Towards a gender-conscious tourism curriculum: Lessons from the classroom.

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Abstract

Promoting gender equality and discussing gender issues in tourism openly and inclusively can be facilitated by moving towards a gender-conscious tourism curriculum. University students need to be equipped with knowledge, skills, and experiences that will enable them to navigate the ever-changing world in a purposeful and meaningful way. This chapter shares reflections on teaching and learning, drawing on the author's classroom experience, to illustrate the challenges and opportunities of incorporating gender in tourism programmes. By critically drawing on the principles of heutagogy, this chapter offers insights on the value of "revisiting teaching philosophy," "co-creating a collective and inclusive learning space," and promoting "learning and teaching through conversation" as essential pillars to teaching and learning gender. In doing so, this chapter contributes to the ongoing discussions on the need to design a gender-conscious curriculum bringing to attention gender issues as being mainstream in tourism education and beyond.

Keywords

Introduction

Despite increased research on gender and tourism in recent years, little is known about teaching and learning gender in tourism. Yet, according to Segovia-Perez et al. (2019), tourism education can play a significant role in removing stereotypes and gendered assumptions, as well as promoting good practices in relation to equity. Furthermore, tourism employment is considered a source of empowerment for women and minority groups and achieving gender equality and empowering women and girls features prominently as the fifth United Nations Sustainable Development Goal (UN SDG). Yet, as pointed out by Alarcón and Cole (2019, p. 903), "without gender equality, there can be no sustainability," further concluding that gender equality is the foundation for all 17 UN SDGs. Academia and education, because they produce and disseminate knowledge, have an important role to play in shaping ideas and discourses to help achieve the SDGs (Dashper et al., 2022) in the classroom environment and through relevant curriculum changes.

Our responsibility as educators has got to be to engage in teaching practice which enables Our responsibility as educators has got to be to engage in teaching practice which enables students to not only learn their core subjects and better themselves but also equip them with knowledge, skills, and experiences that will allow them to navigate the ever-changing and uncertain (post)modern world. Tourism education, especially in the United Kingdom (UK) where vocational elements of programmes continue to be highly valued, is an important component of the reproduction of the new workforce. Future managers and leaders are, arguably, students in tourism, and it is during their time at university that introducing them to current debates and misconceptions on the ever-present gender stereotypes and inequalities needs to take place (Gebbels et al., 2020). It is this new generation of future leaders who are indispensable to eradicating gender inequality in tourism and beyond. As Jeffrey (2017) urges us all teaching gender equality and female empowerment in tourism helps to promote these issues on a larger scale and raise awareness for our future leaders. Gebbels et al. (2020) have also called for the need to address gender issues within educational institutions in order for students to enter into the work environment with minimal gender bias.

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This chapter contributes to the first part of this handbook: *Teaching and learning gender in tourism*, with the aim of sharing reflections on teaching and learning, in particular drawing on the author's classroom experiences, to illustrate the challenges and opportunities of incorporating gender in tourism programmes in the UK. By critically drawing on the principles of heutagogy, which advocates learner agency and is defined as a self-determined learning where the learner takes centre stage in the learning process, this chapter offers insights into the value of *revisiting our own teaching philosophy*, *creating a collective and inclusive learning space*, and promoting *learning and teaching through conversation* as essential pillars of teaching and learning gender. In doing so, this chapter contributes to the ongoing discussions on the need to design a gender-conscious curriculum bringing to attention gender issues as being mainstream in tourism education and beyond.

Gender and curriculum: contested terms

Our societies are governed by unwritten rules, norms, and expectations, many of which are culturally conditioned. For instance, the societal norms of gendered roles, labour division, and patriarchy are easily translated into the classroom environment. In that space, they should be questioned rather than unintentionally reinforced. Within the context of tourism and hospitality education, underpinned by strong practical and vocational elements, Tribe (2002) has called on academia to educate and raise graduates as *philosophic practitioners*. In short, tourism programmes should incorporate both liberal and vocational education equipping students with the ability to reflect and act (Inui et al., 2006). To better reflect the changes in higher education and industry employment, such graduates are now being characterised as those who can understand and critique higher order academic knowledge and skills, apply and critique higher order practical knowledge and skills, develop a critical self with a critical understanding of the world, formulate reasoned visions of a better tourism world, and participate in activities for a better tourism world (Tribe & Paddison, 2021, pp. 11–12). Developing such future leaders will not be possible without a strong commitment from teachers, in this case study called the facilitators of learning to encapsulate the principles of heutagogy, who create a classroom environment which encourages critical thinking, transformation, and identity formation (Lalendle & Msila, 2020). Such progressive teachers are also known to be very aware of the importance of discussing issues of gender, race, or class alongside traditional content of tourism curriculum in order to raise awareness of current debates among future employees in the industry (Segovia-Perez et al., 2019).

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Before going any further, it is essential to clarify that the definitions of the two key terms used here, gender and curriculum, are contested. The definition of gender is different across varying theoretical, research, and practice domains, including also very diverse interpretations of "gender," what it means, how we study it, and how it mediates our understanding of the world and our experiences of it. Bradley (2013) considers gender as a lived experience operating and influencing three areas of social life, which are "production," "reproduction," and "consumption." For other thinkers, like Judith Butler, a postmodern feminist, gender is fluid and therefore doing gender is underpinned by performativity, whereby sex and gender are inextricably linked and are played out by male and female identity in everyday lives. This symbolises a move away from gender as dichotomous.

Similar to gender, the curriculum is also a contested term, positioned differently depending on the theoretical and ideological leanings of the scholars working within the field. A classic definition of curriculum comes from Lawton (1975, p. 6) who argued that rather than it being "that which is taught in classrooms" curriculum is "essentially a selection from the culture of society …certain aspects of our way of life, certain kinds of knowledge, certain attitudes and values are regarded as so important that their transmission to the next generation is not left to chance." As such, the curriculum is influenced by social and cultural values, knowledge and skills that are deemed necessary for young people to know to prepare them for life and their future work. Therefore, I want to argue that like gender, the curriculum is not a fixed but a dynamic entity. It is influenced by the ideological perspectives of lawmakers and government leaders, the changes in economies and societies as well as the beliefs, traditions, and values of those who teach and of those who learn. Indeed, cultural and social contexts are both at the heart of Vygotsky's theorisation of learning, whereby the possibility of learning cannot be separated from its social context, giving rise to social constructivism (Shabani & Ewing, 2016). This results in the need for academics to ensure that their students are aware of the most recent debates and emerging paradigms which are related to tourism both directly and indirectly. One way to do that is by including the highly debated subject of gender in the tourism curriculum using the principles of heutagogy.

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Principles of heutagogy

In order to incorporate the subject of gender successfully into the tourism curriculum, first, we need to consider the teaching strategy that will help us to achieve that. Pedagogy, which is developed on theories of cognitivism, constructionism, and behaviourism, primarily focuses on teaching children, is subject-centred, delivers knowledge objectively, and therefore follows a very uniform step-by-step progression (Halupa, 2015).

Rethinking education within the context of adult learning and higher education implies a shift from self-directed, or student-directed learning which is at the core of andragogy to self-determined learning, key in heutagogy. As simply explained by Halupa (2015), pedagogy is faculty-centred education, andragogy is student-centred education, and heutagogy is self-determined and transformative. Yet, these three modes of learning are now being seen as applicable during a person's entire intellectual learning and development journey which is life-long, and the choice of any of the modes is based on a larger context and what is being learned (Paine, 2021). Hase (2015) acknowledges the difference between self-directed learning and self-determined learning, which are often mistaken for each other, by stating that self-directed learning is "a subset of self-determined learning (…) it is a quality and a process of self-determined learners." Therefore, heutagogy is often referred to as a teaching strategy or a methodology for adult learners built on dialogue, self-reflection, and exchange (Kenyon & Hase, 2001; Lalendle & Msila, 2020). First defined by Hase and Kenyon (2013) as self-determined learning, heutagogy has become a strategy that helps individuals to know how to learn as the key skill for the 21st century (Advance HE, 2020). Heutagogy builds on the self-directed principles of andragogy in which students develop their own learning skills. As such, it is underpinned by the philosophies of humanism and constructivism (Hase & Kenyon, 2013) whereby the learner is central to the educational process of learning (see Rogers, 1969), and the learner constructs their own reality using past and present experiences and thus becomes actively engaged in learning (see Dewey, 1938; Piaget, 1973; Vygotsky, 1978).

As it calls for self-determined learning, the process rather than the outcome of learning is emphasised (Kenyon & Hase, 2001). Therefore, when teaching a complex subject such as gender, the key principles of heutagogy can be applied. These are self-reflection and double-loop learning, based on the theory of action. They emphasise the importance of questioning personal values and assumptions during learning (Akyıldız, 2019).

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Heutagogy is prospective in approach, whereby knowing how to learn is recognised as a fundamental skill (Snowden & Halsall, 2014). It does this by providing a learner-centred environment by helping students define their learning path. The role of the educator is less prominent than that of a student, and learning becomes a negotiated experience rather than a formal exchange of ideas. Critical to heutagogy in the context of vocational education and training is being able to recognise that the learner is key to all areas of the learning process (Kenyon & Hase, 2001). McPherson (2016) contents that collaboration is a powerful tool in heutagogy because students learn much from one another as they do from the facilitator of learning. Snowden and Halsall (2014, p. 4) cite research that concluded the heutagogical approach as being key in helping students to control their learning through reflective practice, resulting in enhancing their professional development. Heutagogy changes traditional teaching as we know it by addressing the past inactivity of the learner who is now expected to work with the teachers/facilitators of learning as co-creators of knowledge.

The essence of heutagogy has all the elements that seek to free the learner who is a trusted player in the education process, as it emphasises the idea of knowledge as a shared experience (Lalendle & Msila, 2020). As Halsall et al. (2016) explain, heutagogical approaches to education emphasise the importance of holism, self, capability, community, and societal needs. Within that, Snowden and Halsall (2014) propose two key collaborative strategies which support heutagogy: solution-focused approach to teaching and learning, and mentor-assisted learning. The former is considered a real-world approach to pedagogy. It develops critical consciousness, collective identity, and solution-orientated strategies for change because it is based on the discovery of challenging beliefs, values, and solutions, introducing the learner to concepts such as social injustice, oppression, inequality, and domination. It is therefore based on creating transformative learning and teaching experience, activating learners to become committed, engaged citizens, and recognising that development requires change at individual, societal, and cultural levels (Snowden & Halsall, 2014). Mentor-assisted learning, established by providing guidance and support, is based on developing strong mentor and mentee relations which will culminate in a learning landscape for the student that recognises and helps to battle anxieties, promotes ways to navigate university systems and processes, and offers encouragement and motivation (Halsall et al., 2016). Therefore, heutagogy places less importance on the traditional teacher and more on students who are guided to take responsibility for designing their learning pathways. In doing

so, they are being equipped with the skills and capabilities to become autonomous and lifelong learners (Advance HE, 2020).

Educating the future workforce

As already established earlier in the chapter, education plays a crucial role in (re)producing the new workforce and many of our future leaders in tourism and hospitality are or have been students at further education or higher education institutions. For hooks (1994), the classroom should be the most radical space of possibility in the academy; exciting and never boring. It is there that status quo needs to be questioned. This bringing about change can be facilitated by taking on a liberal approach which aims to bring to attention to a broad range of issues relevant to tourism and hospitality curriculum, including the subject of gender (Tribe, 2002). It should be clear to us as educators that the new generation of women and men are indispensable to eradicating gender inequality in the industry (Gebbels et al., 2020).

Therefore, a shift to a gender-conscious curriculum design should be encouraged in order to create a commonplace where gender (in)equality can be talked about. It is our responsibility to encourage students to learn about and reflect upon gender issues and challenges present in the hospitality and tourism industry. There are two ways in which this can be achieved. Jeffrey (2017) proposed two methods of incorporating the subject of gender in tourism curriculum (Gebbels et al., 2020; Jeffrey, 2017). Jeffrey (2017) recommends that the subject of gender can be discussed throughout any module/course, including gender-related topics called "gender mainstreaming." There can also be a dedicated module/course which covers contents focusing on specific issues of gender (in)equality known as "gender specialising." The following self-reflective accounts will illustrate the challenges and suggestions about including gender in the tourism curriculum drawing on the author's personal experiences of teaching this subject.

Examples from the classroom: becoming a self-reflexive practitioner

Using principles of auto-ethnography, I will reflect on my practice as an educator (Ryan, 2012), drawing on my own experiences in the classroom by recounting my efforts of incorporating the subject of gender in learning and teaching activities delivered to postgraduate students in a post-1992 university in London.

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Methodology

As a useful feminist method, auto-ethnography allows for critical reflection by giving us a space to engage in internal conversation (Ryan, 2012). As a valuable research method, it is both a process and a product as the researcher draws on autobiography as well as ethnography to write the auto-ethnography (Edwards, 2021; Ellis et al., 2011). Questioning the possibility of ethical auto-ethnography, Edwards (2021) explains that this method can be undertaken with temporal congruence or as it was here, retrospectively. This means that I engaged in doing auto-ethnography much later after the teaching took place. I recalled and recounted the events, experiences, and feelings of delivering the session on gender issues from memory. But because auto-ethnography epiphanies happen as part of our everyday lives and are not located in the actual space of research, I never actually took any notes right after the teaching experience. I reflected on the teaching experience and the feedback that I received and used that as an opportunity to make future changes to the way that session could be delivered (Edwards, 2021; Ellis et al., 2011). Although aware of the emerging practice of collaborative auto-ethnography, I decided to reflect on the teaching experience as a teacher alone rather than also involving my students in the process (see Reyes et al., 2020). Therefore, engaging in retrospective auto-ethnography enabled me to focus on and selectively write about and analyse a particular teaching experience, which, like epiphanies for autobiographers, further allowed me to question, dissect, and understand the culture and practices of a higher education institution (Edwards, 2021; Ellis et al., 2011).

It was previously explained that principles of heutagogy are grounded in (social) constructivism. In particular, feminist social constructionism sees what we know and how we know it as socially constructed through interactions with others (Small et al., 2011). Also, the two key terms used throughout this chapter, gender and curriculum, are contested and there is a lack of universal definitions. Therefore, it was necessary for me to acknowledge that how students define gender and curriculum for themselves during and after my teaching would be largely driven by their own ontological and epistemological perspectives, influenced by their own experiences, upbringing, and worldviews. The same could be said for me. Thus, my role as the facilitator of learning, practising heutagogy, was to help them challenge their existing preconceptions and biases. For that, it was important to me to draw on our already well-established working relationship based on respect, trust, kindness, and mutual understanding. I try to achieve such a relationship from the beginning of all my classes, by facilitating an in-

depth discussion about the expectations I have of students on this module, as well as asking them to outline their expectations of teaching and learning they will be undertaking.

In the following case study, I will reflect on how my own (re)thinking of gender has changed by showcasing a gender-specialising learning activity, informed by the principles of heutagogy, and how the taken for granted aspects of student feedback can act as the basis for critical self-reflection and discussion.

Case study: Self-reflective account of teaching gender

I have been a full-time academic for six years and have taught on undergraduate and postgraduate modules. Part of my role over the last three years has been also as a postgraduate programme leader looking after tourism and hospitality management students.

I have found that there are many very effective ways to achieve a gender-conscious curriculum which I demonstrate in this case study. Guiding students through collaborative learning and helping them to become independent, self-determined learners has been key. Therefore, when teaching gender in tourism, practising the principles of heutagogy including also helping students to challenge their existing preconceptions and biases enables the development of shared vision on a topic whilst paying attention to individual voices and opinions.

Critical pedagogy, coined by Paulo Freire, advocates inclusive teaching by examining issues of power in the classroom (Saunders & Wong, 2020) and can be embraced in the classroom by beginning to question our values, beliefs, and assumptions, and by translating knowledge into practice through challenging the biases based on gender, as well as race, ethnicity, or class, and questioning the existing, oppressive power structures that inhibit student learning (Brookfield, 1995; Fullagar & Wilson, 2012). It is about helping students make sense of and respond to key issues and for us as educators to move out of our comfort zones (Brookfield, 1995).

It has always been my practice to begin certain lectures by laying out the definitions of the key terms. I tend to do that more so in the first one or two lectures; when I introduce a new module; in foundation modules delivered to first-year students especially when they are being taught a wide range of subjects; and in modules where the focus is on critical tourism and hospitality. I find that beginning with two or three definitions has many benefits, including a short discussion on which sources are appropriate to cite when giving definitions and why

deciding on the most relevant definition shows critical analysis. Another benefit is to question the gendered assumptions of definitions, which I think far too often can be taken for granted as gender neutral. For instance, when discussing the subject of entrepreneurship, it is necessary to spend some time challenging the gendered entrepreneurial discourse. To move further with a gender-conscious curriculum, presenting the definition of entrepreneurship without a critical perspective is not enough. One may choose to plan an activity where students deliberate whether entrepreneurship is a gender-neutral term, leading to a realisation that the dominant discourse of entrepreneurship is masculinist, and capitalistic, assuming gender neutrality, and positioning men as the proxy of normative practice (Marlow & Martinez Dy, 2018).

We, the educators, need to continue to question the gendered assumptions, statements, and definitions in all of our teaching and allow our students to reflect on their assumptions and preconceived ideas in the safety of the classroom environment. Therefore, "gender mainstreaming" can be a very effective method in continuing to eradicate gender inequalities.

I decided to try out "gender specialising" for the first time, consciously, in one of my postgraduate modules. Student feedback indicated that they wanted to discuss current themes in tourism and hospitality. Co-designing teaching and learning activities is one example of incorporating heutagogy into the curriculum. Also, I wanted to make the subject of gender the entire focus of the lecture and tutorial learning and teaching activities. The purpose of that chosen module is to develop students' knowledge of the characteristics and the role of critical tourism and hospitality studies within wider society emphasising the point that the two sectors are both a manifestation of society and culture and a means by which these are experienced. Since we have been strongly encouraged to practise research-informed teaching, this module fitted very well as the space where I could share my latest research on gender issues in tourism and hospitality, co-authored with two other colleagues, both male. This was also the first year of running this particular module, and I wanted to use this time to introduce new topics which I knew where not being covered on other modules on this programme. The cohort was made up of 22 students, largely female, with the large majority of international students (students who came from outside of the UK and the European Union).

I was quite confident about presenting to my students on this subject. By then, the students and I had gotten to know each other quite well and we managed to establish a good working relationship based on respect, kindness, and a sense of mutual understanding. Students also

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got to know me as their programme leader. My self-confidence was also based on the fact that I am the first author of the journal article, I am a female, with dual nationality, I presented this paper to other audiences before, including hospitality industry professionals in the UK. I basically felt I knew my stuff.

I decided to structure my two-hour session beginning with a discussion on the topic: "gender inequality in the tourism industry belongs to the past," for which students were asked to prepare in advance by researching gender issues in hospitality and tourism from their countries of origin using official government websites, research publications, and other relevant resources.

To embrace the principles of heutagogy based on learner's agency and equip students with tools to become self-determined learners, I wanted the students to lead this session from the start, and for my research to act as a much-needed conduit between students' findings and the recommendations that I was planning on sharing with them. I also added further learning and teaching resources on the virtual learning environment for students to engage with in their own time after the session.

From the beginning of the session, it became clear that only about half of the class came prepared for the discussion, so I split the cohort in such a way to ensure that both groups had equal chances to do well in the discussion, by having students who prepared in advance split between the two groups. Both groups did their best in the discussion by presenting a range of arguments, citing research in their native language, and demonstrating critical analyses. After 30 minutes, they reached a conclusion that more needed to be done to eradicate gender inequalities in their own home countries and beyond. This is when I was able to share my latest research, from the UK context. I began by sharing an overview of the key themes on gender in tourism and hospitality, including precarious working environment, being highly gendered, and male-dominated in its values and boardrooms. I outlined the research methodology and stressed that findings are derived from thematic analysis of the discussion which had taken place during a public seminar. I then moved on to the recommendations proposed in the paper on reducing gender inequalities presented under three headings: listening environment, education, and bringing men into the equation. I finally concluded my presentation by quoting prof. Nigel Morgan whom I once heard stating that "gender is everyone's problem," with a hope to encourage students to continue discussions on gender and questioning their own positionality, preconceptions, unconscious bias, and stereotypes.

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After the two-hour session came to an end, I felt the activities I had planned went well based on the overall good student engagement, and positive classroom atmosphere. Two students, both male, decided to stay behind to speak to me after everyone else left. They wanted to offer some feedback and I listened. Although they enjoyed the session, they felt that as the minority gender, they could not fully engage in the discussion. They felt uncomfortable and somewhat marginalised, and much of the discussion was focused on how highly male-dominated the industry is, and on female underrepresentation in senior leadership roles. They felt that men, and therefore them personally, were being blamed for all aspects of gender inequality, which we know it is not correct. Clearly, I placed too little emphasis on the importance of male allies during my lecture, not enough on structural barriers, and possibly came across as judgmental. My own positionality and prejudice took the better of me, and I failed to establish a safe and non-judgmental space for all students to feel comfortable in. Since this feedback took me by surprise, I had to think on my feet. I asked the two students what I could have done differently. They suggested that having one of the male authors of the research presenting with me would have made them feel less intimidated. They also suggested a different structure to a discussion to ensure that the more knowledgeable and confident students were not taking over the activities, and everyone would have a chance to contribute.

Recommendations and advice for future practice

The following section on recommendations and advice for future practice results from my further reflections on the previous case study. Also, the three pillars to teaching and learning gender, based on the principles of heutagogy, have enabled me to better structure these practical recommendations and enhance my own teaching practice of working towards a gender-conscious curriculum in tourism. By no means is the list an exhaustive one. My intention is to share what I have considered a helpful set of practical advice and suggestions largely derived from my own experiences and reading and research on the topic. In doing so, I hope to contribute to the discussions on how to contribute towards designing a gender-conscious curriculum bringing into attention gender issues as being mainstream in tourism education and beyond.

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1 Revisit your teaching philosophy

Heutagogy, as previously discussed, leads to a transformative learning and teaching experience. An effective teacher who takes on a new identity as the facilitator of learning will incorporate the two collaborative heutagogical strategies, solution-focused approach to teaching and learning, and mentor-assisted learning (Snowden & Halsall 2014). Before this can be achieved, however, my experience of teaching gender has helped me to realise how important it is to revisit our own teaching philosophy and, by doing so, continue to develop our critical self. For instance, turning to critical feminist theories or critical pedagogy literature can assist us in (re)examining our own values, goals, and beliefs about teaching and learning. This is also a good opportunity to consider our own (implicit) bias, how we exert or contain power in the classroom, and our ability to try out different teaching styles successfully. Practical strategies include but are not limited to starting with writing down our teaching philosophy and revisiting it on a regular basis, keeping a teaching journal, recording voice notes after teaching sessions using a reflective framework to aid the reflection, sharing teaching experiences and practices with other educators, and attending teaching and learning conferences.

Doing so may not only help to protect and promote interests of our female students and minority ethnic groups within our classrooms but also to highlight research-informed teaching heavily promoted and encouraged in higher education.

#2 Co-create a collective and inclusive learning space

Another practical suggestion to move towards a gender-conscious curriculum design and practice heutagogy is to co-create a space where students feel safe, included, and have a sense of belonging. When designing my learning and teaching activities for the session on gender issues in tourism and hospitality, I had not considered the importance of the learning space and those who will inhabit it with me. Only upon reflection I began to realise that this was missing. One method to create such a space is to remove the possibility of unintentionally creating parallels between our own students and examples of gender-related issues. Vignettes have been called a research method tool, a methodological paradigm, a reflective writing tool, and can be written or visual in form (Langer, 2016). Despite their many research purposes, "a common purpose for using vignettes is to elicit information through inviting responses, encouraging discussions, and probing for understandings to gain insights to participants' beliefs, emotions,

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judgments, attitudes and values about the particular phenomenon that lies at the heart of the research" (Skilling & Stylianides, 2020, p. 542).

Using vignettes allows students and teachers to self-reflect and question personal values and assumptions during learning, which are also key principles of heutagogy. By creating a fictional character or an employment organisation, students can begin to provide solutions, recommendations, and action points to resolve an issue at hand around the subject of gender, whilst drawing similarities and differences between their own experiences and those of the created individual. An example of a short vignette about Alex is as follows.

Example:

Alex": head receptionist, satisfied with her career prospects; has worked in luxury hotels for ten years; a single, young professional, passionate about dancing. Her family does not understand her professional life choices and her passion for hospitality; they think that as a woman she should be looking for a husband and have children. In her culture, women still tend to hold positions that are extensions of their traditional domestic roles; and women are not being represented where true power exists.

Her passion for dancing has led her to consider becoming a qualified dance teacher. However, she realises that her career in hotel operations has often come first before her hobbies because so far any informal requests to change her working hours were not met. Yet she decides to pursue her dream of becoming a dance teacher.

After she qualifies as a dance teacher, she wants to do more teaching, but she also does not want to give up her work which she loves. She decides to put in a formal request for flexible working, be it job sharing, working from home on some of the days of the week, or compressed hours. She has been made aware that her request may be declined again if it is not in line with the business needs.

#3 Learn and teach through conversation

Dialogue becomes a critical component when teaching using heutagogy and can facilitate social transformation of the student and teacher experience (Msila, 2021). However, effective dialogue can also be a challenging element to include in teaching for reasons to do with students' knowledge of the subject; feeling reserved about discussing the subject of gender

based on their cultural or other predispositions; and feeling challenged or uncomfortable to express themselves freely and confidently about such a subject in front of the class. As discussed in the case study, some students may feel that the discussion is dominated by one or two other students, and therefore it becomes our collective responsibility to mitigate such an issue.

The example of a vignette shared earlier can act as the starting point for conversation and larger discussions, which can be further supported by the techniques discussed below. There are many innovative, creative, and cost-effective techniques that can be used in teaching complex subjects such as gender that further facilitate an inclusive learning space (Gebbels et al., 2020). The key is creating dialogue as a collective approach where each student is given time to reflect, express their feelings using these creative methods, and finally arrive at a shared vision (McCusker, 2019).

- LEGO® Serious Play®, based on building models using LEGO® bricks, is a playful method to discuss contested issues, research ideas, and co-create solutions and recommendations for a challenging subject such as gender in tourism (Wengel, 2020). It facilitates collaborative group discussion environments where students, as stakeholders from diverse backgrounds, can share their opinions, and unlike other more traditional methods such as focus groups, LEGO® Serious Play® does not emphasise homogeneity (McCusker, 2020). To facilitate this method about gender in tourism, students can be presented with a topic "the impact of gender inequalities on tourism" and asked to build a model that represents their ideas. Leaving the topic rather vague is intentional to enable the students to interpret the key words: impact, gender inequalities, tourism, based on their own knowledge and conceptualisation (McCusker, 2020). Each student is then asked to explain their models in more detail, sharing about the significance of using different colours or figures. Students are then asked to work together to combine their models into a single model of a shared vision on the topic.

- Hands-on tools for creative group work include Mandala, originally known as a form of art, and refers to drawing a set of circles whilst becoming more self-aware (Potash et al., 2016), and Ketso which is a growing in popularity technique that promotes inclusivity and gender equality and helps to overcome barriers (Ketso.com, 2019).

Ketso method is particularly valid when discussing gender because it simultaneously facilitates individual voice and group analysis (McIntosh and Cockburn-Wootten, 2016). Dashper et al. (2022) used Ketso to stimulate open and honest discussion about gender inequalities in tourism academia and to encourage active involvement and break down barriers in teams. Each of the four Ketso workshops is based on a tree analogy, and the leaves represent ideas offered by each participant. This allows for a constructive dialogue, ability to contribute to a discussion, and freedom to voice opinions in a non-hierarchical and inclusive environment.

- Designed to be used alongside existing curriculum and teaching methods, drama-based techniques based on principles of drama-based pedagogy help to overcome racial or gender stereotypes (Dawson & Lee, 2016). Designed to be used alongside the existing curriculum, drama-based pedagogy includes tools such as activating dialogue, theatre games as a metaphor, image work, and role work (DBP, 2022).

Conclusion

Integral to all social institutions and interactions is the subject of gender, and gender equality is the foundation for all 17 UN SDGs. It should, therefore, be an integral part to learning and teaching, research, and critical reflection in all educational settings. Yet, the subject of gender has been neglected within tourism curriculum leaving students unprepared for dealing with the realities of future workplaces and ill-equipped to contributing to global debates on eradicating gender inequalities.
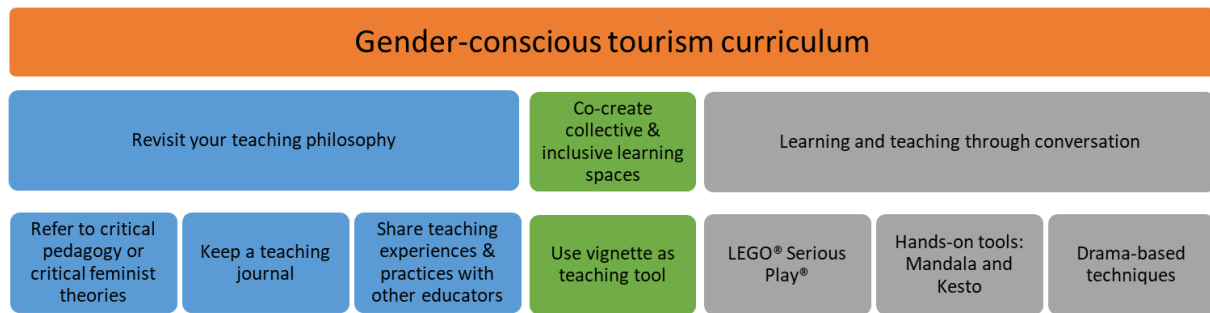
The aim of this chapter was to share reflections as well as challenges and opportunities of incorporating gender in tourism programmes in the UK. Having established that both, gender and curriculum, are contested terms, which meaning is influenced by the ontological and epistemological perspectives of those defining them, the key principles of heutagogy were discussed as foundations to teaching gender. Placing less importance on the teacher and more on students who are guided to take responsibility for designing their learning pathways, heutagogy is the teaching strategy fit for a 21st-century student and future manager, leader or business owner in tourism. It aims to equip students with skills and capabilities to become autonomous and lifelong learners (Advance HE, 2020).

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In order to share her own experiences of incorporating gender in the tourism curriculum, the author reflected on her teaching practice by discussing examples of gender specialising and gender mainstreaming, which led to practical recommendations for future practice, founded on the principles of heutagogy. Firstly, educators are encouraged to evaluate their teaching philosophies by turning to critical feminist theories or critical pedagogy literature, which can assist in (re)examining one's values, goals, and beliefs about teaching and learning. Secondly, co-creating a collective and inclusive learning space can act as an enabler for challenging discussions about gender, and bringing in vignettes allows students and teachers to self-reflect and question personal values and assumptions. Thirdly and finally, learning and teaching through conversation can facilitate social transformation of student and teacher experience. LEGO® Serious Play®, Mandala, Ketso, and drama-based techniques have been proposed as effective tools to create dialogue in a collective way by giving each participant time to reflect, express their feelings in creative ways and to arrive at a shared vision (Figure 2.1).

As highlighted in this chapter, learning from and acting on student feedback becomes invaluable for the educator to reflect on the teaching experience and their practice. One limitation of this study is related to relying on memory work due to a lack of written or voice notes. Therefore, in the future taking notes and scheduling in feedback from students about their experiences of heutagogical learning could aid in further improvements to one's teaching practice.

Collaborative auto-ethnography is becoming an emerging practice. Researchers are encouraged to engage in this form of auto-ethnography, which would allow for the unveiling of shared experiences of teaching gender that will further inform the teaching practice and offer additional insights on the subject itself.

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Figure 2.1. Key-takeaway recommendations.

Gender-conscious tourism curriculum						
Revisit your teaching philosophy			Co-create collective & inclusive learning spaces	Learning and teaching through conversation		
Refer to critical pedagogy or critical feminist theories	Keep a teaching journal	Share teaching experiences & practices with other educators	Use vignette as teaching tool	LEGO® Serious Play®	Hands-on tools: Mandala and Kesto	Drama-based techniques

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