

CENTRAL ASIAN JOURNAL OF LITERATURE, PHILOSOPHY AND CULTURE

eISSN: 2660-6828 | Volume: 04 Issue: 11 Nov 2023
<https://cajipc.centralasianstudies.org>

The Impact of the Information Technology Characteristics on the Quality of the Tourism Product - Dar Qasr Al-Kazimiya Hotel as a Model

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Received 19th Sep 2023, Accepted 21th Oct 2023, Online 15th Nov 2023

Abstract

The research aims to know the impact of the information technology characteristics on the quality of the tourism product - Dar Qasr Al-Kazimiya Hotel as a model, as well as diagnosing the mechanism and identifying the capabilities and abilities of the organization (the research community) regarding information technology and the quality of the tourism product and the extent of their availability on the ground. To achieve this objective, the dimensions of the independent variable were adopted. Information technology (hardware components, software, databases, communications, human resources), and the dimensions of tourism product quality represented by (reliability, dependability, responsiveness, empathy, and tangibility) were adopted. The research included the following topics:

The first domain: - Research methodology.

The second domain: A conceptual framework for information technology.

The third domain: A conceptual framework for the quality of the tourism product.

Fourth domain: - The practical aspect.

The fifth domain: Conclusions and suggestions.

Keywords: information technology – the quality of the tourism product.

Introduction:

The last years of the last century witnessed a growing interest in the issues of information technology and the quality of tourism products, as the technical progress in the field of information on the one hand, and the

realization of hotel organizations that the best way for their survival and growth is to continue creativity based on a knowledge base, on the other hand, and the growing role played by information technology. In improving the work of hotel organizations in various fields, information technology is one of the standards of competitiveness that tourism managers can invest in improving the quality of the product and providing the best tourism services, which has encouraged researchers and those interested in tourism service activities to pay attention to the quality of the tourism product.

The first domain - Research Methodology

There is a group of scientific methods that are used in studying social and economic phenomena. The (descriptive-analytical) method was chosen, as the theoretical framework was adopted to describe the phenomenon so that the role of the applied framework comes in analyzing the study variables.

First: The Research Problem

Information technology is one of the factors in the external environment that is characterized by continuous change and complexity for most current business organizations. It requires hotel organizations, during the change and development of information technology and the rest of their continuity and survival in light of the competitive environment, to continue and adapt to these developments by adopting appropriate information technology. Therefore, organizations and Hotels are seeking to adopt the appropriate strategy to develop their new products, so the parameter of the research problem can be determined by the following question: - Does information technology have an effective impact on developing the quality of the tourism product in hotel organizations through the following questions: -

1. Does Dar Qasr Al-Kazimiya Hotel - Baghdad seek to adopt the dimensions of information technology?
2. Does Dar Qasr Al-Kazimiya Hotel - Baghdad seek to adopt the dimensions of the quality of the tourism product?
3. To what extent does information technology affect the quality of the tourism product?
4. Is there a clear perception among the researched organizations about the concept of information technology and the quality of the tourism product?
5. What is the nature of the relationship or impact between information technology and the quality of the tourism product?
6. Is there a discrepancy in the respondents' answers regarding information technology and the quality of the tourism product?

Second: The Research Importance

1. **Scientific importance:** It is demonstrated by what the answers to the questions of the theoretical research problem will reveal, as it will provide a theoretical framework that is considered a modest contribution to be added to the knowledge regarding the study variables.

2. **Field importance:** It is reflected through the application of theoretical concepts and ideas for study in the field of work, as well as testing the impact relationship between the dimensions of information technology

and the quality of the tourism product to determine the extent of its significance statistically, through which the management of the hotel organization under investigation can adapt the dimensions of information technology to help it succeed through the quality of the tourism product.

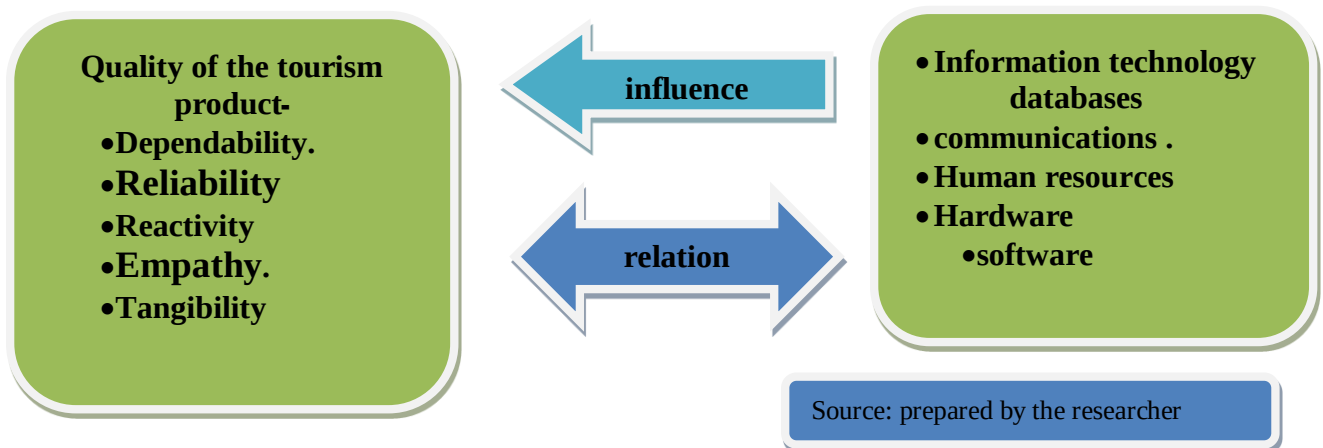
Third: Research Objectives

The research aims to demonstrate the impact of the information technology characteristics on the quality of the tourism product, in addition to developing a theoretical framework for information technology and the quality of the tourism product, identifying the nature of the relationships (correlation and influence) between the two variables, trying to interpret them, and benefiting from the results in addressing one or more problems in the researched organization. And presenting a set of proposals that effectively contribute to increasing the awareness of administrative leaders about the concept of the research variables.

Fourth: Research Model

A hypothetical research model was designed as in Figure (1), which indicates the relationship (correlation and influence) between information technology and the quality of the tourism product.

Figure (1) Hypothetical research model



Fifth: Research hypothesis: In line with the research objectives and to test the plan, the researchers adopted two main hypotheses:

The first main hypothesis: There is a significant correlation between information technology and the quality of the tourism product. This main hypothesis is divided into the following sub-hypotheses:

1. There is a significant correlation between the physical components and the quality of the tourism product.
2. There is a significant correlation between software and the quality of the tourism product.
3. There is a significant correlation between databases and the quality of the tourism product.
4. There is a significant correlation between communications and the quality of the tourism product.
5. There is a significant correlation between human resources and the quality of the tourism product.

The second main hypothesis: There is a significant effect between information technology and the quality of the tourism product. This main hypothesis is divided into the following sub-hypotheses:

1. There is a significant effect between the physical components and the quality of the tourism product.
2. There is a significant effect between the software and the quality of the tourism product.
3. There is a significant effect between databases and the quality of the tourism product.
4. There is a significant effect between communications and the quality of the tourism product.
5. There is a significant effect between human resources and the quality of the tourism product.

Sixth: Research Methodology: -

The inductive and deductive research method was used in the theoretical aspect, relying on books, magazines, and scientific periodicals. The statistical aspect was also relied upon in analyzing the scientific aspect of the research.

Seventh: Population and research sample: -

The research population is Dar Qasr Al-Kazimiya Hotel as a model - Baghdad, and it is a random sample. The research sample included a group of leaders and workers in the organization under investigation. The total number of questionnaires that were distributed was (60) questionnaires for each (managers, assistant directors, department heads, and employees).

Eighth: The research determinants: They were represented as follows: -

1. The research was limited to Dar Qasr Al-Kazimiya Hotel as a model - Baghdad, due to its cooperation with researchers.
2. The research period was extended from 1st November 2021 to 10th May 2022.

Ninth: Means of collecting data and information: -

The following methods were relied upon in collecting data and information for the research:

1. Seeking help from some Arab and foreign sources, as well as university periodicals, theses, and dissertations related to the research subject and searching the Internet to cover the theoretical side and support the field side with it.
2. A questionnaire was formed to obtain data on the members of the research sample, as well as data that contribute to determining the correlations and influence between the research variables. The questionnaire was prepared in light of the scientific vision achieved through surveying scientific sources.
3. Interview with some of the administrators in the investigated hotels to obtain the history of the hotels and the nature of the business they practice.

Tenth: Statistical methods: Statistical processing was done using the ready-made program (SPSS) to extract the final results and analyze them to discover the relationships and impact between the research variables.

The Second Domain: A Conceptual Framework for Information Technology

First: the Concept of Information Technology

Before discussing the concept of information technology, it is necessary to shed light on the concepts of technology and information, as technology and information are among the contemporary administrative topics that have gained the attention of writers and researchers, as well as managers in public organizations because of their essential role in the success and achievement of the goals that their organizations aspire to. In survival and growth, he defined technology as “all the resources, knowledge, and techniques that lead to the creation of products or services for an organization.” (Al-Mashhadani, 2002: 46). (Kandilji and Al-Janabi, 2009: 30)

defined it as “data” that has been processed to achieve a specific goal that leads to making a decision.” (Rowely, 1988: 10) views information technology as all the methods, devices, applications, and physical means can be used when data is collected, transmitted, processed, stored, and retrieved. Some pointed out that information technology is the basic technology used in modern computer-based information systems and their applications for the user of the system, and it includes devices, communications networks, databases, and the necessary programs (O'BRIEN, 1998: 433).

Second: The Importance of Information Technology

The importance of information and communication technology comes to a large extent as a result of the developments that have occurred in the world, most of which are characterized by reliance on information technology. Information and communication technology benefited in the late twentieth century through the development of a large number of programs and applications in the field of statistics, management, and accounting, and extends to include areas of planning, production, design, and procurement, which led to a noticeable improvement in the management of organizations by providing new ways of dealing and electronic interaction. (Al-Abadi and Al-A'ardi, 2012: 27-28) pointed out the importance of information technology as follows:

1. Performing large-scale and very rapid digital calculations.
2. Providing fast, accurate, and inexpensive communications within and between organizations.
3. Store large amounts of information in a small, easily accessible place.
4. Allowing rapid access and licensing to large amounts of information in all parts of the world.
5. Increasing the effectiveness and efficiency of people working in groups, whether in one location or several locations.
6. Presenting information that challenges the human mind.

Third: Components of Information Technology

To establish the theoretical vision and foundation for our research, the researcher found it appropriate to discuss some of the efforts of writers and researchers regarding the components of information technology. (McFarlan, 1984: 8) points out that the components of information technology are represented by electronic computers as well as communications networks. (Burhan et al., 1988: 71) believe that the components of information technology are represented by hardware, equipment, software, and human resources (programmers, analysts, designers of systems, and applications). (Al-Hadi, 1989: 32) and (Al-Housh, 1989: 32) indicate that the components of information technology include the electronic computer, remote communications, modern reproduction devices, audio and visual recording devices, wire effects, overlapping video broadcasting, publishing, broadcasting, and possible future developments in technology.

1. **Hardware:** It includes the equipment used to enter information, store it, transmit it, circulate it, retrieve it, receive it, and broadcast it to the beneficiaries. It also includes the calculator and associated devices that include (some things) the central processing unit (CPU), the main board, the screen, and others. They are called the physical components, as they represent improved memory. The computer and its data processing

capabilities and speed are a wide area of modern technical developments, and scientists and engineers in computer and communications companies are a primary source of these tremendous developments.

2. **Software:** It is what makes the computer work and perform the tasks required of it. Computer users deal with this software, as it records information, processes it, and provides outputs to those requesting it. The software also works to provide various systems, including administrative information systems and decision support systems.

3. **Databases:** They are a group of files that are interconnected to store all the organization's information in one place. The stored information is accessed by providing users with software that can be used for this purpose, and the database can be constantly updated to keep pace with emerging variables so that managers can make their decisions according to correct foundations.

4. **Human resources:** They are represented by the types of workforce in information technology, starting from managers, passing through workers specialized in implementing data collection and analysis operations, program designers, device and equipment operators, and ending with maintenance workers, whether related to software maintenance or hardware maintenance, as information and communications technology depends greatly on Human thought, which gives it great importance in developing human resources and building what is called intellectual capital that is endlessly adaptable to changing circumstances and technologies (Zahlan, 1991: 255).

5. **Telecommunications:** It is the last component of information technology, and some believe that it is the most important. It is remote tools or means such as telephones, faxes, optical fibers, and their other components that form electronic networks that make it possible for computer users to connect to any site directly and to communicate with any other computer user in the world. Any other website. The Internet is an internal Internet network used by General Electronic Company for the company. Several companies can also be linked to the computer network, such as linking with suppliers that operate based on the open Internet.

The Third Domain: A Conceptual Framework for the Quality of the Tourism Product

First: The Concept of Quality of the Tourism Product

Many organizations work to achieve quality to survive in the competitive market. Quality is the term that we use somewhat as an absolute, and a section of people believe that quality is the best there is. Quality is one of the main factors that helped raise the spirit of competition between companies, factories, and various services. This is due to the awareness of consumers in choosing a good or service of high quality and at the appropriate price. Arif pointed out that the concept of quality differs from one side to another. The consumer sees that quality is the type of product, while the producer sees quality as the conformity of the product to the specifications set by the organization or the consumer if the product has a customer. High, (Arif, 2002: 3). Al-Aqili promised her that it would provide the best possible of the organization to its customers to satisfy them and gain their trust, and thus it is a standard for evaluating success in everything (Al-Aqili, 2009: 18-19). (Al-Tai'e, 2004:172) explains that tourists view tourism products as a package of benefits, facilities, and values, and they choose those products that provide them with the best package of benefits and values for the price they pay to obtain them. He defines it as a variety or combination of tangible and intangible services offered on the market to satisfy the desires and needs of tourists. In addition to tangible and intangible services, the concept of

the tourism product includes people who provide services, places, organizations, activities, ideas, facilities, and values.

Second: The Importance of Improving Product Quality

(MARK, 2010: 7) sees the importance of improving product quality through continuous development of product quality to meet customer expectations. (MEENA, 2012: 4) sees the importance of improving product quality through the following:

1. Satisfying customers' desires as it is a customer-oriented philosophy.
2. A continuing philosophy for all the organization's activities.
3. Diagnosing quality problems and working to address them.
4. Reducing costs related to product quality.
5. Training employees to carry out their responsibilities.
6. Encouraging communications between members of the organization.

Third: Dimensions of the Quality of the Tourism Product

Regarding these dimensions, many of them have appeared, but these dimensions can be summarized as follows:

1. **Competence:** the professional competence of employees.
2. **Dependability:** regular performance and availability of security at a constant level.
3. **Reactivity:** means a quick response to the client's requirements by the organization's members at any time and in any place.
4. **Accessibility:** physical and psychological.
5. **Comprehension:** that is, the organization must understand the customer's needs and adapt them for the better.
6. **Communication:** meaning the organization seeks to retain its customers by dealing with them in a language they understand and is appropriate for them (focus on the appropriate language for communication)
7. **Credibility:** This feature includes the reputation of the organization and guarantees its reliability and honesty.
8. **Security:** protecting workers from various risks, whether physical, financial, psychological, or moral.
9. **Courtoisie:** Since most services are dealt with face to face with the customer, there must be a kind of courtesy and friendly relations between the employee and the customer, that is, the employee must be characterized by a kind of politeness.
10. **Tangibility:** meaning that the organization must embody its services by the policy followed in providing its services.
11. **Level of accuracy:** The extent to which the service is completed correctly the first time.
12. **Timing:** How long the customer waits to get his turn to provide the blood and the extent of adherence to the pre-determined appointment

It is also possible to combine the most important dimensions through which the quality of services is determined into five points, which we relied on in the field study, as these elements can be relied upon as indicators for researching the level of quality of services to the customer.

A. **Reliability:** The ability to complete the required service with correct performance, accuracy, and dependability.

B. **Reactivity** The ability to provide service quickly and constantly assist customers when requested.

C. **Dependability:** The ability to gain the customer's trust and make him feel safe.

D. **Empathy:** good communication with the customer and understanding him.

E. **Tangibility:** It is the totality of physical facilities, such as equipment, devices, etc., (Hassan, 2008: 71).

Fourth Domain: - The Practical Aspect

In this study, the process of statistical analysis will be conducted for the answers collected from samples taken (60 samples) from the study population and the following agencies:

First: Questionnaire Variables

The questionnaire includes two independent variables:

1. Information technology
2. Quality of the tourism product

The collected data were processed using the statistical analysis program SPSS to find the following elements: -

1. Frequencies and percentages.
2. Arithmetic mean and standard deviation.
3. Pearson correlation coefficient.

Regarding the weighted arithmetic mean, an estimated scale was adopted according to the five-point Likert scale, as shown in Table No. (1).

Table No. (1) Rating scale for the five-point Likert scale

	Response	Weighted average
1	Strongly disagree	1:1.80
2	Disagree	1.81: 2.60
3	Neutral	2.61: 3.40
4	Agree	3.41: 4.20
5	Completely agree	More than 4.20

Second: Analysis of frequencies and percentages of the research sample

Table No. (2) shows the frequencies and percentages for the study sample, and according to the first item related to the personal data of the study sample, as follows:

Table (2) Frequency distribution and percentages of the study sample

	Items	Frequency	Ratio	Sample size
1	Gender			
	Male	45	72.6	60
	Female	15	24.2	60
2	Age			
	Less than 35	25	40.3	60
	36-45	35	56.5	60
	46-55	0	0	60
	More than 56	0	0	60
3	Marital state			
	Single	17	27.4	60
	Married	43	69.4	60
4	Academic achievement			
	diploma	23	37.1	60
	Bachelor's	30	48.4	60
	Master's	4	6.5	60
	PhD	3	4.8	60
5	Number of service years			
	1-5	5	8.1	60
	6-10	50	80.6	60
	11-15	5	8.1	60
	16-20	0	0	60
	21 and more	0	0	60

Third: Analysis of the weighted arithmetic mean of the study sample's answers

Table (3) shows the values of the arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the relative importance of the research community's responses regarding the first study variable (information technology) and my agencies:

Table (3) Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and relative importance of the study sample's answers

No.	Questions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Hardware			
1	The devices used by the hotel ensure fast and accurate processing of data.	4.55	0.723

2	There are computers in all departments of the hotel.	4.61	0.613
3	The hotel relies on modern technologies as a basis for completing its work.	4.62	0.584
4	The use of computers allows the hotel to simplify work procedures and complete them at the lowest cost.	4.68	0.469
5	There is an integrated base available for the various units and departments within the hotel.	4.65	0.606
Software			
6	The hotel uses software through computer-aided design.	4.68	0.503
7	The software used by the hotel contributes to the supporting systems, including management information systems.	4.65	0.577
8	The software helps organize work matters quickly and very effectively.	4.616	0.546
9	The hotel uses some ready-made programs to implement new ideas presented by employees.	4.60	0.616
10	The software available at the hotel is diverse and meets the requirements for achieving its goals.	4.65	0.546
Databases			
11	The hotel has a database of developments in the labor market.	4.60	0.616
12	The hotel relies on the database to develop the product.	4.65	0.546
13	The hotel's database is flexible.	4.63	0.551
14	The hotel is constantly working to update its database concerning developing creative ideas in the field of product development.	4.58	0.656
15	The database is used to provide the hotel's senior leadership with the information necessary to make strategic decisions.	4.56	0.767
Communications			
16	The hotel employs people with experience using the Internet.	4.61	0.665
17	The hotel is keen to use means that ensure network protection to maintain the confidentiality of information.	4.58	0.691
18	The hotel owns a website that provides its customers with information about its products.	4.60	0.671
19	The hotel uses communication networks to connect departments in the hotel.	4.63	0.609
20	The hotel uses photos and videos to promote its activities.	4.66	0.643
Human resources			
21	The hotel seeks to use the information available in databases to develop its products.	4.70	0.542

22	The hotel's employees are distinguished by their experience, which contributes to the company's products permanently.	4.63	0.497
23	The hotel has different specialties for managing information technology (engineers, programmers, analysts, computer operators).	4.55	0.853
24	The hotel seeks to open continuous training courses for its employees regarding the use of information technology and software applications.	4.73	0.445
25	Hotel management believes that the use of information technology increases the effectiveness of organizational change and achieves employee satisfaction.	4.60	0.693

When reviewing Table (3), we see that all the values of the arithmetic mean strongly agree according to the interpretations of the weighted arithmetic mean that was adopted in Table (1). This means that the average answers of the research sample consisting of (60) people completely agree with the questions related to information technology and its domains. (Hardware components - software - databases - communications - human resources).

Fourth: Analysis of the weighted arithmetic mean of the study sample's answers

Table (4) shows the values of the arithmetic means, standard deviations, and the relative importance of the research community's responses regarding the second study variable (quality of the tourism product) and my agencies:

Table (4) Arithmetic means, standard deviations, and relative importance of the study sample's answers

No.	Questions	Arithmetic mean	Standard deviation
Dependability			
1	Hotel services are compatible with the desires and needs of customers.	4.46	0.891
2	Staff are familiar with how services are provided.	4.70	0.530
3	When faced with any problem, the problems are solved with care and honesty.	4.45	0.909
Reactivity			
4	There is always a readiness to provide hotel services	4.50	0.873
5	The service is completed with the required accuracy and promptly.	4.78	0.523
6	The employees are never late to fulfill requests.	4.71	0.454
Empathy			
7	The staff pays personal attention to guests when dealing with them	4.73	0.445
8	Hotel services meet personal needs.	4.68	0.567
9	The staff is always striving to know the needs of the guests.	4.61	0.613

Tangibility			
10	The interior and exterior appearance of the entire hotel is attractive and convenient.	4.75	0.508
11	Hotel service providers take care of their external appearance.	4.68	0.596
12	The hotel has advanced equipment and tools to facilitate service provision.	4.70	0.561
Reliability			
13	Guests feel safe dealing with the hotel management.	4.65	0.546
14	The employees are polite.	4.616	0.584
15	There is a comprehensive knowledge of employees in answering various questions.	4.75	0.473

When reviewing Table (4), we see that all the values of the arithmetic means are in strong agreement according to the interpretations of the weighted arithmetic mean that was adopted in Table (1). This means that the average answers of the research sample consisting of (60) people were in complete agreement with the questions related to the quality of the tourism product. Its domains are (dependability, reactivity, empathy, tangibility, reliability).

Fifth: Testing the relationship between the research variables

To ensure the existence of a statistically significant relationship between the research variables (information technology and the quality of the tourism product), the simple correlation coefficient (Pearson) was tested (Table 5). The test results are as follows:

Table No. (5) shows the simple correlation coefficient (Pearson) test for the research variables

The variable	IT	The quality of the tourism product
IT	1	0.900
The quality of the tourism product	0.900	1

The correlation values shown in Table (5) indicate the following:

❖ There is a very strong, positive, and statistically significant direct correlation at the level of significance (0.01) with a value of (0.900) between information technology and the quality of the tourism product.

❖ There is a very strong, positive, and statistically significant direct correlation at the level of significance (0.01) with a value of (0.900) between the quality of the tourism product and the information technology.

The Fifth Domain: Conclusions and Suggestions

First: Conclusions

1. Information technology occupies an important place in the administrative environment of hotel institutions because it is linked to the tasks of collecting, storing, processing, and disseminating information in those organizations.
2. Information technology represents an important means in the process of performing work through developing human and material capabilities. Therefore, the quality of this technology that is compatible with environmental developments must be taken into account.
3. Information technology contributes to developing the capabilities of providing hotel services in the hotel by providing communication channels to provide management with the required information.
4. The importance of information technology is clear to all members of the sample, but it was not at the level it was supposed to be at the current stage.
5. The necessity of using information technology to provide software for decision-making and contribute to providing high-quality services.

Second: Recommendations

1. The necessity of involving the customer at all levels of providing and manufacturing tourism services to be a strategic partner in manufacturing and implementation through the formation of operations rooms to monitor the tourism customer satisfaction index, as it is the most important factor in improving the performance of tourism organizations and evaluating their performance.
2. The need for tourism organizations to employ and invest in information and communications technology in this field to improve customer services and electronic promotion and distribution programs.
3. The necessity for tourism organizations to adopt and activate strategic planning systems to follow up on the variables of the tourism industry environment, which is characterized by change and dynamism to develop strategies and plans to improve their performance, not only at the level of quality but also in all competitive priorities.
4. Obligating hotel management to attract graduates of tourism institutes and colleges to work in the tourism and hotel sector to achieve professionalism in work, speed of response, treatment of potential problems, and good communication with customers.
5. Obligating hotel management to prepare training programs and hold various courses to suit all target segments in the field of hospitality programs, travel and tourism management, room service, management of tourism festivals, work in tourist guidance, and catering.

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