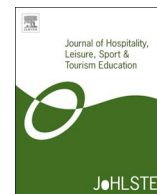


Contents lists available at [ScienceDirect](https://www.sciencedirect.com)

Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education

journal homepage: www.elsevier.com/locate/jhlste

Practice papers

Values in tourism higher education: The European master in tourism management[☆]

Janne J. Liburd^{a,*}, Tanja Mihalič^b, Jaume Guia^c

^a Department of Design and Communication, University of Southern Denmark, Denmark

^b Faculty of Economics, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

^c Faculty of Tourism, University of Girona, Spain

1. Introduction

We live in a globalised world where tourism transcends geographical space, time, cultures and values. The continued growth, complexity, and socio-economic significance of tourism have played a part in prompting universities to meet the demands and opportunities created by the tourism industry (Airey, 2005). Tourism education and research have evolved in response to, but also in isolation from the larger society and socio-economic contexts in and by which tourism exists. For example, research has showed that there is a strong consensus around the concept of sustainable tourism development, whereas practical implementation and its implications remain problematic. This fact calls forth a change of perspective in tourism higher education, from which these challenges and gaps can be addressed.

From this perspective, learning should not be limited to critical reflections on the complexity of tourism in conceptual terms. The design of the programme curriculum must give room to a variety of learning scenarios that are not restricted to traditional lectures or short-term industry projects, but an opening of the learning space at local and global levels (Mihalič, 2002, 2005; Liburd & Hjalager, 2010, 2011). Moreover, new learning environments and practices should allow tourism higher education students to recognize and critically reflect upon the underlying values of tourism-related behaviours and practices, e.g. stewardship, ethics, professionalism, mutuality and knowledge (Sheldon, Fesenmaier, Woeber, Cooper, & Antonioli, 2008), and the implementation of sustainable tourism development in a diversity of contexts (Liburd & Edwards, 2010). Tourism higher education must evolve from simply promising a mere acquisition of knowledge towards sceptical and questioning attitude towards knowledge creation (Barnett, 1990; Liburd, 2013).

This practice paper reports on values-based education and learning in an elite MSc programme in tourism, the European Master in Tourism Management (hereinafter the EMTM). The EMTM is a joint international MSc programme in tourism management jointly delivered by three European Universities. The EMTM programme sprang from a self-conscious dialogue amongst the authors of the paper over several years about the need to transcend well-established and old assumptions about the practice of tourism higher education. Its creation involved experimentation with transcending institutional and disciplinary boundaries, and benefitting from the Erasmus Mundus initiative promoted by the European Union with the purpose of developing new elite European MSc programmes along those lines.

EMTM is the only programme in tourism awarded the Erasmus Mundus label among around 130 MSc courses from all university disciplines. The programme involves a compulsory mobility scheme between the University of Southern Denmark, Denmark, the University of Ljubljana, Slovenia, and the University of Girona, Catalonia, Spain. Annually, a maximum of 35 students are selected among an average of 600 applications. Among the selected students, half are EU citizens and the other half non-EU students. No more than four students from the same nationality are selected. The average number of nationalities in each cohort is 23 and the disciplinary backgrounds of students encompass a large variety of the humanities and arts and social sciences. As a consequence, global variety in culture, geography, and knowledge is integral to the learning environment of the EMTM programme.

[☆] This practice paper reports on values-based education and learning in an elite MSc programme in tourism, the European Master in Tourism Management.

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: liburd@sdu.dk (J.J. Liburd), tanja.mihalic@ef.uni-lj.si (T. Mihalič), jaume.guia@udg.edu (J. Guia).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2017.09.003>

Received 8 July 2016; Received in revised form 5 September 2017; Accepted 21 September 2017

1473-8376/© 2017 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

As the student cohort follows the same mobility scheme for the three first semesters (first semester in Denmark, the second in Slovenia, and third in Catalonia, Spain), the programme exposes students to different types of tourism, education, and life in three nationally, geographically, and culturally diverse European contexts. Moreover, during the fourth semester when students write the master thesis, they are distributed not only among the three EMTM partner universities, but also among eight excellent, non-EU associated partner universities from Asia, Africa, Australia, Brazil and the Americas, or among tourism industry partners from all over the world. Finally, a visiting scholar mobility scheme is also in place, which brings interaction with, and learning from an invited elite of non-EU tourism professors who expose students to the depth and reach of international scholarship.

In this context of trans-institutional, trans-disciplinary and trans-cultural experience, the EMTM aims to educate graduates who can manage the complex challenges and opportunities in international tourism. This calls for a holistic approach to tourism education where broader aims of the industry and society are explicitly addressed in the curricula. In order to do so the EMTM programme is committed to the values of the Tourism Education Futures Institute (TEFI) where notably ethics, responsibility and sustainability are centre stage.

In the following, we challenge the gap between the concept of sustainable tourism development and its slow penetration into tourism practice. In particular, we examine how EMTM students assess the gap between the industry importance and educational performance of the value-set proposed by TEFI. First, the content of TEFI values and the methodology are outlined. Next, the findings are discussed and as a result we contend that the integration of values into teaching and the creation of tourism knowledge are paramount if we want to bridge the gap between theory and practice of sustainable tourism development. Yet values cannot be taught as dogma but that as points of critical, deep reflection, which guide managerial practice.

2. The TEFI values

The Tourism Education Futures Initiative (TEFI) was borne out of a concern that tourism higher education did not sufficiently address the challenges of the present while educating future responsible world-makers in order to meet demands by the industry as well as those of the wider society. In order to understand how the TEFI values are being brought into the learning experience of tourism higher education students we refer to [Ramdsen \(2003: 7\)](#) who stated that “there can be no such thing as value-free education”. Indeed, Barnett laments how

“the higher education community consistently evades its responsibility to declare the particular values that underpin its activities.” (1990: 44)

The ambitious vision of TEFI is to reshape tourism education worldwide and to help tourism graduates follow practices that are informed by the five value-sets, illustrated in [Fig. 1](#).

Drawing on [Liburd \(2013\)](#) the interrelated five values can be explained as follows. First, ethics is the basis for good action and is concerned with distinguishing between right and wrong; ethical behaviour derives from specific value systems, such as teleology and deontology. Second, knowledge is more than data (summary descriptions of parts of the world around us) and more than information (data put into a context); knowledge comes in both explicit and tacit forms; the knowledge of others should be recognised, and existing knowledge that may be taken for granted should be challenged. Third, professionalism implies not only a profession and the skills, competencies or standards associated with it but also attitudes and behaviour reflecting these; aligning personal and organisational conduct with ethical and professional standards, professionalism includes a responsibility to the customer or guest and community, a service orientation, and a commitment to lifelong learning and improvement. Fourth, stewardship suggests that tourism faculty and students should learn to understand leadership in three distinct aspects, namely sustainability, responsibility, and service to the community; stakeholders share a responsibility for the environment and the society, as well as the responsibility to exercise their relational power and/or the restriction of power of others; tourism students, teachers and other stakeholders can demonstrate their responsibility through service to the community. Fifth, and last, mutual respect is a value grounded in human relationships that require attitudinal developments; these are evolving and dynamic and involve acceptance, self-awareness of structural inequalities, open-mindedness, empowerment, and the ability to revisit one's cultural understanding of the world.

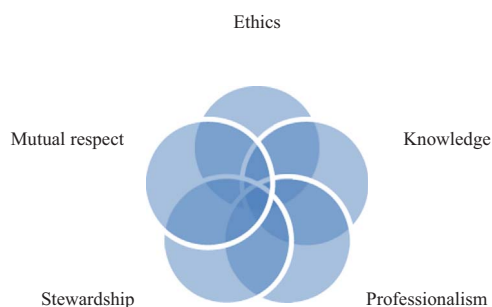


Fig. 1. The TEFI Values (adapted from [Liburd, 2010](#)).

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/7419972>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/7419972>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)