



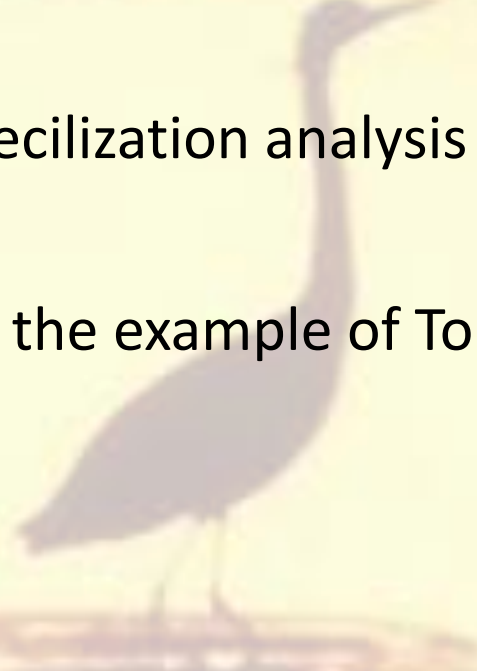
Education for Sustainable Development: The Example of the Department of Tourism and Recreation at the Technological University of Białystok.

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Overview of Białystok

Białystok, with a population of almost 300 thousand, is a city located in north-eastern Poland, serving the function of the capital of Podlaskie province. It is the administrative, economic, and academic centre of the region which, due to its exceptional environmental assets, has been termed the *Green Lungs of Poland*.

The location in the environmentally unpolluted region, full of tourist attractions, as well as the rich infrastructure of Białystok, makes the city and surrounding area a great place for living, recreation and development of tourism.



Białystok – the melting pot



Białystok has evolved as a place which is the melting pot of different nations, religions, cultures, customs and traditions, where the occidental rationalism meets the oriental mysticism. It has become an example of the integration of ethnic and religious groups, a meeting place for Poles, Byelorussians, Jews, Lithuanians, Germans, Russians and Tartars. The multiethnicity of the city was the reason for the Białystok-born Ludwik Zamenhoff to start his work on the universal language of Esperanto.

The location of Białystok, in the proximity of borders with Belarus, Lithuania and Russia, as well as the convenient transportation links, create excellent conditions for developing economic and cultural contacts with the countries of Eastern and Western Europe.

The Faculty of Management at the Technological University of Białystok

The Technological University of Białystok is the oldest technological university in the North-Eastern region of Poland. The history of the Faculty of Management begins in 1990, the time of great political and economic changes in Poland.

In 1991 The Social Sciences Unit was converted into the Chair of Social and Economic Sciences which later evolved into the Institute of Management and Marketing. First students started their studies in the academic year of 1993/94. In 2001 the Institute was converted into the Faculty of Management. It is currently the biggest faculty of the Białystok Technical University and it is rapidly developing. There are already almost 10000 graduates of the Faculty.

The Faculty of Management offers Bachelor and Master courses in the following fields: management, management and production engineering, tourism and recreation, logistics and political science.

Syllabi analysis of Tourism and Recreation specilization

On the webpage of the Department of tourism and recreation it is declared that the Department offers a major in the Bachelor of Tourism degree which provides a special business emphasis on the economic, environmental, social and sustainability aspects of destination region management. Graduates will possess advanced knowledge in a broad range of fields and several usable skills for developing and managing of tourism businesses that is environmentally, socially and economically sustainable.

Courses offered by the Department

- Propaedeutics of ecology
- e-tourism
- Tourism market research
- Tourism policy
- Policy in tourism and culture
- Tourism and recreation economic
- Tourism service management
- Tourism management on protected areas
- Tourist consultancy
- Tourist conduction



Curricula analysis

The analysis of the syllabi of all the courses offered in the Tourism and Recreation program for content linked to sustainable development shows there is *much to be improved*.

Sustainable development-connected content appears in the course called Propaedeutics of Ecology. CSR notion is discussed during the class called Tourism Management on Protected Areas. The remaining courses' syllabi did not include content linked to sustainable development, however.



The background of the slide features a soft-focus photograph of several birds, likely terns, standing on a nest. The nest is a large, cup-shaped structure made of sticks and twigs, situated on a sandy beach. The scene is bathed in a warm, golden light, suggesting a sunrise or sunset. The birds are silhouetted against the bright background, with their long necks and pointed beaks clearly visible.

Curricula analysis – end thought

On the webpage of the Department of Tourism and Recreation it is stated that a graduate in tourism and recreation possesses necessary knowledge to operate in tourism business, to organize and program tourist and recreation activities and to manage land resources. Is it possible without teaching the basics of Sustainable development?

Conclusion

The research findings show the critical relations between university curricula and education for sustainability. It is still true that the Education for Sustainable Development remains fragmented and incoherent and often lacks overall strategies and objectives in many higher education institutions.

Education for Sustainable development needs the defining objectives and also specific teaching methods and greater curricular harmonisation. The teaching methods in education for sustainable development (sustainable) future need to be included in every subject and integrated within all subjects in the university education.

Proposed curriculum - Tourism Service Management : objectives

The general objective is to ease the acquisition of knowledge necessary to understand the dynamics of tourism services management. During the course, students will be introduced to basic concepts connected to tourism and service management allowing for sustainable business success. As potential future managers, the students will be provided with skills of critical thinking to contribute to sustainable business development. Practical examples will be discussed and theory examined. The course will focus on strategies allowing sustainable service business success, as service design, service quality management, and sustainable tourism.

Proposed curriculum - Tourism Service Management : learning outcomes

Upon completion of the course, students are expected to achieve the following outcomes:

- know main concepts of tourism services management;
- understand the importance and meaning of service, service quality and philosophy in hospitality;
- know most important influencers of tourism services demand and supply;
- be aware of the hospitality service trends;
- understand the impact of sustainability principles on tourism services;
- analyse critically different approaches to sustainable management of natural, economic, and human resources;
- know sustainability indicators and ways of critical assessment of sustainability;
- analyse cases of sustainable development challenges in tourism management;

Proposed curriculum - Tourism Service Management : course outline

- Hospitality and service industry;
- Service economy and service philosophy. Core ideas: TQM, Servqual, Six-Sigma and Kano models;
- Tourism quality programs and grading systems;
- Tourism market segmentation – case study;
- Demand management, trends and opportunities: Generation X, Generation Y, Generation Z, social media and customer connections, customer communities in tourism;
- Services marketing and customer behaviour in tourism services management;
- Concepts of sustainable development and sustainability. Pillars of sustainability: economic, ecological, and human sustainability;
- Sustainable tourism: principles, practice, programmes, products and services;
- Tourism service trends (ecotourism, slow movement, green hospitality).

Proposed curriculum - Tourism Service Management : final assessment

- 50 % final test
- 30 % essay on sustainability and tourism services management
- 20% group project (case-study – market segmentation)

Proposed curriculum - Tourism Service Management : study materials

- Hand-outs and other lecture materials
- Leiper, N. (2004). *Tourism management* (3rd ed.). Frenchs Forest, N.S.W.: Pearson/Hospitality Press.
- Chaipooirunta, S. (2008). The Development and measurement of different service quality models. http://www.journal.au.edu/journal_management/2008/jan08/jan08-article05-development.pdf
- Daniel, C.N. & Berinyuy, L. P. (2010). Using the Servqual model to assess service quality and customer satisfaction. (Master thesis, Umea School of Business) <http://umu.divaportal.org/smash/get/diva2:327600/FULLTEXT01.pdf>
- Quintela, J. A., Correia, A. G. & Antunes, J. G. (2011). Service quality on health and wellness tourism trends in Portugal. *International Journal of Business, Management and Social Sciences*, 2, 3, 1-8.
- Neal, J. D., Uysal, M. & Sirgy, M. J. (2007). The Effects of tourism services on travelers' quality of life. *Journal of Travel Research*, 46, 154.
- Greig, A., Hulme, D., and Turner, M. *Challenging Global Inequality. Development Theory and Practice in the 21st Century*, Palgrave Macmillan, 2007
- *Indicators of Sustainable Development for Tourism Destinations. A guidebook*. Madrid: WTO, 2004, 507 p.
- Other scientific articles and sources related to the topic.

Thank you.

