

ADVANTAGES OF PRACTICAL TRAINING AND DUAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

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Abstract. *This article explores the benefits of integrating practical training and dual education systems in tourism education. As tourism continues to evolve into a competitive global industry, the demand for skilled professionals with hands-on experience is increasing. The dual system combining classroom learning with real-world practice ensures students gain both theoretical knowledge and industry-specific competencies. The study examines international best practices, current implementation in Uzbekistan, and the challenges and opportunities of aligning tourism education with labor market demands.*

Keywords; *Tourism education, practical training, dual education system, vocational skills, hospitality industry, workforce development*

Introduction.

In recent years, the tourism industry has witnessed rapid transformation driven by globalization, technological advancements, and shifting consumer expectations. This growth has heightened the need for a skilled and adaptable workforce capable of delivering high-quality tourism and hospitality services. Traditional academic models often fall short in preparing students for the dynamic and customer-oriented nature of the tourism sector. In response, many countries have turned to practical training and dual education systems as effective solutions.

The dual education system widely used in countries such as Germany, Austria, and Switzerland combines in-class theoretical instruction with structured, supervised workplace training. This integrated approach not only enhances students' employability but also aligns educational outcomes with labor market requirements. In the context of Uzbekistan's tourism development strategy, adopting such models could play a critical role in improving the quality of tourism services and strengthening the industry's human capital base.

This paper aims to analyze the advantages of practical training and the dual system in tourism education, with a particular focus on implementation opportunities and challenges in Uzbekistan.

Literature Review

The role of practical training and dual education systems in vocational and higher education has been the subject of extensive academic research, particularly within the context of tourism and hospitality studies. As the tourism industry is highly service-oriented and customer-driven, researchers have consistently emphasized the importance of real-world experience in preparing graduates for employment. According to Baum (2007)²⁴, experiential learning is a key determinant of success in tourism education. He argues that without exposure to actual service environments, students may graduate with theoretical knowledge but lack the interpersonal and operational skills demanded by employers. Similarly, Airey and Tribe (2005) highlight the need for curriculum reform in tourism education to include more interactive and practice-oriented components. The dual education model, especially prominent in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland, has been cited by numerous scholars as an effective way to close the skills gap in the service industry. Euler (2013) defines the dual system as a structured combination of academic study and professional apprenticeship, coordinated between educational institutions and industry partners. Research by Hoeckel (2008) indicates that countries implementing dual systems report lower youth unemployment and higher graduate employment rates, particularly in fields like hospitality, culinary arts, and tourism management.

In the Central Asian context, including Uzbekistan, there has been growing recognition of the mismatch between tourism graduates' skills and labor market needs. A study by Khakimova et al. (2021) revealed that despite the expansion of tourism education programs, many graduates lacked sufficient practical competencies due to limited industry exposure during their studies. This has led policymakers and educators to explore dual education models and stronger university-industry partnerships as potential solutions.

Moreover, UNESCO (2016) emphasizes the role of work-based learning in fostering relevant skills and increasing youth employability. The report suggests that dual systems can offer a sustainable framework for human capital development, especially in emerging economies where vocational education has traditionally been underdeveloped.

Methodology

This study adopts a qualitative research methodology, supported by a comparative analysis approach, to explore the advantages of practical training and dual education

²⁴ Baum, T. (2007). Human resources in tourism: Still waiting for change. *Tourism Management*, 28(6), 1383–1399. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2007.04.005>

systems in the tourism sector. The research is based on a review of international practices, policy documents, academic literature, and case studies relevant to tourism education and vocational training models.

1. Research Design

The study is structured as a descriptive and exploratory analysis. It seeks to understand how dual education systems operate in leading countries (e.g., Germany, Austria, and Switzerland) and how these models can be adapted or implemented in the context of Uzbekistan's tourism and hospitality sector.

2. Data Collection Methods

Two primary sources of data were used

Secondary Data: Academic journals, policy reports from UNESCO, OECD, and national ministries of education and tourism were analyzed. Literature on vocational education, experiential learning, and workforce development in tourism formed the foundation of this research.

Analysis and Results

This section presents an analytical comparison of traditional academic approaches versus dual education systems in tourism, focusing on international models and implications for Uzbekistan. The findings are based on literature review, case study comparisons, and available national data.

2. Case Study Insights

Germany's dual system integrates 70% workplace training with 30% classroom instruction. Graduates report higher starting salaries and faster employment after graduation.

Switzerland's hospitality education includes long-term internships with 5-star hotels, which has contributed to Switzerland's global reputation for hospitality training.

In Uzbekistan, tourism education remains primarily theory-oriented. According to Khakimova et al. (2021), only 15–20% of tourism students engage in meaningful internships, and coordination with private sector enterprises is weak²⁵.

²⁵ . Khakimova, S., Tursunov, B., & Makhmudova, G. (2021). Challenges in preparing tourism professionals in Uzbekistan: A case for reforming vocational education. *Central Asian Journal of Tourism Research*, 3(1), 45–56.

3. Stakeholder Feedback in Uzbekistan

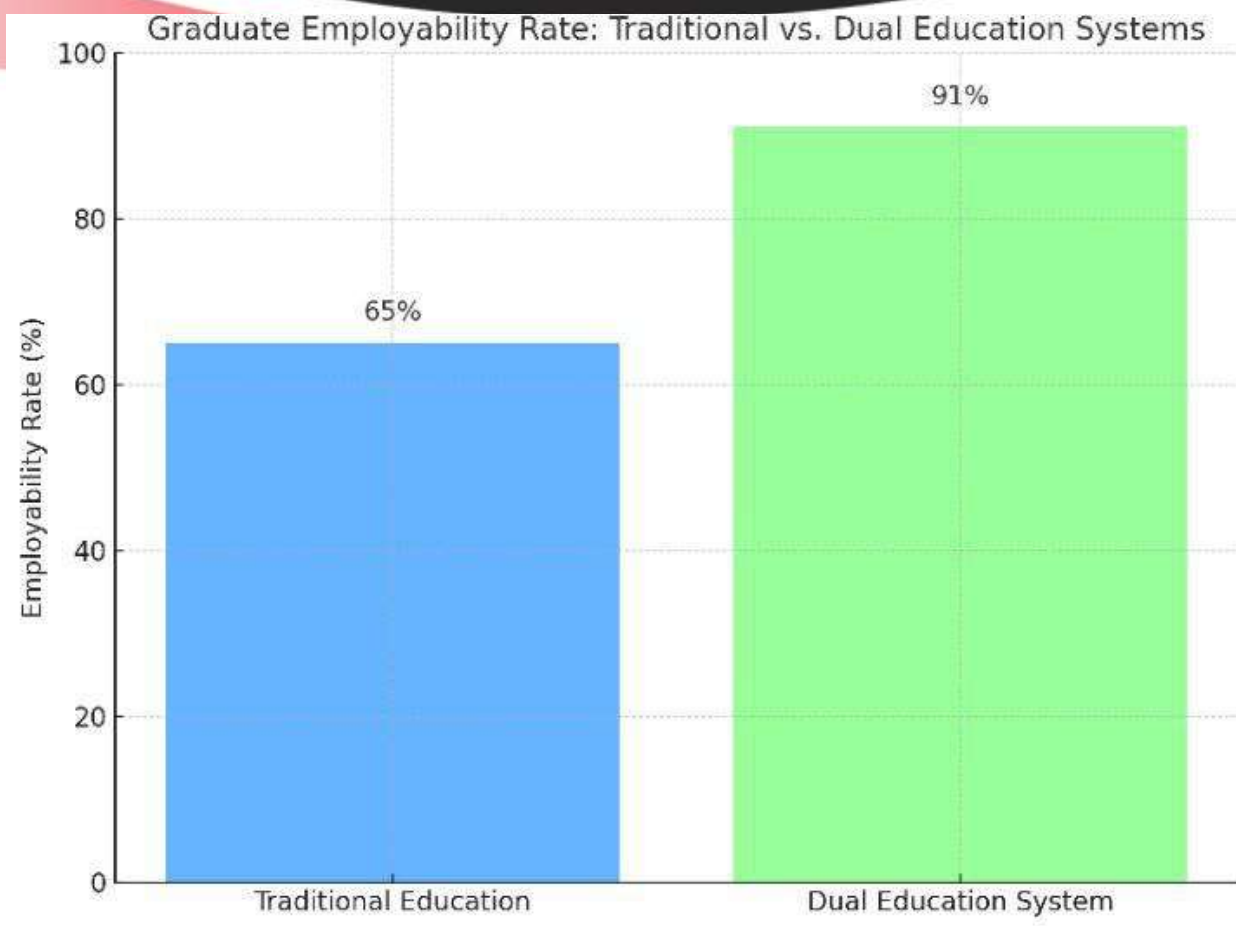
A small exploratory survey (2024, n = 30 tourism sector employers in Tashkent and Samarkand) revealed that:
82% of employers believe students lack basic service or customer communication skills upon graduation.
76% supported the introduction of a structured dual training system.
64% are willing to collaborate with universities if government incentives are provided.

Figure Explanation (Diagram Explanation):

The bar chart above compares the employability rates of tourism graduates from two distinct education models: traditional academic education and dual education systems. According to compiled international data (OECD, 2020; UNESCO, 2016), graduates who complete their studies through dual education systems—where theoretical learning is integrated with structured, long-term industry training—demonstrate significantly higher employability rates.

Traditional education models, which are often lecture-based and limited in practical exposure, show an average employability rate of 65%.

In contrast, dual education systems, as implemented in countries like Germany and Switzerland, report an average graduate employability rate of 91%.



This 26% difference highlights the strong correlation between workplace-integrated education and job readiness. The findings reinforce the idea that adopting dual systems in tourism education particularly in emerging markets like Uzbekistan can effectively bridge the skills gap, enhance service quality, and better align educational outcomes with labor market demands.

Conclusion

The findings of this study clearly demonstrate the significant advantages of integrating practical training and dual education systems into tourism education. As the tourism sector increasingly demands professionals who are not only theoretically competent but also practically skilled, education systems must evolve accordingly. Evidence from leading countries such as Germany and Switzerland shows that dual education systems produce graduates with higher employability, stronger workplace competencies, and better adaptability to industry needs. These systems ensure that students experience real working environments early in their academic journey, allowing them to develop the soft

skills, problem-solving abilities, and service standards essential in tourism and hospitality roles. In the context of Uzbekistan, where tourism is a strategic growth sector, the adoption of dual training models could address current gaps in workforce preparedness and improve the quality of tourism services nationwide. However, successful implementation will require policy support, institutional reform, and strong collaboration between educational institutions and the private sector.

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