

The impact of sustainability in luxury hospitality and tourism education

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Abstract: Over the last 30 years, there have been changes in what is considered luxury. The birth of luxury conglomerates and master's degree qualifications in luxury have emerged. However, at present, the luxury hospitality/tourism industry is in a paradoxical situation – while some people are demanding more and more luxury, others are demanding that luxury needs to be more sustainable. The world-wide hospitality/tourism industry is seen as being able to have a major impact on the sustainable development goals of the United Nations World Tourism Organisation (UNWTO): What role does education play in this context? There are 75 master's degree programmes in luxury worldwide, 71 of which are taught in English. Of the English programmes, ten of those are dedicated to hospitality/tourism/travel; however, little is known about what level of sustainability knowledge is imparted in these programmes. This chapter investigates current hospitality/tourism master's programmes in luxury (taught in English) and discusses how teaching sustainability could influence and create change in the luxury hospitality/tourism industry.

Keywords: Luxury, Education, Hospitality, Tourism, Sustainability

1 Introduction

Luxury is certainly not a new concept. It can be traced back to the Palaeolithic period when luxury was perceived as a collective spiritual concept, and since that period, perspectives on luxury have changed dramatically. Over the past 30 years, interest in luxury has increased tenfold, the market has expanded significantly despite the economic downturn (Bain & Company, 2023) and research within academia has widened (Chandon et al., 2017); for education, this has resulted in the introduction of a master's qualification in luxury. Like luxury, master's degrees have been in existence for centuries, and their origins can be dated back to the medieval era. The Institut Supérieur de Marketing du Luxe (Sup de Luxe) was founded on the initiative of Cartier and introduced the first Master of Luxury degree in 1990 (Sup de Luxe, 2024). At present, worldwide, there are 75 master's in luxury programmes; the majority of these master's qualifications concentrate on the management, fashion, marketing and branding elements of luxury, and only ten concentrate on the hospitality, tourism, or travel element. For the purpose of this chapter, these ten programmes are examined to determine what academia is teaching in the area of sustainable luxury within the context of luxury hospitality and tourism postgraduate education.

While perceptions of luxury have changed considerably since the Palaeolithic period, so has luxury itself – how it is defined, its changing values in regard to consumption, its experiential aspects, and how it has become more unconventional and sustainable. Defining luxury has always been problematic and, to date, there has been no clear definition as to what luxury is. Luxury used to be a privilege reserved for the affluent, and it was linked closely to wealth and position (Llamas & Thomsen, 2016). Luxury is associated with conspicuous spending, causing it to be perceived as elitist, exclusive, symbolic, prestigious, costly, and closely linked to products and their qualities (Godey et al., 2013). Apart from these traditional interpretations, there is currently another interpretation known as “new luxury”, which is a hedonistic and emotional viewpoint on luxury defined by the subjectivity of the consumer’s emotions, desires, and enjoyment (Godey et al., 2013). It has been suggested that contemporary luxury buyers use their purchases to find self-actualization and relief from stress by looking for values like equilibrium and balance (Hemetsberger et al., 2012). According to Eckhardt et al. (2015), the shift in luxury consumption towards experiences can be seen as discrete consumption, which also suggests that status is no longer the primary motivator for luxury (Cristini et al., 2017). Recent studies have identified the new form of luxury as unconventional luxury, focusing on consumers’ private understandings of luxury and how it is experienced in response to the rise in discrete and private luxury consumption (Thomsen et al., 2020).

Therefore, our changing values regarding the consumption of luxury are adding to the multiple perspectives on luxury. The shift from product consumption to experiential luxury consumption is a notable trend in the luxury sector (Cristini et al., 2017). It has been suggested that luxury has evolved into a consumer’s quest for significance by moving from owning to experiencing and from having to being (Cristini et al., 2017). This change has also seen some people demanding more from luxury, in the form of luxury experiences which are exclusive, have a high quality of service, are unique, rare and authentic, deliver perceptions of comfort and social status demonstrate conspicuous consumption, offer a personalized service, and have high levels of emotional and hedonic values (Harkison et al., 2018). On the other hand, other people are demanding that luxury be more sustainable. This has evolved from a change in consumer values, driven by a heightened awareness of sustainability and a growing demand for authentic and responsible experiences which are now reshaping the luxury tourism landscape (Manfreda et al., 2023). Consumers are increasingly integrating ecological, ethical, and environmental considerations into their luxury purchases. These factors have been identified as key influences in shaping the perceived value of luxury consumption, particularly among younger generations (Mora et al., 2018). For example, Gen Z and millennials account for at least 30 % of luxury brand sales, and by 2025 this is anticipated to increase to 45 % (Jain, 2020). Additionally, 73 % of millennial buyers would be prepared to pay a little bit extra for a luxury if it originated from a socially or sustainably conscious brand. This demonstrates that millennials are becoming more aware of global prob-

lems and are motivated to act to improve things (Jain, 2020). The changes in consumers' values also affect the traditional luxury industries as they need to find ways to compete in the customer's mind in the sustainable luxury market. Batat (2019) argued that consumers want ideological value in the form of ethics or spirituality with the new forms of luxury.

In 2023, tourism was one of the top ten industries in the world by revenue (\$2,029,7B) (WTTC, 2024) and it is estimated that, by 2030, there will be 1.8 billion arrivals (20 % of the population of the world will be travelling) (Mirashi, 2016). That means that every day, 5 million people will be crossing an international border for business, leisure or visiting their family and friends. Tourism sustainability is one of the significant potentials for fulfilling UNWTO's sustainable development goals by 2030. There is an extensive literature that has enabled us to have a better understanding of the role of higher education institutions in the pursuit of sustainable development. Unfortunately, however, there is a lack of literature that shows us what has been achieved (Findler et al., 2019; Piramanayagam et al., 2023), and there is even less literature for the specific case of hospitality and tourism education (Liu et al., 2017). At present, there is a consensus among stakeholders that academic institutions in Asia are not keeping pace with the rapid changes in the hospitality and tourism industry, particularly in terms of technology-driven advancements and sustainability practices (Teare, 2023).

So, as previously highlighted, due to its size, the luxury hospitality/tourism industry worldwide could be seen as a force to be reckoned with as it starts or continues to aim for the UNWTO's 2030 goals. And education on sustainable practices while people are studying could start to shape future hospitality/tourism leaders. This chapter aims to highlight how much sustainability is part of luxury master's programmes concentrating on hospitality/tourism/travel, and it seeks to raise awareness of and discuss how educators could teach sustainability in luxury tourism/hospitality postgraduate programmes.

2 Literature review

Before the UNWTO's sustainable development goals were launched in 2015, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had launched its own initiatives for sustainability for academia in 2005 via the Decade of Education for Sustainable Development 2005–2014 (Piramanayagam et al., 2023). Sustainable development meant fostering peace, fighting against global warming, inequalities, the marginalization of females, and poverty, and having a different vision of the world (UNESCO, 2005b). The purpose of these initiatives was to encourage an integration of sustainable development beliefs, concepts and applications into all forms of education. It was expected that higher education institutions would change people's behaviour and ensure economic viability, environmental integrity and sustainability for present and future generations (UNESCO, 2005a).

Paris (2016) had argued that, in higher education, the integration of sustainability is important for managers of the future to ensure they have the skills and knowledge to promote sustainable hospitality/tourism business activities. But Camargo and Gretzel (2017) stated that students lacked an understanding of sustainability concepts and only concentrated on the environmental part of sustainability. This was highlighted by Zhang and Tavitiyaman (2022), who stated that the triple-bottom lines (TBL) of environmental conservation, social justice, and economic growth were all as important as each other and that students needed a balanced understanding of all three areas. Previously, Dhi-man (2008) had supported sustainable development beliefs but had suggested that it was important for stakeholders to stress there had to be a balanced understanding of the TBL. Optimizing the environmental, financial and social impacts of sustainability will become critically important to ensure that all businesses meet their goals in the future (Zhang & Tavitiyaman, 2022).

As previously stated, even though there is an extensive literature that has enabled us to gain an understanding of what role higher education institutions have had in the pursuit of sustainable development, there is still a lack of literature on what hospitality and tourism education has achieved. However, Zizka (2017) highlighted that there was a knowledge variation among first-year students in an international hospitality management programme in Switzerland regarding ethics, sustainability, and corporate social responsibility (CSR), which had been formed by the influence of parents, friends, and school on students' knowledge. There was a high interest in learning about sustainability, followed by ethics, and a lower interest in learning about CSR among students, as they perceived sustainability as the most important topic, followed by ethics and then CSR (for both their academic and professional lives). Yet Arrobas et al. (2020) stated that sustainability had still not been fully integrated into hospitality/tourism education, and inequities between local communities and tourists were starting to become visible due to the growth in the hospitality/tourism industry.

Berjozkina and Melanthiou (2021) suggested that sustainability implementation in tourism/hospitality education is at a development stage, with a need for more integration into programme learning outcomes. Tourism/hospitality education is crucial due to the global importance of the industry and its significant employment opportunities. The evolution of tourism/hospitality education includes various academic levels, from diplomas to doctoral programmes. For example, Cyprus relies heavily on its tourism sector, with a significant contribution to the country's GDP, leading to growth in institutions offering related education. Challenges and opportunities in sustainability education emphasize the importance of equipping learners with skills to address sustainability issues effectively.

Zizka and Varga (2021) noted that over 67 % of higher education students in their study rated sustainability as extremely important for their professional lives, even though research had highlighted that embedding sustainability into

all courses showed that students' knowledge improved more by conducting one intensive course. Zizka and Varga (2021) stated that higher education shaped future leaders, and played a significant role in doing so, their research was only conducted in degree programmes. So, they suggested that more research needed to be conducted in the other levels of higher education, for example, doctoral and master's programmes.

Hussain et al. (2023) highlighted that if hospitality and tourism programmes were to be sustainable practice-ready then the trainers and educators would also need to be ready, and that may also involve a change in mindset. They saw that there are challenges ahead in terms of the adaptability and motivation of hospitality educators in dealing with the trends and changes that are defining the hospitality industry. Kapoor et al. (2023) suggested that there is a need and opportunity for employers to step in and be part of engaging interns while they are on placement with them. Due to most hospitality programmes having a mandatory internship in their curriculum, this would give students an opportunity to experience theoretical sustainable practices in real life. Kapoor et al. (2023) also noted that industry is ahead of academia regarding sustainability practices and that students can be the change agent for academia – by being exposed to industry sustainability practices, they can go back to their institutes and push for them to embrace industry practices and introduce sustainability into the curriculum.

Sharma and Srivastava (2021) suggested that there were various ways courses can be modified so that undergraduate hospitality curricula can incorporate sustainability, and that it is important to try to reduce the gap that exists between academia and industry in their orientation towards sustainability. However, more recently, Kim (2023) noted that there are many curricula in higher education that are still overspecialized, unbalanced and mono-disciplinary – graduates are solving problems in isolation. A proposed solution to overcome this is to offer specialized sustainable development degrees but, although sustainability has started to be integrated into higher education, there have been limitations on who has been doing it and what has been done. Hughes et al. (2024) suggested using sustainability decoupling in hospitality education and employing the Theory of Planned Behaviour (TPB) (Ajzen, 1991) as a lens for assessing student sustainability attitudes – comparing sustainability commitment across different academic programmes. Hospitality programmes at university level emphasize environmental sustainability and have stronger faculty influence. Structural equation modelling showed a programme's impact on student sustainability intention through attitude, subjective norm, and perceived behavioural control. It can be seen that hospitality/tourism education has a part to play in developing the leaders of the future, but with little literature on what is being taught in the postgraduate luxury space, research needs to be conducted to gain a clearer picture. Currently, no studies have been conducted on luxury education, and discussion about sustainability within the context of academia revolves around diverse perspectives – can luxury be sustainable and

are the elements of sustainability impacting luxury experiences and luxury value?

3 Methods

The data that was used for this chapter is taken from a wider study the researchers had previously conducted on the introduction of luxury master's programmes. It is secondary data and collected from the curriculum of the ten master's in luxury programmes in hospitality/tourism/travel worldwide. Secondary data saves time and money, it is more easily available and accessible through online social media, annual reports, publications and websites (Connelly, 2017). Through a Google search in English, both researchers (one located in the northern hemisphere and one in the southern hemisphere) determined that there were 75 luxury master's programmes, with ten of them having 'travel', 'tourism', or 'hospitality' in the title or in the name of the institution. The data from these programmes was then taken from their websites and analysed via the website content analysis process where, after formulating the research question, the next step was to select a sample, define categories, train coders and determine reliability, then analyse and interpret data (McMillan, 2000). The research question was to determine if sustainability was taught in these master's programmes. Aiming to answer the research question – how sustainability is visible in the curricula of the programmes, the sample was ten master's programmes – Table 1 shows the titles of these programmes and the university. The data was manually coded by the researchers in Excel sheets, and each researcher's work was checked by the other to ensure the continuity of the analysis and interpretation of the data. The findings obtained from this data are shown below, followed by a discussion.

Table 1: Titles of master's degree programmes

Titles of Master programmes
MSc in International Hospitality Management – Institut Lyfe
Masters in Marketing and Management for Luxury Tourism – Les Roches
Digital Hospitality and Travel Leadership – MSc – University of West London, Meridean Overseas Education Consultants
Luxury Hospitality Management – MA – University of West London, London Geller College of Hospitality and Tourism
Master of Hospitality Management: Luxury and Lifestyle – Université Saint Joseph
MBA International Hospitality and Luxury Brand Management – CMH
Master in Luxury/VIP Management – HTL – International School of Hospitality Tourism & Languages
Master of Science (MSc) in Luxury Experiences Management – The Hong Kong Polytechnic University – School of Hotel and Tourism Management

Titles of Master programmes
MSc in International Hospitality Management – Institut Lyfe
Master of Science in Luxury Management and Guest Experience – Glion Institute of Higher Education
MSc Ferrières – International Leadership and Innovation, Hospitality and Luxury Management – Ferrières Hospitality & Luxury Management School

Source: author's work

4 Findings

Upon analysis of the master's degree programmes in luxury hospitality/tourism/travel and the rationale behind them, four general themes emerged (see Figure 1). The first theme is globalization, which gives students a focus on luxury both domestically and globally. Second, a recurring subject area is the future of luxury in terms of products and services. This is demonstrated by trends and insights that indicate experiential goods will be major factors in future luxury. Real-life or authentic assessment, which exposes students to industry practice and techniques through real-life projects and problems, is the third theme. Finally, studies in hospitality and tourism put a strong emphasis on management and leadership skills as students advance their careers, gaining knowledge from a variety of interdisciplinary fields, developing their research skills, learning about technology trends, marketing strategies, and innovation.

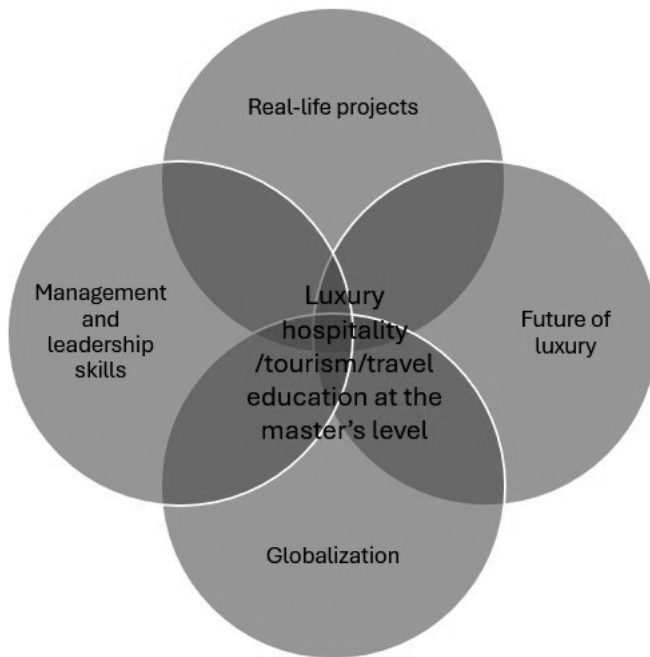


Figure 1 Content of luxury hospitality/tourism/travel education at the master's level

Source: author's work

However, the findings relating to sustainability are disappointing. Before any more of the findings are presented, it is noteworthy that the data from the wider study showed that sustainability, a key aspect of the contemporary luxury industry, is found in the title of only one of the 75 luxury master's degrees. However, it is highlighted within the marketing text of 12 of the 75 programmes.

Among the ten luxury master's in hospitality/tourism/travel, sustainability is mentioned in just one curriculum. In this programme, the course is part of the compulsory studies titled Sustainable Luxury and Design, which raises the question of whether the content of the course is about sustainable luxury in the hospitality and tourism industry or it has a generic perspective on sustainability. In addition, as only one of the luxury hospitality/tourism/travel programmes discusses sustainability, it raises the question of what sustainability teaching is happening, and what its impacts are on students and at what level. Furthermore, as there is no clarity regarding the content, it is hard to determine what, if any, form of sustainability is actually integrated into the programmes. In addition, it needs to be highlighted that although sustainability may be missing from an institution's website, it does not mean to say that it is not being taught in that institution's luxury master's programme.

5 Discussion

As previously discussed, the hospitality/tourism industry and the education sector involve a vast number of people. If 1.8 billion people are travelling in 2030 – (20 % of the population will be on the move) (Mirashi, 2016) – this will affect the sustainability of the world, and education will play a pivotal role in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by the growing travel and tourism sector.

The UNWTO acknowledges that education, training, and research are crucial elements in guaranteeing the long-term viability and competitiveness of tourism destinations (Grandcourt, 2020). If the industry does not acknowledge the importance of sustainability and ensuring sustainable practices, it will also negatively affect the entire sector. As the industry grows, there will be a growing demand for qualified people who are educated about sustainable practices. Education programmes can prepare students to meet these demands by preparing skilled professionals, adding to the industry's overall sustainability. As previously noted by Bakker (2005), luxury hospitality and tourism research has the opportunity to serve as a role model, and research into customer experiences can be incorporated into other service industries. Furthermore, the negative connotation which is sometimes attached to luxury consumption (Eckhardt et al., 2015; Goor et al., 2020) may be diminished by taking sustainable practices into account. However, based on the findings of the present study, luxury hospitality and tourism education programmes should incorporate sustainability principles into their curricula to answer the call of the UNWTO. The lack of education in sustainability suggests a potential area for improvement in these programs' curricula.

The lack of sustainability education, at least as evident from the programmes, may have many causes. According to Munjal and Sharma (2023), faculty members at educational institutions often lack comprehensive expertise or training in, or understanding of sustainability challenges, their implications, and viable strategies. Consequently, their ability to contribute meaningfully to the classroom discussion on the subject matter is limited, and they lack knowledge of the practical methods employed by the industry. Munjal and Sharma (2023) suggested that in order to increase understanding, training sessions should be organized in a train-the-trainer approach, with the explicit goal of equipping faculty with the necessary skills and knowledge in sustainability. This will enable them to enhance the teaching and learning experience by imparting valuable skills and knowledge in this area. Furthermore, most educational institutions do not adopt significant policy measures to effectively implement sustainable practices on their campuses, resulting in a lack of tangible evidence of their commitment. This further weakens sustainability practices' narrative and scholarly expression (Munjal & Sharma, 2023). This can easily be modified by making sustainability thinking one of the main visible goals of institutions and the education they offer.

The challenge with luxury is that cultural characteristics are acknowledged as significant factors in comprehending luxury. Previous research has observed differences in how luxury is perceived in various nations (Hennigs et al., 2012). As the perspectives on luxury may differ, the link to sustainability from the industry is not always clear. The luxury market, which has been traditionally defined by extravagance, exclusivity, and richness, frequently contrasts sharply with the ideas of sustainability. Environmental conservation, moral behaviour, and responsible resource management are prioritized by proponents of sustainability. It needs to be noted that sustainability can be implemented very differently in each luxury sector: in the car industry, regulators are putting pressure on manufacturers with actions being taken partially voluntarily. However, the luxury lodging/hospitality sectors have been very active in recent decades, in terms of environmental sustainability, yet the jewellery/watch industries continue to face challenges related to the ethical sourcing of raw materials. Therefore, in the context of luxury literature, the scholarly research on luxury has presented differing viewpoints on the potential contradiction between luxury and sustainability, ranging from pessimistic to optimistic (Amatulli et al., 2021). These dichotomies may impact the understanding of the importance of sustainability in luxury education. However, as previously noted, due to shifts in luxury and consumer culture, luxury consumers have become more diverse (Iloranta, 2021), and they now seek many forms of value from their luxury purchases (Hennigs et al., 2012). Some researchers have suggested that luxury consumption is shifting towards inconspicuous kinds of consumption (Eckhardt et al., 2015). The changes in the understanding and purchase of luxury can be attributed to the influence of 'masstige' (the blending of luxury and mass-market appeal) (Eckhardt et al., 2015). Additionally, the consumption of luxury is no longer limited to specific socioeconomic classes or conspicuous brand names (Hemetsberger et al., 2012). According to Mora et al. (2018), the shift in consumer behaviour suggests that people now view an abundance of consumer goods as a sign of wealth and affluence, leading to a focus on intangible factors like wellness and happiness as the ultimate indicators of contemporary luxury. Research indicates that experiences, with their intangible elements, are more likely to make individuals happier than material belongings (Rosenzweig & Gilovich, 2012). Experiences, as opposed to material belongings, are more closely self-related, and are less prone to cause regret in the way a person has spent their money (Rosenzweig & Gilovich, 2012), since they aim to produce enduring memories and hedonic values (Nicolao et al., 2009). These changes may also be connected to the slow transition from materialistic to post-materialistic ideals in Western cultures (Belk, 2020). The perception of luxury is evolving in societies as a result of economic, technological, social, and political influences (Kapferer & Bastien, 2012). Therefore, as Jain et al. (2023) emphasized, sustainability is an essential aspect of luxury hospitality and should be integrated into the business model and effectively communicated to all stakeholders through proper channels of communication. Nevertheless, it is vital to carry out the activity in a manner that upholds the luxury aspects and provides a luxurious

encounter for customers (Jain et al., 2023). Kapferer and Michaut (2015) argued that sustainability is intricately linked to luxury since it embodies the notion of superior quality from the standpoint of luxury consumers. When discussing luxury tourism, sustainability is acknowledged as encompassing authenticity and promoting a sense of significance in luxury experiences (Iloranta, 2019, 2021; Iloranta & Komppula, 2022). In summary, the changes in luxury consumption and the dichotomous perspectives on sustainability as a part of luxury in this context may also have implications for luxury education as they are the missing link between it and sustainability.

To tackle these challenges, universities and other educational institutions offering luxury hospitality/tourism programmes should also demonstrate their commitment to sustainability through their own operations and campus initiatives. It is not only educating students about sustainability in a luxury context and how the negative impacts can be minimized. Institutions need to incorporate sustainable practices into their campus operations (using energy-efficient buildings, renewable energy sources, water conservation measures, and extensive recycling programmes). Making sustainability visible on campuses, and in daily operations, shows commitment and underlines its importance. From the social sustainability perspective, creating an inclusive, equitable, and supportive environment for all members of the community is essential. This can be done by integrating social sustainability topics in the curriculum across various disciplines, including courses on social justice, equity, and community engagement in luxury business. Universities may develop policies and practices that promote diversity, equity, and inclusion, including the provision of support services for underrepresented and marginalized groups and creating safe and accessible spaces for all students, staff, and faculty to gather, collaborate, and express themselves. The social perspective should not only be visible inside the university but should also foster partnerships with local communities to address social issues and create mutual benefits (in, for example, service-learning projects, community-based research, and volunteer programmes).

In addition, encouraging research and innovation in sustainability within luxury hospitality/tourism education is essential for advancing knowledge and practices in this field. An institution's dedication to advancing sustainable solutions is demonstrated by prioritising research that addresses sustainability concerns (Ralph & Stubbs, 2013). Obtaining grants or offering reward systems in their salaries for educators who research could emphasize sustainability issues, and the innovations, and practices in a particular field (Munjal & Sharma, 2023).

Establishing collaborations with sustainability-oriented organizations can amplify the institution's endeavours and generate tangible outcomes. From the practitioner perspective, providing students with experiential learning opportunities focused on sustainability is crucial. Collaborating with luxury hospitality brands, sustainable tourism organizations, and environmental non-governmental organizations can expose students to real-world sustainable initiatives. Engaging with stakeholders is crucial for acquiring knowledge about sustain-

ability in the hospitality/tourism sector. Nevertheless, disparities arise in the way industry professionals/students perceive sustainability matters. Therefore, student internships should be utilized to facilitate the transfer of research and knowledge regarding sustainability-related practices between academia and industry, resulting in reciprocal advantages. There is a chance to incorporate project-based learning initiatives into academic credit programmes. However, these programmes will require the integration of internships where students can observe, document, and learn about sustainability practices in hospitality/tourism businesses, in addition to the current focus on operational learning (Munjal & Sharma, 2023).

Furthermore, as the perspective in the master's studies is managerial, educating future leaders in the luxury hospitality/tourism industry about ethical and responsible leadership is fundamental. This is vital as some countries are suffering from a lack of employees and are having difficulty keeping the industry attractive. Integrating sustainability concepts cultivates a perception of ethical leadership among students. It is hoped that individuals who complete these programmes will uphold these ideals in their careers, thereby exerting a favourable influence on the industry.

Luxury hospitality/tourism education should also emphasize the importance of community engagement and social impact. Only one curriculum explicitly mentioned sustainability but it did not mention the perspective of the hospitality/tourism industry. Tourism is different from many other industries, as the number of stakeholders is large and the industry requires specialist knowledge about its impacts on sustainability for it to be regarded as 'regular luxury'. Teaching sustainability in the context of tourism/hospitality is, therefore, essential. Participating in sustainability projects with the local community and different stakeholders can showcase an institution's dedication to creating a beneficial influence outside its campuses while giving practical skills to their students and community.

Examining the programmes' curricula and their delivery raises questions about these curricula, which may be partly outdated or may not have room for contemporary issues such as sustainability and climate change. Munjal and Sharma (2023) also noted this in the Indian context. However, consumers are increasingly seeking ethical and environmentally friendly products and services, leading to a market shift towards sustainability. By conforming to this prevailing pattern, educational institutions guarantee that their programmes stay pertinent and sought-after. Furthermore, integrating sustainability into the curriculum demonstrates a commitment to educating students about the significance of sustainable practices.

Sustainability could also be used as a marketing message and added value in programmes, differentiating them from others and offering a competitive advantage to them. Programmes that integrate sustainability ideas might differentiate themselves from conventional offerings, appealing to students seeking education that corresponds with their values. The new generation of students

values sustainability issues in the context of luxury. Contemporary students are increasingly aware of ecological and societal concerns. They actively search for organizations that align with their dedication to sustainability, particularly in industries linked to luxury, where the effects of consumption are more noticeable. By adopting sustainability principles, educational institutions can enhance the competitiveness of their programmes and their graduates, aligning with the market's increasing focus on sustainability. Educational institutions that incorporate sustainability into their curriculum are seen as progressive and pioneering.

Sustainability represents more than simply a temporary trend; it signifies a lasting transformation in the way organizations function. Sustainability needs to be made visible and measurable and must have someone in the organization in charge of it. Providing transparent and open information about sustainability goals, efforts, and achievements may ensure that the institution is held to be responsible for and demonstrates its commitment to ongoing improvement. By researching the structures and challenges relating to why sustainability is missing from luxury hospitality/tourism, institutions can understand it better and recognize how it can be added to their structures.

Concentrating on the points noted above may highlight the importance of sustainable luxury hospitality/tourism education on many levels. Making it one of the goals of education will enhance the willingness of staff, students, and industry practitioners to readily accept and adapt to change. The sector can benefit from global best practices and research by exploring these choices. By integrating sustainability into their curricula, educational institutions equip their students with the skills and knowledge necessary for them to thrive in the industry's future, ensuring long-lasting value (Zhang & Tavitiyaman, 2022).

6 Conclusions

Ultimately, including sustainability principles in luxury hospitality/tourism master's education programmes serves as both a direct reaction to the UNWTO's request and a strategic measure to equip the industry for a sustainable future. It guarantees that the sector makes a positive contribution to global sustainability while training people to run the industry responsibly.

This chapter raises questions about the level of sustainability in luxury master's programmes and what has been done so far. Is sustainability embedded in all courses, or is it a separate course? Is this being done on a superficial level, or are students given practical examples that require them to reflect on sustainability. In companies where they do their internships, can they bridge the academic-practice gap? It may be easier to conduct sustainability education in undergraduate degree programmes in countries such as Finland and New Zealand, as ideas about sustainability are embedded in regulations and laws that support the practices of tourism companies. For the luxury industry to develop

towards sustainability, there needs to be a real impact on education, showing examples of how to put sustainability into practice.

Naturally, there are limitations in doing a web content analysis: it did not give a full picture of what is taught in each module, and future research could help to determine what is actually being taught, but initial indications are disappointing. Furthermore, there is so much that academia and industry could do together to ensure the advancement of a much-needed sustainability agenda; it could be said that it is already too late, so it is essential that we start to collaborate now. Educators have the ability to influence future leaders before they go into industry and provide them with the tools they would need to change the hospitality/tourism industry. And the industry needs to ensure that this change also starts now with the employees they have, and by supporting future employees.

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