase in tourist satisfaction can increase tourists' consumption willingness by about 15% (Chuamuangphan, 2009).

Research Purpose and Method

The study aims to comprehensively analyze the human resource development for Chinese senior tourists in Thailand's ecotourism and propose feasible strategies. Specifically, it seeks to understand the actual needs of senior tourists, evaluate tourism services, analyze the current situation of human resource development, and construct a scientific and reasonable human resource development strategy system. The research methods include literature review, case analysis, and questionnaire surveys. A total of 200 questionnaires were issued and effectively recovered, providing a solid empirical basis for the research.

Related Theories and Literature Review

Theories Related to ecotourism and Senior Tourism

1. Ecotourism concept

Internationally, the term “ecotourism” was first proposed by the International Union for Conservation of Nature (IUCN) in 1983, and in 1993, the International Ecotourism Association defined it as tourism activities that have the dual responsibility of protecting the natural environment and maintaining the lives of local people (Theerapapposit, 2004). Ecotourism emphasizes the protection of natural environment and ecological environment as the core of tourism activities, pays attention to the rational use of resources and the sustainable development of the environment, and strives to achieve a balance between tourism development and environmental protection. Its main characteristics include: with a distinctive ecological environment as the main landscape, the development of tourism activities to minimize the damage to the natural environment, so that tourists can deeply experience and understand the natural ecosystem, while promoting the economic development and cultural inheritance of local communities (Liu & Chamaratana, 2024).

2. Characteristics and demand theory of senior tourism

Table 1 Characteristics of senior tourism

Project	Content
Strong willingness and ability to travel	If physical and economic conditions permit, most middle-aged and senior respondents are willing to travel. Moreover, with the development of social economy, the proportion of senior tourists with higher monthly income is increasing, and areas with better economic conditions such as first and second-tier cities are the main departure places for senior travelers (Theerapapposit, 2009).
“High-frequency long line”, off-peak travel	The senior have plenty of time after retirement, and the choice of travel time is flexible, mostly concentrated in March to June and September to October, the frequency and consumption of travel are higher, and they prefer medium and long line travel (Sangkakorn et al., 2015).

Table 1 (Cont.)

Project	Content
The main channels of the line are still traditional travel agencies	Travel agencies and their channels contribute most of the senior tourist flow, traditional travel agency stores are the most important sales channel, and the senior are more inclined to offline booking (Buaban, 2016).

Table 2 Demand for senior tourism

Project	Content
Demand for cultural experience	The senior group has a strong interest in history, culture and traditional art, and likes to visit museums, historical sites, ancient towns and other places to have a deep understanding of local culture.
Natural landscape demand	The beauty of nature has a unique appeal to the senior, who are willing to go to places such as the mountains, the seaside or the countryside to feel the peace and beauty brought by nature.
Hot spring health needs	After retirement, the senior pay more attention to health and physical and mental balance, and hot spring vacation has become one of their favorite leisure activities.
Social interaction needs	Travel is an opportunity for the senior to have social interaction with relatives, friends or peers, and they hope to enhance their feelings and share happiness and experiences through travel activities.
Security requirement	Due to the age factor, safety is one of the most concerned issues when the senior choose travel destinations and ways, and they are more inclined to choose destinations with high safety, thoughtful service and suitable for the travel needs of the senior.

3. Human resource development theory

Connotation of human resource development

Human resource development refers to the investigation, analysis, planning and adjustment of human resources by an enterprise or organizational group on the basis of the existing human resources of the organization and according to the strategic objectives and organizational structure changes of the enterprise, so as to improve the existing human resource management level of the organization or group, make human resource management efficiency better, and create greater value for the group (organization). Its core content includes three parts: training development, organization development and career planning (Nepal, 2002).

4. Human resource development model

Training needs analysis model: Through the analysis of organization, task and personnel, the training needs of employees are determined to provide a basis for the development of training plans. For example, for the senior ecotourism industry, it is necessary to analyze the ability gap of tourism practitioners in serving senior tourists and understanding ecotourism knowledge, so as to determine the training content (Hareebin, 2020).

Performance improvement model: focuses on how to improve employees' work performance through human resource development activities, including setting performance goals, analyzing performance gaps, and making improvement plans. In senior ecotourism, the satisfaction and experience of senior tourists can be enhanced by improving the professional quality and service level of tourism service personnel, and the performance of tourism enterprises can be improved (Khaenamkhaew, et.al., 2023).

Career development model: Emphasizes the career development planning of employees and the design of promotion channels to help employees continue to grow and develop in the organization. For those engaged in senior ecotourism, different career development paths can be provided for them according to their professional skills and work experience, such as promotion from grassroots tour guides to tourism planners, managers, etc (Rattan, 2009).

Learning organization model: Advocating the establishment of a culture of continuous learning and encouraging employees to continue to learn and innovate. In senior ecotourism enterprises, knowledge sharing and experience exchange among employees can be promoted by organizing employees to participate in training, learning and exchange activities, so as to improve the professional level of the whole team (Walter, 2009).

Competency model: It determines the key abilities and qualities required for a specific position or occupation, and provides criteria for the selection, training and evaluation of human resources. In the senior ecotourism industry, competency models can be established according to the requirements of different positions such as tour guides, hotel service personnel and scenic spot managers to ensure the recruitment of suitable talents and provide guidance for their training and development (Chitapanya, 2005).

Analysis of the current situation of ecotourism in Thailand for Chinese senior tourists

1. Scale and trend of tourism market

From January 1 to March 3, 2024, more than 6.7 million foreign tourists visited Thailand, including 1.2 million senior Chinese tourists. As of June 11, a total of 15.4344 million foreign tourists visited Thailand during the period from January 1 to June 9, 2024, including 3,063,750 Chinese tourists. As of September 16, Thailand received 24,810,988 tourists, of which Chinese tourists accounted for a relatively large number of foreign tourists. It can be seen that the number of senior Chinese tourists to Thailand has shown an obvious upward trend.

Taking 2024 as an example, comparing the data of different stages, the overall number of Chinese tourists to Thailand increased rapidly in the first half of the year. During the June 3-9 period, compared with the previous week, Chinese tourists increased by 7.09% month-on-month. From January 1 to February 2, 2023, Thailand received a total of 99,429 Chinese tourists, and by the first quarter of 2023, Thailand is expected to have 300,000 Chinese tourists, and the annual number will exceed 5 million. The comparison of this set of data also shows that the growth rate of Chinese tourists to Thailand has increased significantly after the epidemic, and the growth of senior tourists is also part of the overall trend.

The Tourism Authority of Thailand expects the number of Chinese visitors to Thailand to be no less than 7.3 million in 2024. Judging from the current growth trend and the attraction of Thailand's tourism market to Chinese tourists, the market scale of Chinese senior tourists to Thailand's ecotourism is expected to continue to expand.

2. Travel behavior and preference

Table 3 Destination choice preference table

Destination	Selection Ratio	Reasons
Nature reserves around Bangkok	35%	The unique tropical rainforest landscape, convenient transportation and rich ecological resources are suitable for senior tourists to carry out nature observation activities.
Phuket, Koh Samui and other coastal areas	40%	Beautiful beaches, rich Marine ecological resources, such as coral reef viewing, Marine ecological snorkeling and other programs attract senior tourists.
Surrounding mountains of Chiang Mai	25%	The quiet rural atmosphere, fresh air and rich mountain ecological resources are suitable for senior tourists to relax.

Activity Preference

According to the survey data of some travel agencies, about 60% of the senior Chinese tourists are keen to participate in nature observation activities in Thailand's ecotourism, such as observing birds and butterflies in the mountains of Chiang Mai. About 40 percent of seniors are interested in cultural experiences, such as visiting the Grand Palace in Bangkok, temples in Chiang Mai and engaging in traditional Thai crafts.

Consumption Habit

According to the sample survey, the average daily consumption of Chinese senior tourists in Thailand's ecotourism is about 500-800 yuan, of which accommodation costs account for about 30%-40%, catering costs account for about 25%-35%, and shopping consumption accounts for about 20%-30%. In terms of shopping, about 70% of the senior tourists will buy ecological souvenirs with Thai characteristics, such as hand-woven straw bags and wood carvings; About 30% of senior tourists buy natural health products, such as latex pillows and bird's nests from Thailand.

Research Purpose

The actual needs of Chinese senior tourists in eco-tourism in Thailand were thoroughly investigated, data were collected through questionnaires and interviews, covering tour guides, hotels, restaurants, scenic spots and other service links, and tourists' expectations and service shortcomings were accurately positioned.

Analyze tourist satisfaction, identify service deficiencies, and provide targeted improvement directions for human resource development strategies.

Comprehensively investigate the quantity, quality and structure of human resources in Thailand's ecotourism industry, evaluate the language ability, professional knowledge and service awareness of practitioners, and identify the advantages and disadvantages.

This paper analyzes the human resource management experience and problems of eco-tourism enterprises in Thailand, and provides reference for the construction of human resource development strategy system.

Research Methods

(1) Literature review

Consult domestic and foreign databases, industry reports, professional books, focusing on authoritative literature on senior tourism, ecotourism, and human resource development. This paper studies the definition, characteristics and sustainable development significance of ecotourism, and builds a theoretical framework combining the needs of senior tourism health guarantee and cultural experience.

(2) Questionnaire

A total of 30 questions are designed in this questionnaire, which is divided into three parts: basic information, service experience and satisfaction evaluation. Among them, the basic information part involves the age, gender and occupation of tourists, and the service experience part covers the convenience of transportation, the quality of tour guide's explanation, and the adaptability of catering, etc. The satisfaction evaluation adopts a 5-point scale, ranging from very dissatisfied to very satisfied. 100 copies of the questionnaire were distributed through online social media platforms and tourism forums, and 100 copies were distributed offline in major tourist cities and scenic spots in Thailand, totaling 200 copies, with a recovery rate of 100%. The sample covered Chinese senior tourists with tourism experience in Thailand from different age groups and regional backgrounds.

(3) Case analysis

Mae Teng Elephant Camp in Chiang Mai, Thailand, Similan Islands in Phuket and two well-known eco-tourism enterprises are selected as cases, because of their typical reception volume, service quality and market reputation. The Mae Teng Elephant Camp successfully provided barrier-free facilities and arranged medical staff, but the depth of cultural explanation was insufficient; The deployment of Similan Islands in peak season is efficient, and the training incentive in off-season is insufficient. It is concluded that Thai ecotourism enterprises should build a diversified training system, covering language, culture and first aid skills. Develop a flexible deployment mechanism to promote personalized itinerary customization and in-depth cultural experience activities.

Research Results

After statistical analysis of the collected questionnaires, it is found that the overall satisfaction rating of Chinese senior tourists on Thailand's eco-tourism is 3.5/5. Among them, the transportation convenience score is the highest, 4.0/5, which indicates that Thailand's transportation facilities are relatively convenient for senior tourists; The depth score of cultural explanation is the lowest, only 2.8/5, indicating that there is a large room for improvement in cultural explanation. In terms of service experience, 60% of tourists think that the quality of tour guide's explanation needs to be improved, especially

the explanation of professional knowledge of Thailand's ecotourism resources is insufficient. At the same time, 40% of tourists expressed dissatisfaction with the suitability of food and beverage, believing that the dining options are not rich enough, and some foods do not meet the tastes of Chinese senior tourists. In addition, 70% of Chinese senior tourists hope to add cultural experience activities during the tour, such as visiting the process of traditional handicrafts in Thailand; 50% of tourists want to provide more health care services, such as professional medical personnel. Statistical software is used for data analysis, including descriptive statistics to analyze tourist information and satisfaction distribution, and correlation analysis to explore the relationship between different service links and tourist satisfaction. The results show that there is a significant negative correlation between the depth of cultural explanation and tourists' satisfaction, indicating that improving the quality of cultural explanation plays an important role in improving tourists' satisfaction. There is a significant positive correlation between transportation convenience and tourist satisfaction, which further confirms the positive impact of transportation facilities on senior tourists' satisfaction. These quantitative research results provide a strong basis for Thailand's ecotourism enterprises to optimize human resource development, and help to improve targeted services and enhance the overall tourism experience of Chinese senior tourists.

The case study showed that the Mae Teng Elephant Camp in Chiang Mai, Thailand, excelled in the design of the senior visitor experience, with a visitor satisfaction rate of 4.2/5. Success stories include accessibility (80 per cent coverage) and the presence of medical professionals (90 per cent availability). However, with a score of only 3.0/5 on the depth of cultural interpretation, there is still room for improvement. The Similan Islands in Phuket are highly efficient in deploying human resources during the peak season, with visitor satisfaction reaching 4.0/5. Its staff deployment efficiency is as high as 90% in peak season, but the staff training and incentive mechanism are insufficient in off-season, resulting in a decline in service quality in off-season, and tourist satisfaction is reduced to 3.2/5. It is recommended that Thai ecotourism enterprises establish a diversified training system, covering language, culture, first-aid skills, etc., and the training coverage rate should be increased to more than 80%. At the same time, a flexible human resource allocation mechanism is developed to adjust personnel allocation according to the season and tourist flow to ensure stable service quality throughout the year.

Current Human Resource Service Status

Current Situation of Quality and Ability of Tourism Service Personnel

In Thailand, only about 40% of the people engaged in tourism services can communicate in Chinese fluently, which to some extent affects the quality of services for senior Chinese tourists.

About 30% of the service personnel have a deep understanding of Thailand's ecotourism resources, and relatively few service personnel can accurately introduce the local ecosystem, animal and plant resources and other professional knowledge to the senior tourists.

According to the satisfaction survey of tourists, about 70% of Chinese senior tourists believe that the service awareness of Thai tourism service personnel needs to be improved, especially in terms of paying attention to the special needs of senior tourists (Srisantisuk, 2015).

Present Situation of Tourism Human Resource Management

In the recruitment of tourism enterprises in Thailand, the recruitment channels for ecotourism service personnel mainly include the local talent market and the campus recruitment of tourism colleges, and the proportion of personnel recruited through these two channels is 60% and 40% respectively. However, the proportion of recruitment targeting senior ecotourism professionals is low, accounting for only about 20% of total recruitment.

In terms of training content, the training of conventional tourism service skills accounted for about 60%, while the training of characteristics of senior tourism, professional knowledge of ecotourism and cultural differences between China and Thailand accounted for only 40%. In terms of training methods, classroom teaching accounts for about 70%, while practical operation and case analysis account for a relatively small proportion.

From the perspective of salary, the average monthly salary of tourism service personnel in Thailand is about 20,000-30,000 baht, and the income of some service personnel will fall by 20%-30% in the off-season of tourism. In terms of career development, about 60% of the travel service staff felt that there were fewer opportunities for promotion and limited room for career development.

Problems Faced by Human Resource Development from Multiple Perspectives

Cultural Perspective

1. Cultural differences between China and Thailand pose challenges to human resource services

Thai culture is heavily influenced by Buddhism and emphasizes peace, tolerance and respect for hierarchy. For example, in social and work situations in Thailand, respect for elders and superiors is a very important etiquette norm. Influenced by traditional culture, the senior in China pay attention to family concept, collectivism and etiquette and morality, but their specific value orientation and behavior are different from those in Thailand. This difference in values may lead to deviations in the understanding of the behavior and needs of senior tourists. For example, Chinese senior tourists may expect service personnel to provide warm, thoughtful and proactive service, while Thai service personnel may be relatively restrained and implicit in the way of service, which leads to differences in service expectations and experience, increasing the difficulty and challenge of service.

Language is an important tool for cultural exchange, and although some service personnel in Thailand's tourism industry can speak some simple Chinese, there are still shortcomings in in-depth communication and understanding of the complex needs of older tourists. For example, senior Chinese tourists may use some expressions or metaphors with cultural characteristics when expressing their needs, and it is difficult for Thai service personnel to accurately understand the intentions of tourists if they do not understand Chinese culture and language habits. In addition, Thai people prefer to express their opinions in an indirect way, while Chinese senior people may be more accustomed to direct and clear communication, which is also likely to cause misunderstandings and obstacles in communication.

In terms of diet, Thailand mainly tastes sour and hot, sweet and spicy, and there are many special foods such as Tom Yin Gong soup, mango sticky rice, etc., while the eating habits of Chinese senior tourists are more diversified, and some senior people may not be able to accept too spicy and stimulating food. In terms of religious belief, there are many temples in Thailand, and there are also many religious rituals and taboos. If senior Chinese tourists do not understand the relevant religious culture, they may have some inappropriate behaviors when visiting temples and other religious places, which requires the service personnel to have relevant cultural knowledge and guidance ability to avoid unnecessary cultural conflicts (Srisangkaew, 2017).

2. The manifestation of cultural understanding and communication barriers in senior tourism services

A Thailand itinerary may include activities that are culturally specific to the country, such as visiting temples and attending traditional festivals. However, due to their limited understanding of Thai culture, senior Chinese tourists may have insufficient understanding of the significance and value of these activities, resulting in differences with service personnel on itinerary arrangements. For example, some senior tourists may feel that the time spent visiting temples is too long, or they do not understand the way to participate in some traditional festival celebrations, thus affecting their satisfaction with the tour.

Chinese senior tourists may have some special service needs in the process of travel, such as special requirements on diet, accommodation preferences, etc. However, due to cultural understanding and communication barriers, they may not be able to accurately express their needs to the Thai service staff, or the service staff cannot understand the needs of tourists, resulting in inadequate services. For example, senior tourists may want to have a hot kettle to make tea when they stay, but the service staff may not understand the living habits of Chinese senior people and fail to provide relevant equipment in a timely manner, affecting the experience of tourists.

In the process of tourism, there may be some sudden emergency situations, such as senior tourists feel unwell, encounter natural disasters and so on. In such cases, cultural understanding and communication barriers can make emergency response more difficult. For example, senior tourists may not be able to use accurate language to describe their symptoms to the service staff when they are unwell, or the service staff may misunderstand the physical reactions and expressions of senior tourists due to cultural differences, resulting in delayed treatment or timely treatment (Sangkakorn et al., 2015).

Economic Perspective

1. The balance between human resource development costs and economic benefits of tourism for the senior

In order to improve the professional quality and service level of tourism service personnel, they need to carry out regular training, including language training, cultural knowledge training, service skills training and so on. These trainings need to invest a lot of time and money, such as hiring professional language teachers and cultural experts to teach, organizing service personnel to study on the spot, etc., which increases the cost of human resources development. However, the profit space of the senior tourism market is relatively limited, because the senior tourists are more sensitive to the price, and the tourism consumption is relatively rational, travel agencies and tourism enterprises should

not be too high in the pricing, which leads to the difficult balance between the investment in human resources development of enterprises and the economic benefits of the senior tourism business.

The tourism industry is highly mobile, especially in popular tourist areas like Thailand, where service personnel may change jobs frequently for various reasons. In order to maintain a stable service team, enterprises need to constantly recruit and train new employees, which not only increases the cost of human resource development, but also affects the stability of service quality. For the senior tourism business, the stability of service personnel is particularly important, because senior tourists need to be more familiar with and understand their service personnel, frequent change of service personnel will reduce the satisfaction of senior tourists, affect the reputation of enterprises and economic benefits (Li & Ruangnapakul, 2022).

2. The contradiction between the needs of senior tourists at different economic levels and the allocation of human resources

Some senior tourists with better economic conditions have higher requirements for the quality and personalization of tourism services, and they hope to enjoy more high-end and customized services, such as private tour guides, exclusive transportation, high-quality catering and accommodation. However, tourism enterprises in Thailand may not be able to meet the needs of these senior tourists in terms of human resources allocation, because providing high-end services requires service personnel with professional skills and rich experience, and such talents are relatively scarce in the market, and enterprises need to spend higher costs to recruit suitable personnel. This has led to a shortage of human resources in the high-end senior tourism market, which cannot meet the needs of tourists. For the senior tourists with relatively poor economic conditions, they pay more attention to the cost performance of tourism, hoping to enjoy basic tourism services at a lower price. However, due to the limited investment in human resources development, the quality of service personnel and service quality may be uneven, unable to meet the basic needs of senior tourists. For example, in some low-price tour groups, the tour guides may compress the itinerary and reduce the service content in order to pursue profits, or the service staff's attitude is not enthusiastic enough and professional knowledge is insufficient, which affects the travel experience of senior tourists (Sangounchom & Na, 2020).

Social Perspective

1. Influence of local social environment on human resources of senior tourism in Thailand

In Thailand, the tourism industry has a relatively low social status, and some people consider working in tourism services to be a low-level profession that lacks respect and recognition for the industry. This social perception may affect young people's willingness to choose to work in tourism services, leading to brain drain and recruitment difficulties in the industry. For senior tourism business, more patient, careful and professional service personnel are needed, but due to the low social recognition, it is difficult to attract outstanding talents to join, which affects the quality and quantity of senior tourism human resources.

Thailand's political situation and social environment are sometimes unstable, such as political demonstrations, natural disasters, etc. These factors will affect the development of tourism, and also have an impact on the human resources of senior tourism. For

example, in the period of political instability, the number of tourists will decrease, the operation of tourism enterprises will be affected, and the job opportunities and income of service personnel will also be affected, leading some people to choose to leave the tourism industry, further aggravating the shortage of human resources (Zhang et al., 2020).

2. The reaction of public opinion and word of mouth to human resource development

If senior tourists have poor travel experience in Thailand, they may post negative comments and complaints through social media, tourism forums and other channels, and these negative opinions will spread quickly, causing damage to Thailand's tourism image. For example, some senior tourists may be dissatisfied with Thailand's tourism services because of the bad attitude of service staff and unreasonable schedule, and their comments will affect the choices of other potential tourists, thus leading to a decrease in tourist sources for tourism enterprises. In order to cope with the impact of negative public opinion, tourism enterprises may strengthen the management and training of service personnel, but this will also increase the management cost of enterprises and the difficulty of human resources development.

Although good word of mouth can attract more older tourists to Thailand, the scope and speed of word of mouth spread is limited. In the highly competitive tourism market, it is difficult to rapidly expand market share only by word-of-mouth communication, and enterprises need to invest more resources in market promotion and publicity. However, in terms of human resource development, enterprises may pay too much attention to market promotion and neglect the training and management of service personnel, resulting in a decline in service quality and affecting the reputation and long-term development of enterprises (Tshukudu, 2012).

Technical perspective

1. Insufficient application of new technologies in senior tourism services

Senior tourists need to obtain a variety of information during the travel process, such as scenic spot introduction, transportation information, catering recommendations, etc. However, as Thailand's tourism industry lags behind in the application of new technologies, some scenic spots and tourist places have limited information release channels, and senior tourists may not be able to obtain the required information in a timely and accurate manner. For example, the official websites of some scenic spots are not well constructed, the information is not updated in a timely manner, or the information is not provided in multiple languages such as Chinese, resulting in difficulties for senior Chinese tourists in obtaining information.

In some tourism service links, such as booking air tickets, hotels, tickets, etc., the application of new technologies can improve service efficiency and convenience. However, in Thailand, some tourism enterprises still use traditional manual service methods, resulting in senior tourists need to spend a lot of time and effort in the booking and payment process. In addition, the lack of intelligent facilities in some tourist places, such as the lack of electronic guidance systems, intelligent parking systems, will also affect the service experience of senior tourists.

2. Difficulties and challenges in human resource development and utilization of new technologies

In order for travel service personnel to be skilled in the application of new technologies, companies need to train them in technology. However, for some older and less educated service personnel, it is more difficult to learn and master new technologies, and it takes more time and energy. For example, some service personnel may not be familiar with the operation of smart phones, computers and other equipment, and have difficulties in understanding and applying technologies such as online reservation systems and electronic payments, which increases the difficulty and cost of technical training for enterprises.

The development of information technology changes with each passing day, and the replacement speed of new technology is very fast. Tourism enterprises need to continuously invest funds and manpower to train service personnel to update and upgrade technology, so as to maintain their technical level and service ability. However, for some small tourism enterprises, due to limited capital and technical strength, they may not be able to keep up with the pace of technological updates in time, resulting in the technical level of service personnel lagging behind, affecting the competitiveness of enterprises (Khaenamkhaew et al., 2023).

Suggestions on Human Resource Development Strategies From Multiple Perspectives

Cultural Integration Strategy

1. Strengthen Cross-Cultural Training for Tourism Service Personnel

Design a systematic Chinese language training program that not only focuses on daily communication and tourism vocabulary but also incorporates immersive language labs and virtual reality experiences to simulate real-life interactions. This will help service staff better understand the needs and expectations of Chinese senior tourists.

Implement a cultural comparison course that uses interactive workshops and role-playing scenarios to highlight differences in values, customs, and religious beliefs between China and Thailand. This will enable service personnel to provide more culturally sensitive services.

Train service personnel in effective cross-cultural communication skills by incorporating AI-driven communication tools that can provide real-time feedback and suggestions for improving interactions. This is crucial for improving the overall service experience for Chinese senior tourists (Kontogeorgopoulos & Chulikavit, 2010).

2. Establish a Culturally Sensitive Human Resource Management Model

During recruitment, use AI-powered assessments to evaluate candidates' cultural understanding and cross-cultural communication skills, giving preference to those with relevant experience or a strong interest in Chinese culture.

Incorporate cultural integration indicators into the performance appraisal system by using blockchain technology to ensure transparency and accuracy in tracking and rewarding staff who effectively meet the cultural needs of senior tourists and penalizing those who cause cultural misunderstandings.

Create a long-term cultural training mechanism that includes gamified learning modules and augmented reality experiences to continuously update service personnel's cultural knowledge and improve their cross-cultural communication skills (Khaenamkhaew et al., 2023).

Economic Balance Strategy

1. Optimize the Cost Structure of Human Resources

Analyze the training needs of tourism service personnel using predictive analytics to focus on essential skills such as senior care, basic medical knowledge, and special dietary arrangements. This targeted approach will reduce unnecessary training costs.

Develop a flexible compensation system that combines basic pay with performance-based incentives, using blockchain-based smart contracts to ensure transparency and fairness in payments. This will motivate service personnel to improve service quality and increase tourist satisfaction, thereby balancing costs and benefits.

Allocate human resources efficiently during peak and off-peak seasons by using AI-driven workforce management systems to maximize utilization and reduce labor costs.

2. Develop Service Products for Senior Tourists at Different Economic Levels

For high-end senior tourists, create customized service packages that include private guides, luxury accommodations, and exclusive activities. Use AI-driven personalization tools to tailor these packages to individual preferences. Provide specialized training for service personnel to meet the high standards of these tourists.

Optimize mass tourism products for senior tourists with general economic conditions by focusing on cost-effective solutions that maintain service quality. Use data analytics to identify cost-saving opportunities without compromising on service. This will ensure a good travel experience within their budget.

Implement a tiered marketing strategy to target different segments of senior tourists, using both traditional and digital channels. Utilize AI-driven marketing tools to analyze consumer behavior and optimize marketing campaigns for maximum reach and impact.

Social Adaptation Strategies

1. Improve the Adaptability of Human Resources to the Thai Social Environment

Strengthen social and cultural education for tourism service personnel by incorporating virtual reality tours of Thai historical sites and cultural festivals. This will enhance their understanding of Thai society and improve their ability to interact with local communities.

Provide training on emergency response and safety measures using augmented reality simulations to prepare service personnel for potential social instability factors such as political demonstrations and natural disasters.

Encourage service personnel to participate in local community activities by creating community engagement platforms that facilitate interaction and collaboration. This will help build strong relationships with residents and promote the importance of senior tourism.

2. Actively Use Social Resources to Promote Senior Tourism

Establish partnerships with local social organizations, medical institutions, and senior universities to provide comprehensive support for senior tourists. Use blockchain technology to ensure transparency and accountability in these partnerships.

Develop a social resource network that covers transportation, catering, accommodation, and entertainment. Use AI-driven resource allocation systems to enhance the overall quality of senior tourism services.

Collaborate with social welfare organizations to offer subsidized or free travel opportunities for senior tourists with financial difficulties. Use crowdfunding platforms to expand the social impact of senior tourism.

Technology Application Strategy

1. Promote Technical Training and Application for Tourism Service Personnel

Provide comprehensive information technology training that includes the use of smartphones, computers, and online platforms. Incorporate AI-driven training modules that adapt to individual learning styles and progress.

Train service personnel to use relevant tourism technologies such as electronic guide systems and intelligent translation devices. Use machine learning algorithms to continuously improve the accuracy and effectiveness of these tools.

Regularly update technical training content to keep service personnel informed about the latest trends and applications in the tourism industry. Use virtual reality and augmented reality to create immersive training experiences.

2. Use Technology to Improve Human Resource Development Efficiency

Establish an internal online learning platform that uses AI-driven personalized learning paths to provide flexible and personalized training for service personnel.

Implement an advanced Human Resource Management System (HRMS) that uses machine learning to streamline recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and salary management processes.

Utilize big data technology to analyze tourist demand and service personnel performance. Use predictive analytics to enable more effective human resource planning and allocation.

Discussion and Prospect

Discussion

This study has conducted an in-depth analysis of the current situation of Chinese senior tourists' ecotourism in Thailand, identifying key challenges in human resource development and proposing innovative, multi-faceted strategies to address these issues. The research reveals that the growing number of Chinese senior tourists engaging in ecotourism in Thailand not only underscores the appeal of Thailand's rich ecotourism resources but also highlights the significant potential of this niche market segment. As noted by Khaenamkhaew et al. (2023), the rapid development of Thailand's tourism industry, bolstered by its abundant tourism resources and continuously improving facilities, has attracted a substantial influx of tourists, with Chinese senior tourists emerging as a crucial component of this demographic. In terms of tourism behavior and preferences, senior tourists exhibit distinct characteristics in destination selection, activity preferences, and consumption habits, which provide valuable insights for optimizing tourism services. For instance, senior tourists tend to favor destinations with a rich cultural heritage and comfortable environments, as highlighted by Zhang et al. (2020), aligning well with Thailand's historical and natural landscape advantages.

However, from multiple perspectives, human resource development faces numerous challenges. Culturally, the differences between China and Thailand introduce service challenges, with barriers in cultural understanding and communication occasionally manifesting in senior tourism services. Relevant studies, such as Srisantisuk's



(2015) discussion on tourism services under different national cultural backgrounds, offer a theoretical foundation for understanding the impact of these cultural differences on tourism services. Economically, there is a need to balance the costs of human resource development with the economic benefits of senior tourism, as well as to address the contradiction between the diverse needs of senior tourists at different economic levels and the allocation of human resources. Srisangkaew's (2017) analysis of the economic aspects of human resource development for senior tourism provides useful references for understanding the economic issues in this market segment. Socially, the local social environment in Thailand impacts senior tourism human resources, with public opinion and reputation also exerting a negative influence on human resource development. Technologically, there is a coexistence of insufficient application of new technologies and difficulties in the development and utilization of human resources for new technologies, which is related to the current trends and application status of technology in the tourism industry (Srisantisuk, 2015).

Given these challenges, the proposed multi-faceted human resource development strategies hold significant importance. The cultural integration strategy, which involves strengthening cross-cultural training for tourism service personnel and establishing a culturally sensitive human resource management model, is instrumental in enhancing service quality and meeting the cultural needs of senior tourists. The economic balance strategy focuses on optimizing the cost structure of human resources and developing service products tailored to senior tourists at different economic levels to achieve a balance between cost and benefit. Social adaptation strategies aim to improve the adaptability of human resources to Thailand's social environment and actively leverage social resources to foster the development of senior tourism, thereby creating a conducive social environment for this market segment. The technology application strategy promotes technical training and application for tourism service personnel, using technological means to enhance the efficiency of human resource development and adapt to the needs of modern tourism development.

In summary, human resource development is pivotal for the growth of ecotourism in Thailand targeting Chinese senior tourists. Well-considered and effective strategies can foster the healthy development of the tourism market and significantly improve the tourism experience for senior tourists.

Research Deficiencies and Prospects

(1) Limitations of the Research

This study primarily relies on the analysis of existing literature and data. Although empirical data were collected through questionnaires and other methods, the sample size and coverage have limitations, which may not fully represent the overall situation of Chinese senior tourists' ecotourism in Thailand.

The human resource development strategy, despite being analyzed from multiple perspectives, may be influenced by various factors in actual implementation, and its feasibility and effectiveness require further practical testing.

The application of new technology in human resource development for senior tourism was only preliminarily discussed. With the continuous advancement of technology, its application scenarios and impacts warrant further investigation.

(2) Prospect of Future Related Research Directions

The research sample and scope should be expanded to include more extensive field research and data collection. This will provide a more accurate understanding of the characteristics and needs of Chinese senior tourists in Thailand's ecotourism, thereby offering a stronger basis for human resource development.

There is a need to strengthen tracking research on the implementation effects of human resource development strategies. Continuous optimization of these strategies through actual case analysis and evaluation will enhance their feasibility and effectiveness.

Ongoing attention should be paid to the development of new technologies in the tourism industry, with in-depth studies on their applications in human resource development for senior tourism. Technologies such as artificial intelligence and big data analysis can significantly improve service quality and management efficiency.

Further exploration of the cooperation mechanisms between China and Thailand in the field of senior tourism is necessary. This includes inter-governmental cooperation, inter-enterprise collaboration, and non-governmental exchanges to create a more favorable policy and social environment for human resource development.

Research should also focus on the changing trends of the senior tourism market and the dynamic shifts in senior tourists' demands. Timely adjustments to human resource development strategies will ensure adaptability to the evolving market needs.

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