Educational innovation in tourism and hospitality studies: Addressing accessibility and gender equality-related challenges

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DOCTORAL THESIS

Title	Educational innovation in tourism and hospitality studies: Addressing accessibility and gender equality-related challenges
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Abstract

Hospitality and tourism organizations are struggling to achieve sustainability targets. To contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tourism and hospitality higher education institutions are decisive. This Ph.D. dissertation, adopting a mixed-methods approach, proposed 'societal multiple-impact projects' that aim at excellence in research, outstanding education, and relevant public outreach, while committing to advancing a just society. Studies were organized in two phases. In the first phase, we analyzed the constraints that hinder accessibility (SDG 11) and gender equality (SDG 5) in tourism and hospitality contexts. Accessibility is targeted by SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities, and gender equality by SDG 5: Gender equality. In the second phase, we provided clues regarding the kind of educational innovation pedagogy that may contribute to educate students and potentially future leaders in tourism and hospitality to favor accessibility (SDG 11), and gender equality (SDG 5). A guiding principle underlying the design and implementation of both phases was to promote a multiple-stakeholder approach, in line with SDG 17: Partnership for the goals.

The first exploratory study examined intention to travel to accessible accommodation by families of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Surveys were collected (N = 117), and results were analyzed using logistic regression. The results obtained allowed us to learn about travel constraints related to accessible tourism, providing useful insights for future research as well as to accommodation providers.

The second study applied a qualitative approach to access the experiences of female leaders from management associations in Catalonia (Spain). Our findings showed that these associations empower women by creating awareness of gender barriers, enhancing social awareness of gender equality in decision-making bodies, expanding professional networks and access to resources.

The third study, a mixed-methods case study, proposed campus-based pedagogy that elicited students' agency through a combination of transformational pedagogical approaches: an action-based challenge related to accessibility in tourism, applying design thinking as a problem-solving method, and using learning logs as self-regulating reflective tools. Results showed a positive change in students' attitudes towards people with disabilities, and the development of critical reflexivity, specifically regarding tourism for all.

Finally, the fourth study was a pilot educational intervention on gender equality with multi-stakeholder involvement, following an open innovation approach. The study focused on students and facilitator perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience, while an assessment proposal for subsequent iterations was provided.

Keywords: accessible tourism, gender equality, inclusion, tourism pedagogy, educational innovation, societal impact, sustainable development goals, tourism studies.

Resumen

Las instituciones de educación superior en turismo y hotelería son determinantes para contribuir a la Agenda 2030 de las Naciones Unidas y los Objetivos de Desarrollo Sostenible (ODS), pero las empresas del sector turístico-hotelero tienen muchas dificultades para alcanzar los objetivos de sostenibilidad. Esta tesis doctoral, adoptando un enfoque de métodos mixto, propone proyectos sociales de múltiple impacto que promueven la excelencia en la investigación, educación de máxima calidad y divulgación pública relevante, sumando compromiso en la promoción de una sociedad justa. Los estudios se organizaron en dos fases. En la primera fase, analizamos las limitaciones que dificultan la accesibilidad (ODS 11) y la igualdad de género (ODS 5) en contextos turísticos y hoteleros. Accesibilidad se contempla en el ODS 11: Ciudades y comunidades sostenibles, e igualdad de género en el ODS 5: Igualdad de género. En la segunda fase, proporcionamos claves sobre el tipo de experiencia educativa innovadora que puede contribuir a educar a los / las estudiantes y a los / las futuros/as líderes del turismo y la hostelería, favoreciendo la accesibilidad (ODS 11) y la igualdad de género (ODS 5). Un principio rector que subyace al diseño y la implementación de ambas fases fue promover un enfoque de alianzas, en línea con el ODS 17: Alianzas para lograr los objetivos.

El primer estudio exploratorio examinó la intención a viajar a alojamientos accesibles en familias con menores diagnosticados con trastorno del espectro autista en base a encuestas (N = 117), analizando los resultados mediante regresión logística. Los resultados obtenidos nos permitieron conocer las limitaciones de viaje con relación al turismo accesible, proporcionando información útil para futuras investigaciones, así como para los proveedores de alojamiento.

El segundo estudio aplicó un enfoque cualitativo, analizando las experiencias de mujeres líderes de asociaciones directivas de mujeres en Cataluña (España). Nuestros resultados revelaron que estas asociaciones empoderan a las mujeres creando conciencia sobre las barreras de género, mejorando la conciencia social sobre la igualdad de género en los órganos de toma de decisiones, y ampliando las redes profesionales y el acceso a los recursos.

El tercer estudio, un estudio de caso de método mixto, propone una aproximación pedagógica que impulsa la agencialidad de los estudiantes, mediante una combinación de enfoques pedagógicos transformacionales: un reto profesional relacionado con accesibilidad en turismo, aplicando design-thinking como método de resolución de problemas, y el uso de diarios de aprendizaje como herramientas de reflexión autorreguladas. Los resultados presentaron un cambio positivo en las actitudes de los estudiantes hacia las personas con discapacidad y el desarrollo de una reflexividad crítica, específicamente con respecto al turismo para todos.

Finalmente, el cuarto estudio fue una intervención educativa piloto sobre igualdad de género con participación de múltiples agentes, siguiendo un enfoque de innovación abierta. El estudio se centró en las percepciones de los estudiantes y facilitadores sobre la experiencia de enseñanza y aprendizaje, ofreciendo una propuesta de evaluación para iteraciones futuras.

Palabras clave: turismo accesible, igualdad de género, inclusión, pedagogía del turismo, innovación educativa, impacto social, objetivos de desarrollo sostenible, estudios de turismo.

Resum

Les institucions d'educació superior en turisme i hostaleria són determinants per contribuir a l'Agenda 2030 de les Nacions Unides i als Objectius de Desenvolupament Sostenible (ODS), però les empreses del sector turístic-hoteler tenen moltes dificultats per aconseguir els objectius de sostenibilitat. Aquesta tesi doctoral, adoptant un enfocament de mètodes mixt, proposa projectes socials de múltiple impacte que cerquen l'excel·lència en recerca, educació de màxima qualitat i divulgació pública rellevant, amb el compromís de promoure una societat justa. Els estudis es van organitzar en dues fases. En la primera fase, analitzem les limitacions que dificulten l'accessibilitat (ODS 11) i la igualtat de gènere (ODS 5) en contextos turístics i hotelers. L'accessibilitat es contempla en l'ODS 11: Ciutats i comunitats sostenibles, i la igualtat de gènere en l'ODS 5: Igualtat de gènere. En la segona fase, proporcionem claus sobre el tipus de d'experiència educativa innovadora que podria contribuir a educar els / les estudiants i els / les futurs/es líders del turisme i l'hoteleria, afavorint l'accessibilitat (ODS 11) i la igualtat de gènere (ODS 5). Un principi rector subjacent a el disseny i la implementació de les dues fases va ser promoure un enfocament d'aliances, en línia amb l'ODS 17: Aliances per assolir els objectius.

El primer estudi exploratori examina la intenció de viatjar a allotjaments accessibles en famílies amb menors diagnosticats amb trastorn de l'espectre autista en base a enquestes (N = 117), analitzant els resultats mitjançant regressió logística. Els resultats obtinguts han permès conèixer les limitacions de viatge en relació al turisme accessible, proporcionant informació útil per a futures recerques, així com per als proveïdors d'allotjament.

El segon estudi aplica un enfocament qualitatiu, analitzant les experiències de dones líders d'associacions directives de dones a Catalunya (Espanya). Els nostres resultats han revelat que aquestes associacions empoderen a les dones creant consciència sobre les barreres de gènere, millorant la consciència social sobre la igualtat de gènere en els òrgans de presa de decisions, i ampliant les xarxes professionals i l'accés als recursos.

El tercer estudi, un estudi de cas de mètode mixt, proposa una aproximació pedagògica que impulsa l'agencialitat dels estudiants, mitjançant una combinació d'enfocaments pedagògics transformacionals: un repte professional relacionat amb accessibilitat en turisme aplicant design-thinking com a mètode de resolució de problemes, i l'ús de diaris d'aprenentatge com a eines de reflexió autoregulades. Els resultats han mostrat un canvi positiu en les actituds dels estudiants cap a les persones amb discapacitat i el desenvolupament d'una reflexivitat crítica, específicament respecte al turisme per a tots.

Finalment, el quart estudi és una intervenció educativa pilot sobre igualtat de gènere amb participació de múltiples agents, seguint un enfocament d'innovació oberta. L'estudi es va centrar en les percepcions dels estudiants i facilitadors sobre l'experiència d'ensenyament i aprenentatge, oferint una proposta d'avaluació per a iteracions futures.

Paraules clau: turisme accessible, igualtat de gènere, inclusió, pedagogia del turisme, innovació educativa, impacte social, objectius de desenvolupament sostenible, estudis de turismo.

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Chapter 1. Introduction

Abstract of the chapter

Hospitality and tourism organizations are struggling to achieve sustainability targets. To contribute to the United Nations 2030 Agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), tourism and hospitality higher education institutions are decisive. This introductory chapter provides an overview of the overarching frame of the Ph.D., the research objectives and guiding principle. It introduces the studies that were organized in two phases. In the first phase, we analyzed the constraints that hinder accessibility (SDG 11) and gender equality (SDG 5) in tourism and hospitality contexts. Accessibility is targeted by SDG 11: Sustainable cities and communities, and gender equality by SDG 5: Gender equality. In the second phase, we provided clues regarding the kind of educational innovation pedagogy that may contribute to educate students and potentially future leaders in tourism and hospitality to favor accessibility (SDG 11), and gender equality (SDG 5). A guiding principle underlying the design and implementation of both phases was to promote a multiple-stakeholder approach, in line with SDG 17: Partnership for the goals. Finally, it deals with ethical considerations and the document structure.

1 Introduction

In the following pages, we present the theoretical framework and concepts that have been the basis of this dissertation and the four studies that compose it: Study 1 entitled "Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder", Study 2 entitled "Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world", Study 3 entitled "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation" and Study 4 entitled "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models".

Our intention in the following lines is to provide a brief overview of the overarching frame of the Ph.D., the theoretical basis and the key concepts that are further discussed in the introduction of each chapter and emphasize the relationship among all of them. Moreover, ethical considerations are included at this introductory chapter that we end by introducing the structure of the thesis.

1.1   Research context: Sustainable Development Goals and higher education

In January 2016, over 150 world leaders adopted the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development launched by the United Nations, which includes 17 sustainable development goals (henceforth SDGs) (United Nations, 2020). The 17 SDGs were developed from, and replace, the United Nations Millennium Development Goals of 2000, covering a broader range of challenges than the former plan (Sustainable Development Solutions Network, 2017).

Development is a concept that has evolved throughout history. In the past, development was related to economic development, and only at the beginning of this century was the focus shifted to sustainability and human development (Zamora-Polo & Sánchez-Martín, 2019). Sustainable human development is defined as 'the expansion of the substantive freedoms of people today while making reasonable efforts to avoid seriously compromising those of future generations' (United Nations Development Program, 2011, p. 18). This definition is based on concepts that were initially individual fights: human development and cooperation, ecology, ethics or global citizenship (Zamora-Polo & Sánchez-Martín, 2019) to become, nowadays, of global societal concern.

Responding to this society and global intergovernmental concern, the UN 2030 Agenda launched a substantial, internationally applicable, long-term action plan for people, the planet, prosperity, and peace (UN, 2015). The SDGs are not legally binding, however they are a major influencer on the strategies of governments, businesses and organizations (SDSN, 2017). The SDGs specifically aim to end poverty, hunger, and inequality, act on climate change and the environment, improve access to health and education, ensure economic growth, foster peace, and human rights, and build strong institutions and partnerships. The 17 goals are integrated and indivisible and consider the different realities, capabilities, and levels of development of each country, respecting their national policies and priorities. Figure 1 illustrates the 2030 Agenda and its 17 SDGs in their abbreviated format (UN, 2020).

Figure 1. The global goals for sustainable development (UN, 2020)

These goals collectively seem ideal, grandiose and some might even argue as just 'too good to be true'. This criticism stems from the lack of clarity in dividing and measuring these goals, especially the ones focused on human rights (Pogge & Sengupta, 2016). Due to the voluntary nature of participation in this agreement, internal politics in different countries do not allow for a sustainable environment for power, equity and implementation of rights and allocation of resources which misses the point of this program. Issues such as climate change, health and racial discrimination are dynamic and situational which make it harder to quantify SDG progress.

The most important problem that is highlighted with implementing strategies to attain the SDGs is the need for addressing the inequalities and inequities in the distribution of resources, particularly with respect to injustices in health delivery and socio-environmental issues. Despite the United Nations using the 'leaving no-one behind' approach as the forefront commitment from national governments to achieve health equity and environmental justice, many groups remain underrepresented (Racioppi et al., 2020).

Tourism and the SDGs

Tourism has become one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. From 2015 to 2019, one in five of all jobs generated worldwide were tied to the travel and tourism industry (World Travel Tourism Council, 2019). Tourism is a sector with strong interlinkages with most of other economic sectors, so it highly impacts all dimensions of sustainable development. In many countries, tourism acts as an engine for job and wealth creation, economic growth, environmental protection, and poverty alleviation (United Nations World Tourism Organization & UNDP, 2017). However, sustainability is still an issue in tourism and hospitality and tourism organizations are struggling to achieve sustainability targets (Seraphin & Gowreesunkar, 2021; Slocum et al., 2019). To reinforce the role of tourism in the achievement of the 2030 Agenda, the United Nations General Assembly declared 2017 the International Year of Sustainable Tourism for Development. Though certain advances have been noted, the way ahead is considerable.

In 2020, the COVID-19 pandemic strongly impacted the tourism industry with 100% of tourism destinations implementing travel restrictions. Consequently, tourism arrivals decreased globally, and 100-120 million direct and indirect jobs are at risk (UNWTO, 2021). Nevertheless, experts foresee that tourism will recover at some point of time and as the SDGs intend to transform the world into a new direction, tourism can and must play a more significant role towards this transformation. Now, more than ever, tourism actors should act in a coordinated way devising sustainability strategies that aim at more responsible and ethical forms of tourism and, on the other hand, tourism sustainability scholarship should raise more attention to the SDGs (Boluk et al., 2021). Table 1 summarizes the tourism links with the SDGs (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017, pp. 16–17)

Tourism links with the SDGs
SDG 1 - End poverty in all its forms everywhere
Tourism provides income through job creation at local and community levels. It can be linked with national poverty reduction strategies and entrepreneurship. Low skills requirement and local recruitment can empower less favored groups, particularly youth and women.
SDG 2 – End hunger, achieve food security and nutrition, promote sustainable agriculture
Tourism can spur sustainable agricultural by promoting the production and supplies to hotels, and sales of local products to tourists. Agrotourism can generate additional income while enhancing the value of the tourism experience.
SDG 3 – Ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages
Tax income generated from tourism can be reinvested in health care and services, improving maternal health, reduce child mortality and preventing diseases. Visitor fees collected in protected areas can as well contribute to health services.
SDG 4 – Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning for all
Tourism has the potential to promote inclusiveness. A skillful workforce is crucial for tourism to prosper. The tourism sector provides opportunities for direct and indirect jobs for youth, women, and those with special needs, who should benefit through educational means.
SDG 5 – Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls
Tourism can empower women, particularly through the provision of direct jobs and income-generation in tourism and hospitality related enterprises. Tourism can be a tool for women to become fully engaged and lead in every aspect of society.
SDG 6 - Ensure availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all
Tourism investment requirement for providing utilities can play a critical role in achieving water access and security, as well as hygiene and sanitation for all. The efficient use of water in tourism, pollution control and technology efficiency can be key to safeguarding our most precious resource.
SDG 7 – Ensure access to affordable, reliable, sustainable and modern energy for all
As a sector, which is energy intensive, tourism can accelerate the shift towards increased renewable energy shares in the global energy mix. By promoting investments in clean energy sources, tourism can help to reduce greenhouse gases, mitigate climate change, and contribute to access of energy for all.
SDG 8 – Promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all
Tourism, as services trade, is one of the top four export earners globally, currently providing one in ten jobs worldwide. Decent work opportunities in tourism, particularly for youth and women, and policies that favor better diversification through tourism value chains can enhance tourism positive socio-economic impacts.

SDG 9 – Build resilient infrastructure, promote inclusive and sustainable industrialization and foster innovation

Tourism development relies on good public and private infrastructure. The sector can influence public policy for infrastructure upgrade and retrofit, making them more sustainable, innovative, and resource-efficient and moving towards low carbon growth, thus attracting tourists and other sources of foreign investment.

SDG 10 – Reduce inequality within and among countries

Tourism can be a powerful tool for reducing inequalities if it engages local populations and all key stakeholders in its development. Tourism can contribute to urban renewal and rural development by giving people the opportunity to prosper in their place of origin. Tourism is an effective means for economic integration and diversification.

SDG 11 – Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable

Tourism can advance urban infrastructure and accessibility, promote regeneration, and preserve cultural and natural heritage, assets on which tourism depends. Investment in green infrastructure should result in smarter and greener cities for, not only residents but also tourists.

SDG 12 – Ensure sustainable consumption and production patterns

The tourism sector needs to adopt sustainable consumption and production (SCP) modes, accelerating the shift towards sustainability. Tools to monitor sustainable development impacts for tourism including for energy, water, waste, biodiversity, and job creation will result in enhanced economic, social and environmental outcomes.

SDG 13 – Take urgent action to combat climate change and its impacts

Tourism contributes to and is affected by climate change. Tourism stakeholders should play a leading role in the global response to climate change. By reducing its carbon footprint, in the transport and accommodation sector, tourism can benefit from low carbon growth and help tackle one of the most pressing challenges of our time

SDG 14 – Conserve and sustainably use the oceans, seas and marine resources for sustainable development

Coastal and maritime tourism rely on healthy marine ecosystems. Tourism development must be a part of Integrated Coastal Zone Management to help conserve and preserve fragile marine ecosystems and serve as a vehicle to promote a blue economy, contributing to the sustainable use of marine resources.

SDG 15 – Protect, restore and promote sustainable use of terrestrial ecosystems and halt biodiversity loss

Rich biodiversity and natural heritage are often the main reasons why tourists visit a destination. Tourism can play a major role if sustainably managed in fragile zones, not only in conserving and preserving biodiversity, but also in generating revenue as an alternative livelihood to local communities.

SDG 16 – Promote peaceful and inclusive societies, provide access to justice for all and build inclusive institutions

As tourism revolves around billions of encounters between people of diverse cultural backgrounds, the sector can foster multicultural and inter-faith tolerance and understanding, laying the foundation for more peaceful societies. Tourism, which benefits and engages local communities, can also consolidate peace.

SDG 17 – Strengthen the means of implementation and revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development

Due to its cross-sectoral nature, tourism can strengthen private/public partnerships and engage multiple stakeholders – international, national, regional, and local – to work together to achieve the SDGs and other common goals. Public policy and innovative financing are at the core for achieving the 2030 Agenda.

Table 1. The tourism links with the SDGs (UNWTO, 2020)

Higher education's contribution to the SDGs

Long before the SDGs were officially launched, the roles of education and higher education and their contribution to sustainability were already being debated. Two landmark publications of the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (henceforth UNESCO): Learning to Be: The world of education today and tomorrow (1972), known as the 'Faure Report', and Learning: The treasure within (1996), known as the 'Delors Report' (UNESCO, 2015) presented a humanist vision of education. In this vision, educational institutions should help with the social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development.

With the launch of the SDGs, this debate became imperative. SDG 4 Quality education is described as "ensur[ing] inclusive and quality inclusive and quality education for all and promoting lifelong learning" (UN, 2020). Specifically, Target 4.7 is of particular importance to this dissertation: By 2030, ensure that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including, among others, through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture's contribution to sustainable development (UN, 2020). Given the size of the task of achieving the SDGs, and the critical role universities have in delivering on the SDGs, there is an urgent need for the sector to accelerate action.

To support education, several international organizations have emerged in the last years to accelerate the adoption of the SDGs in higher education, such as the SDSN, Future Earth, UNESCO, or Principles of Responsible Management in Education (henceforth PRME). PRME, launched in 2007, is a United Nations Global compact initiative that acts as a coordinating platform to help the business and management education community advance the SDGs through research and leadership (PRME, 2013).

On a European level, in 2011 the European Commission implemented the Responsible Research and Innovation approach, encouraging a match between science and societal concerns. The vision called 'Science with and for Society' establishes institutional changes in higher education institutes to bring them closer to citizens and civil society (European Commission, 2020). The guiding principle is that Europe must ensure that science responds to the needs, values, and aspirations of its citizens.

In 2014, this approach was integrated into Horizon 2020, the European Union's program with a budget of EUR 462 million, which overall aim was to build effective cooperation between science and society, linking scientific excellence with social awareness and responsibility. Cross-cutting issues promoted by this program were gender, responsible research and innovation, social sciences and humanities (European Commission, 2020).

The 'Science with and for Society' approach is more current than ever. To face the challenges ahead the European Commission, in the recently launched Horizon Europe program that runs from 2021-2027, calls for even greater support for citizen science and user-led innovation. In this new call of the European Union's funding program for research and innovation, with a budget of EUR 95.5 billion, the SDGs are the guiding framework, with a very strong focus on tackling climate change, promoting diversity and inclusion, involving citizens and civil society organizations in co-designing and co-creating responsible research innovation agendas, promoting gender equality and strengthening the gender dimension (European Commission, 2021).

Tourism and hospitality education was not excluded from this debate, and has a leading disciplinary-related association, the Tourism Education Futures Institute (TEFI), launched in 2007, that contributes to creating awareness and sharing information related to the future direction of tourism and hospitality education. This network focuses on fostering exchange between academia on the importance of graduates acting in a responsible and ethical way and promoting sustainable tourism policies. TEFI advocated for a values-based approach to tourism education summarized in five overlapping dimensions: stewardship, knowledge, professionalism, ethics and mutual respect (Dredge, Schott et al., 2015). This approach is aligned with the SGDs and with larger agendas around sustainability, and social justice, such as PRME or Horizon Europe.

The scale of the change needed to mainstream the SDGs is enormous and urgent. Advancements are required in the 17 areas targeted by the corresponding goals, which are mostly inter-related. Higher education can strongly contribute through research, learning and teaching, and with their interaction with stakeholders and civil society (SDSN, 2020; UNESCO, 2015).

Education alone will not solve the challenges we are facing as society, but we are confident that a humanistic and holistic approach to education, in line with SDG 4, will be of help (UNESCO, 2015). This doctoral dissertation aims to humbly contribute to this objective.

The school of tourism and hospitality management Sant Ignasi (URL) and the SDGs

The SDGs stem from a humanistic approach which is the guiding principle of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull) (henceforth HTSI), Barcelona, Spain, the institution where the Ph.D. candidate collaborates as a lecturer and researcher and where the studies were conducted. HTSI's mission is to contribute to the scientific, social, and humane training of professionally competent people who are aware of their responsibility, who cooperate in the humanizing development of tourism as a global phenomenon and as a concrete activity of people and societies (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi, 2021).

HTSI, founded by the Society of Jesus in 1977, has officially been a higher education institution since 1998. Inspired by Christian humanism, its educational approach follows the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm. This paradigm of Jesuit legacy, was adapted to the educational realm by Kolvenbach (cited in Camacho SJ, 2016) and aims to develop four dimensions of students: utilitas, iustitia, humanitas and fides. Utilitas is the practical dimension associated with the professional competence, knowledge, and skills that a student should develop to work in their chosen professional field. Humanitas expands the humanistic side. Apart from technical, pragmatic skills, following this paradigm, students should cultivate social, psychological, emotional, and religious dimensions. Iustitia refers to social awareness. Students should reflect of their impact in society from a personal and professional perspective. That is, becoming good citizens and contributing to the community by not only thinking and acting for their own personal benefit but for the benefit of others. Fides is the religious dimension. It is connected to transcending mankind and the search for truth as a guiding principle in life.

The aforenamed four traits are those which universities of the Society of Jesus, and values-aligned ones, aim for: training not just good professionals, but conscious, competent, compassionate, and committed citizens, known as 'the four Cs' (UNIJES, 2001). Arrupe, the Superior General of the Society of Jesus between 1965 and 1983, mentioned that the objective of Jesuit education is the formation of "men for others" (Arrupe, 1980). Kolvenbach, the Superior

General of the Society of Jesus between 1983 and 2008, complemented his words twenty years later: "the goal of Jesuit education is the formation of men and women for others and with others, people of competence, conscience and compassionate commitment" (cited in Camacho SJ, 2016, p. 23).

This view of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm is in strong alignment with the humanistic societal concern that led to the launch of the SDGs. Therefore, for HTSI a commitment to the SDGs is not only advisable, but also a core responsibility responding to the mission and vision of the institution. HTSI has formally joined the Sustainable Development Goal commission of Ramon Llull University, created in July 2019, which aim is to boost and coordinate the different SDGs'-related projects from the different schools that integrate this federated University. Commitment to contribute to the SDG inspired by, and in application of the Ignatian Pedagogical Paradigm (IPP) is at the backbone of the thesis.

SDGs object of the dissertation

The SDGs are rooted in the neoliberal policy system, thus scholars claim that critical thinking is required to ensure their implementation is achieved without neglecting vulnerable groups and local communities (Boluk et al., 2017; Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a; Seraphin & Gowreesunkar, 2021; Slocum et al., 2019; Zamora-Polo & Sánchez-Martín, 2019). COVID-19 is affecting the most vulnerable individuals including tourism and hospitality workers[1], with even greater challenges in the post-COVID phase[2] which are expected to exacerbate existing inequalities and injustice (Jamal & Higham, 2021). This concern for vulnerable groups in the implementation of the SDGs is at the heart of HTSI's mission and vision in the formation of 'men and women for others'. These two concerns consequently, informed our decision to focus education on two specific SDGs addressed at vulnerable groups: Goal 11 (Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable), and Goal 5 (Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls).

The four studies presented in this thesis were developed within the Research group on Hospitality, Tourism, and mobility of (HTSI) where the Ph.D. candidate is collaborating, specifically, as part of the tourism for all research line. This research line was launched in 2015, under the umbrella of the project "Wings for autism" (Alas para el Autismo). At its launch, it focused on accessibility, more specifically on the developmental condition Autism Spectrum Disorder in tourism and hospitality contexts. In a second phase, other under-researched non-physical disabilities such as vision and intellectual impairments were studied. In a third phase, in 2017, the research group began exploring a new line of research, gender equity. Moreover, the thesis is in line with the goals established by the Chair of Responsible Tourism and Innovation supported by the same school, whose objective is to promote research and transfer of knowledge in responsible tourism and hospitality.

SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable

Sustainable Development Goal 11 of the 2030 Agenda is the first SDG addressed in this thesis. Goal 11, abbreviated by the UN to "Sustainable cities and communities", ensures cities and

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[1] Tourism today is considered a high-risk activity because its labor dynamics are marked by seasonality, informality, and uncertainty.
[2] The ravages caused by the health crisis places tourism at a historical crossroads to position itself again as one of the most important economic activities in the world, with the uncertainty of 'post 'being sustainable in time and in all areas of the world, as the tourism sector would need it to be.

human settlements are inclusive and sustainable for all. Since March 2020, this SDG has gained prominence as cities are on the front line of coping with the pandemic and its lasting impacts.

To ensure means of implementation, each SDG goal contains associated targets making a total of 169. In the specific case of SDG 11, ten targets were established. Since this dissertation stems from an inclusive tourism perspective, the focus was placed on Target 11.7 aiming at: "By 2030, provid[ing] universal access to safe, inclusive, and accessible, green, and public spaces, in particular for women and children, older persons, and persons with disabilities" (UN, 2020). Accessible tourism supports people with mobility, vision, hearing, cognitive and developmental disabilities (Darcy et al., 2010). In the last few years, worldwide public and private organizations are fostering inclusive tourism from the demand and supply side (European Commission, 2016; Hausemer et al., 2012; UNWTO et al., 2015). Despite the growth interest both from practitioners and researchers in accessible tourism, research has particularly focused on physical disabilities or a mixture of disabilities with scarce research investigating specifically developmental disorders. This dissertation responds to the call for further research to understand the distinct needs faced by different segments of the accessibility market (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011; McKercher & Darcy, 2018).

SDG 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Sustainable Development Goal 5 of the 2030 Agenda is the second SDG the studies undertaken as part of this dissertation aim to contribute to. Goal 5 Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, abbreviated by the UN to "Gender equality", is a fundamental human right and, at the same time, a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world (UN, 2020).

Nine targets compose SDG 5. From a tourism female leadership perspective, focus was placed on Target 5.5, aiming at "Ensur[ing] women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life" (UN, 2020). On one side, tourism can empower women, particularly through the provision of direct jobs and income-generation in tourism and hospitality related enterprises. Thus, tourism can be a field for women's development, to become fully engaged and lead in every aspect of society (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017). On the other side, women are key to achieve sustainable development and to implement the SDGs in tourism (Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a).

Existing literature suggests that there is an urgent need to translate the long-standing awareness of gender inequality in the hospitality industry into practical solutions and change within organizations (Chambers et al., 2017; Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Munar et al., 2015, 2017). In the Spanish tourism sector, little attention has been paid to the field of gender studies, despite its impact on the Spanish economy and the importance of women in tourism as entrepreneurs and employees (Segovia-Pérez & Figueroa-Domecq, 2014). To make matters worse, COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the industry, in Spain and worldwide, destroying jobs, and exacerbating gender inequality and the lack of female empowerment (Moreno Alarcón, 2020). Scholars such as Boluk, Cavaliere et al. (2019a) identified SDG 5 as one of the most unexplored topics in the tourism literature and the tourism industry. The public and private sector, academics, and practitioners must be seriously committed to achieving SDG 5 as a basis for contributing to the rest of the SDGs (Moreno Alarcón & Cole, 2019). Informed by these reasons, we have chosen to focus on SDG 5 in this thesis.

SDG 17: Partnership for the goals

All SDGs are interlinked, and they will clearly not be achieved without strengthening and stream-lining cooperation on a macro and micro level. Therefore, Goal 17: Revitalize the global partnership for sustainable development, abbreviated by the UN to "Partnership for the goals", stresses the fact that the SDGs can only be realized with strong partnerships and cooperation, at the global, regional, national, and local levels, placing people and the planet at the center.

Strong partnerships are indeed one transversal SDG relevant for the success of the 2030 Agenda applicable to all sectors, being the tourism sector no exemption. In our view, the whole tourism value chain should be contemplated and involved to achieve this change. Therefore, the guiding principle of this Ph.D. has been to apply a multiple-stakeholder partnership approach in the studies. Nineteen targets compose SDG 17. From a multiple-impact project perspective, focus was placed on Target 17.17, aiming at "Encourag[ing] and promot[ing] effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (United Nations, 2020). The tourism industry has the potential to promote, drive and enforce the SDGs (Saarinen, 2019). However, if not well handled, tourism may also produce pressures and a negative impact on local communities and assets. Therefore, as UNWTO (2017, p. 10) warns "the harnessing of tourism's positive contribution to sustainable development and the mitigation of the sector's adverse effects calls for strong partnerships and decisive action by all tourism stakeholders".

Sustainability is still an issue in the tourism and hospitality industry, which is far off from reaching the targets of the UN 2030 Agenda. Increasing the speed is needed if we are to comply with the SDGs, without significantly neglecting vulnerable groups. Essential sources of inequality in the tourism and hospitality industry are active and particularly affect two vulnerable groups: people with disabilities and women. We claim that tourism and hospitality higher education institutions are decisive stakeholders for contributing to the UN 2030 Agenda that should lead the way, not as stand-alone entities but in close collaboration with other tourism stakeholders. In our view, advancements in the direction of the SDGs will be difficult to reach if tourism and hospitality institutions do not devote research, education, and public outreach resources in line with societal needs, involving civil society. Research recognizing the demands of vulnerable groups is needed consistent with education to equip students with knowledge, skills, and tools to address the challenges, to elicit agency, and to advance towards transformation in tourism.

1.2   Research aims and objectives

Informed by the gaps identified, two distinctive research phases were designed with the objective to advance on attaining SDGs targets.

In the first phase, our aim was to analyze the constraints that hinder inclusion for all (SDG 11) and gender equality (SDG 5) in tourism and hospitality contexts. Particularly, focusing on families with children with developmental disabilities travelling to accessible accommodation, and fostering women leadership.

In the second phase, the aim was to provide clues regarding the kind of educational innovation pedagogy that may contribute to educate students and potentially futureleaders in tourism and hospitality to favor accessibility (SDG 11), and gender equality (SDG 5).

A guiding principle underlying the design and implementation of both phases was to promote a multiple-stakeholder approach, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships, to multiply the societal impact of the projects undertaken (SDG 17).

The four overarching objectives of this dissertation are:

Objectives related to phase 1:

1. To map the travel constraints and coping strategies related with accessibility in hospitality by characterizing families travelling with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and their intention to travel to accessible accommodations (objective linked to SDG 11).
2. To examine the barriers, challenges and opportunities related with gender equality in tourism by analyzing women's associations in Catalonia, Spain, and their contribution to female empowerment and to eradicating barriers to gender equality (objective linked to SDG 5).

Objectives related to phase 2:

3. To design, implement and evaluate an educational intervention to train undergraduate students who are capable and willing to foster accessible accommodation (objective linked to SDG 11).
4. To co-design and implement an educational intervention on gender equality, with multi-actor involvement (objective linked to SDG 5).

For the attainment of these four overarching objectives, a mixed-methods approach was adopted. Academic year 2015-2016 was devoted to the design and submission of the research plan, while the four studies were conducted from academic year 2016-2017 to academic year 2020-2021. Phase 1 and phase 2 were designed so that findings of the first study, focused on accessibility in hospitality, would provide us with the insights needed to design, implement, and assess the educational experience outlined in the third study. Correspondingly, findings of the second study, focused on gender equality, provided us with the insights needed to design and implement a pilot educational intervention and assessment proposals for subsequent iterations as described in the fourth study. Figure 2 shows the research design in a graphical format.

Figure 2. Research design of the studies composing the Ph.D.

The first phase was composed of two empiric, descriptive-interpretative studies. Two educational interventions, one empirical and a second one as a pilot edition, were included in the second phase. For Study 1 "Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder", an exploratory approach within a positivist paradigm was adopted, collecting surveys, and choosing an analytical tool with explanatory power such

as logistic regression (Silva Ayçaguer & Barroso Utra, 2004) for its analysis. For Study 2 "Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world", a qualitative approach was chosen (Braun & Clarke, 2006), reporting the experiences of participants through interviews. Study 3 "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation" combined quantitative and qualitative methods (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

The quantitative data collected included a validated measurement scale, an Attitude to Disability Scale (ADS) (Power et al., 2010) and three indexes extracted from the satisfaction survey administered to the students once the educational intervention implemented as part of this study concluded. The instruments for data collection included two open-ended question surveys, six reflective learning logs, an in-depth semi-structured interview, and a journey plot designed to collect students' perceptions along their educational experience (Castelló et al., 2018). Study 4 "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models" presented a pilot educational intervention, explored three indexes extracted from the course's satisfaction survey as well as from the students and facilitators' reflections on the challenges and teaching and learning experience, and proposed assessment tools for subsequent iterations of the intervention. Moreover, both educational-related studies were proposed from an action-research approach, where the researcher was also part of the team designing, delivering, and analyzing the educational experiences implemented at HTSI.

The specific objectives of the different studies were:

1. In Study 1, entitled "Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder" our objectives were:

SO1. To analyze the influence of travel constraints (intrinsic, interactive, and environmental) and the severity of disorder at the intention to travel to accessible accommodations by families of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

SO2. To explore the families' strategies for coping with such constraints.

2. In Study 2, entitled "Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world" our objectives were:

SO3. To identify the goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia, Spain.

SO4. To discuss the barriers to women pursuing corporate-level positions that these associations encountered.

SO5. To explore the future challenges women in hospitality face to ensure women's full participation and equal opportunities for leadership.

3. In Study 3, entitled "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation" our objectives were:

SO6. To analyze the changes in students' attitudes before and after participating in the module.

SO7. To identify the challenges students faced and the strategies they applied to solve them.

SO8. To analyze students' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience.

4. In Study 4, entitled "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models" the overarching objective was to co-design and implement a pilot educational intervention within an existing module focused on gender equality proposing thereafter assessment tools for future iterations (objective linked to SDG 5). Our specific objectives were:

SO9. To explore the processes involved in co-designing and implementing an educational intervention applying a multi-stakeholder and open innovation approach.

SO10. To analyze students' and collaborating facilitators' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience.

S011. To propose assessment tools for subsequent iterations.

Table 2 shows the objectives of the studies and the guiding principle in a simplified format.

Doctoral dissertation. Educational innovation in tourism and hospitality studies: addressing accessibility and gender equality-related challenges			
PHASE 1			
Aim		Analyze the constraints that hinder inclusion for all (SDG11) and gender equality (SDG5) in tourism and hospitality contexts	
SDGS		SDG 11 Inclusion for all	SDG 5 Gender equality
Studies and focus		**Study 1. Accessibility in hospitality**	**Study 2. Women associations in tourism**
Objectives attained	General objectives	To characterize families with children on autism spectrum disorder	To analyze women associations in Catalonia, Spain
	Specific objectives	To analyze the influence of travel constraints and the severity of disorder at the intention to travel	To identify goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia, Spain
		To explore the families' strategies for coping with such constraints.	To discuss barriers for corporate-level positions
			To explore challenges to women in leadership
Methods		Quantitative	Qualitative
PHASE 2			
Aim		Provide clues regarding the kind of educational innovation pedagogy that may contribute to educate students to favor accessibility (SDG11) and gender equality (SDG5)	
SDGS		SDG 11 Inclusion for all	SDG 5 Gender equality
Studies and focus		**Study 3. Educational intervention accessibility**	**Study 4. Educational intervention on gender equality**
Objectives attained	General objectives	To train students to foster accessible accommodation	To train students to promote gender equality practices
	Specific objectives	To analyze changes in students' attitudes before and after participating in the module	To explore the processes involved in co-designing and implementing an educational intervention applying a multi-stakeholder and open innovation approach
		To identify challenges students faced and the strategies they applied to solve them	To analyze students' and facilitators' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience
		To analyze their perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience	To propose assessment tools for subsequent iterations
Methods		Mixed methods	Pilot, limited data collection conducted
Guiding principle		Multiple-stakeholder approach, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships, for multiplying the societal impacts (SDG 17)	

Table 2. Objectives of the studies composing the Ph.D.

The studies undertaken as part of this dissertation respond to the SDGs Agenda and are aligned with initiatives focused on rethinking higher education to become a transformative force that promotes human rights towards a global common good. Moreover, it endorses research that responds to social demands with transparency, crystalizing the purpose of HTSI, as a Jesuit-inspired school.

1.3 Ethical considerations

This section presents the ethical aspects considered in the dissertation. Ethical clearance was ensured by the ethics committee of the Universitat Ramon Llull (reference number 2504/16).

The ethical research standards applied involved respecting the principles of justice, autonomy, confidentiality, non-maleficence and beneficence, and confidentiality (Lieberman & Nissen, 2005). Given the focus of each of the studies, close collaboration was established with autism-related associations, women's associations, tourism-related companies, and public institutions.

Focusing on the justice principle, surveys, interviews, and invitations to participate in the studies were arranged irrespectively of aspects related to gender, race, economic, civil status, or religious beliefs.

In terms of autonomy, the samples were informed thoroughly of the purpose of the research through information letters and given the possibility to abandon the projects or request that we do not make use of their data at any time of the research. Permission forms were created to ensure written confirmation from the participants. Information letters and permission forms for families and female associations' leaders were designed in Spanish. For students, they were distributed in English since it was the method of instruction. For the educational interventions we also distributed video and photography consent and release forms to students, lecturers, and company staff, for promotional videos were recorded to showcase testimonials.

As for confidentiality, the data were accessed only by the research team and were kept following the confidentiality policies established by the organic law 15/1999 of 13th of December on the Protection of Personal Data, and the derived supplementary regulations. All information was treated as confidential; the data were anonymized, and they were used for the sole purpose of research. The samples also had the right to express which information they accepted to be made public and which information they wanted to have treated as confidential.

Studies were published in peer-reviewed journals, helped design educational interventions, were presented at conferences and public outreach activities, and were shared with the families, students, associations' leaders, tourism companies and public administrations involved. Thus, the principle of beneficence was ensured.

For study 1 (presented in Chapter 2), an explanatory letter to the associations requesting their collaboration was forwarded (please see Appendix I), and an information letter and permission form for the individuals responding to the survey (please see Appendix II). For study 2 (presented in Chapter 3), a permission form for the interviews was collected (please see Appendix III). For study 3 (presented in Chapter 4), a letter for the collaborating hotel was designed (please see Appendix IV), and an information letter and permission form for the students (please see Appendix V). Moreover, consent forms for image rights can be found in Appendix VI.

1.4 Structure of the thesis

After this introductory chapter, we present the four research studies undertaken as part of this Ph.D. dissertation. They have been structured following the rationale of the two distinctive phases, analyzing accessibility and gender equality-related challenges first to, in a second phase, deliver educational interventions aimed to equip higher education students with the knowledge, skills and tools necessary to address those challenges.

Chapter Two presents the first empirical study of a quantitative nature, that investigates accessibility-related challenges targeted by SDG 11 Inclusion for all.

In Chapter Three, the second empirical study is introduced enhancing knowledge of SDG 5 Gender equality.

A mixed-method case study proposing campus-based pedagogy aimed at fostering accessible accommodation, by eliciting students' agency is introduced in Chapter Four.

Chapter 5 presents a pilot educational intervention proposal for educating on SDG 5 Gender equality, integrated into a previously existing module. Then, in Chapter Six we present the conclusions of the Ph.D. dissertation, the main disciplinary, educational innovation, and societal impacts contributions of the thesis, the limitations of the studies and the prospective lines for future research.

This dissertation may be considered to follow a hybrid format, halfway between a thesis by publication and a traditional monograph. The study 1 (presented in Chapter Two) "Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder", was shared at the Tourman Conference 2018, in October 2018 in Rodhes, Greece and published by the peer-review journal, International Journal of Tourism Research (Scopus 4.4 - Clarivate Analytics IF 2.585 Q2 - SJR 1.03 Q1 H Index 51), Volume 21, Issue 5, 606-614. DOI:10.1002/jtr.2284 in April 2019. Please see Appendix VII to find a complete copy of the journal article.

Chapter Three presents study 2 "Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world" published in the Special issue: Deepening our understandings of the contribution of tourism to the UN sustainable development goals (SDGs) from Tourism Management Perspectives (Data from 2020: Scopus 5.5 - Clarivate Analytics IF 6.586 Q1 - SJR 1.19 Q1 H Index 33), Volume 38, 100820. DOI: 10.1016/j.tmp.2021.100820 published in April 2021. Please see Appendix VIII to find a complete copy of the journal article.

Furthermore, study 3 (presented in Chapter Four) "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation" was shared at the conference Tourism Education futures Institute (TEFI) 11 What's tourism got to do with it? June 2020 hosted by York St John University, UK and it was submitted to the Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport & Tourism Education (Data 2020: Scopus 3.1 - Clarivate Analytics IF 1.762 Q4 - SJR 0.47 Q2 Index 24).

For the sake of clarity and coherence and to provide the dissertation with a unified format the articles have been slightly modified. The references in APA format of the four studies and the overarching chapters (Introduction and Conclusions) are presented together at the end of the document.

Chapter 2. Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder

Abstract of the chapter

This chapter presents an empirical study of a quantitative nature, that investigates an accessibility-related challenge targeted by SDG 11 Inclusion for all. The study focused on examining intention to travel to accessible accommodations by families of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder, the influence of travel constraints (intrinsic, interactive, and environmental), the severity of disorder, and the families' strategies for coping with such constraints. A structured survey targeted at Spanish families (N = 117) indicated that the intrinsic dimension and the severity of disorder positively influence their intention to travel This study contributes to extending knowledge about travel constraints related to accessible tourism and provides insights for accommodation providers on how to better enhance the customer experience of families travelling with a child diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

2 Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder

2.1 Introduction

Accessible tourism encloses people with mobility, vision, hearing, cognitive and developmental disabilities (Darcy, 2010). It is a significant emerging market that yet, remains an issue for the tourism industry. By 2020 Europe is expected to have 120 million people with disabilities, with an internal demand for European Union's accessible tourism up to 862 million trips per year and an inbound market of 21 million trips per year (European Commission, 2013). Worldwide public and private organizations are fostering inclusive tourism from the demand and supply side (European Commission, 2016; Hausemer et al., 2012; World Tourism Organization & ACS, 2015). Yet, accessibility remains a significant challenge for the travel and tourism sector.

This study responds to the call for further research on understanding the distinct needs faced by different segments of the accessibility market (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011; McKercher & Darcy, 2018). Despite the growing interest both from practitioners and researchers in accessible tourism, research has particularly focused on physical disabilities or a mixture of disabilities with scarce research investigating specifically developmental disorders. The purpose of this study is to examine intention to travel to accessible accommodations by families of children with diagnosed Autism Spectrum Disorder (henceforth ASD), in particular, the influence of travel constraints (intrinsic, interactive, and environmental), the degree of disability, and the families' strategies for coping with such constraints.

There is considerable research on travel-related issues for people with physical disabilities (Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2012; McKercher et al., 2003), but little is known about the travel experiences of families where one member has a developmental disorder (March & Woodside, 2005b; Sedgley et al., 2017). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2011; 2014) urged its Member States to identify and address disparities in access to services for persons with ASD. About 1 percent of the world population is diagnosed with ASD being the fastest-growing developmental disorder (Centers for Disease Control and prevention, 2016) (henceforth CDC). Its prevalence is 1 child out of 59 and has increased by 6-15 percent each year from 2002 to 2010, based on biennial numbers from the CDC, which indicates an increased trend over the past thirty years (CDC, 2016). At the present time, persons on ASD represent an under-acknowledged segment of travelers with unique travel needs and this type of families are one of the segments under-researched by academia (Hamed, 2013; Schänzel et al., 2012; Stuhl & Porter, 2015).

This is a nascent area of tourism research and this target group represents a segment of the traveling population that is likely to grow significantly in the years to come. Improved understanding of the needs of families with children on ASD when staying at hotels or similar accommodation and their intention to travel to accessible accommodation could lead to improvement in access to services, safety, and customer satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to provide a starting point to better understand this neglected traveler population and their constraints when travelling to accommodation facilities. On one hand, it will hopefully encourage more and more specialized publications. On the other hand, there is a lack of international standards regarding developmental disorders to guide tourism and hospitality professionals, so this study will contribute to this respect.

This study is structured in four sections. First, it explains the context of accessible tourism, and earlier research on ASD and tourism behavior. Second, it describes the hypothesis and methods used. Third, it presents the findings and discussion. Finally, this article reflects on the contribution of this study to literature and management practices and suggest further research.

2.2   Literature review

People on ASD are characterized "by some degree of impaired social behavior, communication, and language, accompanied by a narrow range of interests and activities that are both unique to the individual and carried out repetitively" (WHO, 2011). The autism condition is a "life-long neurodevelopment condition interfering with the person's ability to communicate and relate to others" (Elsabbagh et al., 2012, p. 160). Hamed (2013) defines autism as a complex developmental condition that results from a neurological disorder which affects the normal functioning of the brain. It impacts communicative, social, and behavioral development, often accompanied by difficulties in cognitive functioning, learning, attention and sensory processing. The symptoms typically appear during the first three years of life. People affected by this disorder usually have poor eye contact, language delay and exhibit stereotyped or repetitive behavior. In some case they ignore others, as they are unable to successfully communicate and interact with them, and often seem to be self-absorbed in their own private world (Autism Speaks, 2010; Early Intervention Consulting, 2011; Kopetz & Endowed, 2012; National Institute of Deafness and Other Communication Disorders NIDCD, 2012). These characteristics were understood as a range of diagnoses under the umbrella term of 'Pervasive Developmental Disorders'. Nowadays the American Psychiatric Association (2013) categorizes all such mental health issues, in the broader diagnosis of ASD (including Asperger´s Disorder). Rett disorder is the only one remaining independent.

Being autism a spectrum disorder, the symptoms and characteristics of autism can reveal themselves in a wide variety of combinations and ranges from mild to severe. At one end of the spectrum of autism, individuals tend to have many challenging behaviors. Mainly they confront social, communication and behavioral challenges (Hamed, 2013). At the other end, individuals have full cognitive abilities and can communicate well with spoken language. Thus, symptoms will present in each individual differently. Two individuals both with a diagnosis of autism can act very differently from one another. It is said that "if you know one person with autism; you know one person with autism." So, although there is neither one definitive definition, nor two individuals with autism are alike, it is agreed that the diagnosis does have an impact on the life of the individual diagnosed and their families. While each individual with autism presents heterogeneity of symptoms and capabilities within the spectrum, researchers distinguish three main groups, given their severity of symptoms and characteristics: high functioning (0-33%), middle functioning (34-65%) or low functioning (+65%) (Dawson, 1996; Hamed, 2013).

The academics and tourism providers' understanding of disabilities and its integration with the community influence the tourism sector. Existing disability models take different approaches that parallel an inclusion process (Darcy et al., 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012; Kim & Lehto, 2013; Zajadacz, 2015) from social exclusion (medical approach), integration (social approach) and inclusion (bio-psychological and geographical). The medical model understands disability as a personal tragedy that needs to be alleviated, and therefore, the individual is responsible for his/her adaptation to the environment (Zajadacz, 2015). The medical model leads to the creation of separated offer (e.g., health tourism). Instead, at the social model disability is seen as a

potential pool of demand which service providers can explore developing targeted products that adapt the environment to the needs of the market segment (Zajadacz, 2015). The social model results in products creating the conditions for making the travel as accessible as possible. Alternatively, the bio-psychological and geographical models appear as a synthesis of the previous, where disability is seen as individual characteristics that require both medical assistance and including people with disabilities in society as a social responsibility. These last models focus on social inclusion through a universal design approach that facilitates the resources to preserve a quality standard of living.

This study positions the research within inclusive models, closely related to the principle Design for all, aligned with the tourism for all concept (Michopoulou et al., 2015; Portales, 2015). The universal design encompasses the needs of all society members, seeing people with disabilities as one of many different profiles in society. Tourism for all fosters travel and leisure without barriers for every disability community. The positioning within an inclusive model permeates the specific language use and nomenclatures of this paper since "language provides a unique capability to resist, strengthen and reframe identities of individuals and groups, yet can also reinforce, weaken and perpetuate dominant worldviews of disability" (Gillovic & McIntosh, 2015, p. 1). In this respect we have opted to use "children diagnosed with ASD", "children on ASD", "condition or disorder" when referring to ASD, and "person with disabilities" aligned with a social model approach.

As mentioned at the introduction, accessible tourism research has primarily focused on physical disabilities or a mixture of disabilities. From the demand side, research has focused on attitudinal barriers (Bi et al., 2007) and experiences in travel (Daniels et al., 2005) and hospitality services (Lugosi et al., 2016). From the supply side, research has studied the provision of i) accessible tourist attraction and sites (Israeli, 2002), ii) accessible accommodation information (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011; Darcy et al., 2010) and iii) hotel experiences (Darcy & Pegg, 2011; O'Neill & Knight, 2000). Yet, research on families with children with developmental difficulties has received less attention in tourism research, which has focused on analyzing the leisure constraints (Emira & Thompson, 2011) and travel (Perry & Kozub, 2011) and vacation experiences (Amet, 2013), and the effectiveness of travel agents (Hamed, 2013; McKercher et al., 2003). Thus, research on tourism and developmental disorders is anecdotal (Hamed, 2013), as it is research on accessibility in hotels and family tourism (Schänzel et al., 2012).

Families play a major role when travelling together with a child with developmental disorders, though the hospitality consumption experiences of parents and carers with children remains under-examined (Lugosi et al., 2016; Sedgley et al., 2017). While research usually focuses on the person with disability, families' opinions also should be taken into account (Emira & Thompson, 2011). For instance, travelling can be overwhelming for a child with ASD and its family, as it "involves changes in routine, anxiety and dealing with sensory issues" (Hamed, 2013, p. 1). The lack of recreational time added to the pressure of constant dealing with a person with dependence is considered an extra source of stress (Kim & Lehto, 2013), which travel may contribute to reduce. Research evidences the positive impact leisure has on both the child's life (Kim & Lehto, 2013; Lee et al., 2012) and family members (Lugosi et al., 2016). Tourism and leisure related experiences provide benefits such as improvement in happiness levels, health conditions, self-esteem, freedom from stress, levels of satisfaction, and social inclusion (Darcy & Dickson, 2009; Hamed, 2013; Stuhl & Porter, 2015).

Despite benefits derived from travel, earlier research, not including developmental disorders, identified that the disability level impacts on the travel experience (Bi et al., 2007; Burnett &

Bender-Baker, 2001; McKercher & Darcy, 2018). Dwyer & Darcy, (2010) demonstrated that while travelling those having a disability can have different levels of independence and support needs ranging from none; mild; moderate; severe and profound (24 hours' assistance).

Travel intention is "an outcome of a mental process that leads to an action and transforms motivation into behaviour" (Jang et al., 2009, p. 57). As noted by several authors, it is important to qualify that it does not always translate into actual travel behaviour (Decrop, 2006; Kah et al., 2016; March & Woodside, 2005a). Intention to travel has been used to predict travel behaviour (Jang et al., 2009; Kah et al., 2016) since it emphasizes commitment to travel. Therefore, it is important to measure intention to travel to accurately examine what travellers are likely to do (Jang et al., 2009). Intention to travel is "in part, formed by overcoming various constraints which may be present at various stages of the decision-making process" (Lee et al., 2012, p. 570). In their view, people with disabilities give up travel opportunities despite sufficient mobility and accessibility, due to varied constraints.

Several researchers have identified travel-related and multidimensional constraints confronted by people with disabilities (e.g., Bi et al., 2007; Daniels et al., 2005; Israeli, 2002; Lee et al., 2012; McKercher et al., 2003; Poria et al., 2011; Shaw & Coles, 2004; Turco et al., 1998). The main constraints are typically classified into intrinsic (intrapersonal), interactional (interpersonal) or environmental (structural) (Crawford et al., 1991). Intrinsic constraints relate to an individual's psychological condition and include personality factors, attitudes, religious beliefs, and moods (Crawford et al., 1991). Interactional constraints arise from social interaction with others, including skills challenges and communication barriers (Allan, 2015; Smith, 1987). Environmental constraints, which have been extensively identified, come mainly from the lack of adequate destination facilities (McKercher et al., 2003; Poria et al., 2011). The lack of qualified staff and their attitude (Emira & Thompson, 2011), availability of accessibility related information (Darcy, 2010; Lee et al., 2012; McKercher et al., 2003; Shaw & Coles, 2004) and own environment perception (Amet, 2013) may aggravate the barriers. The above constraints are prominent in accessible tourism accommodation, which is a pre-requisite for the destination choice. Also coping strategies of caregivers are starting to be researched, first results include looking in advance for accommodation that could provide for the child´s needs (Sedgley et al., 2017). Thus, intrinsic, interactional, and environmental constraints are expected to influence the travel intention to accessible accommodations.

Still, there is a need for understanding the uniqueness of the challenges faced by each disability community (McKercher & Darcy, 2018) as both the nature of disability and the degree of impairment, support needs and level of independence significantly influence the perceived constraints (Emira & Thompson, 2011), the intention to travel (Lee et al., 2012) and the final accommodation choices (Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2010). Most research on constraints on accommodation focuses on physical disability (Darcy, 2010; Poria et al., 2011) while accommodation managers and owners often do not recognize disability as a market (Darcy, 2010; O'Neill & Knight, 2000), and only inform on whether the establishments have a 'disabled room' (Tantawy et al., 2008). To sum up, this article specifically focuses on the intention to travel of families with an ASD child to accessible accommodation, this type of families being one of the segments under-researched by academia (Hamed, 2013; Stuhl & Porter, 2015). This research is part of a larger project that explores the families with an ASD child as a market segment, examines their intention to travel, understand their emotional experience, provides insights for further academic research and recommendations to engage more autism-friendly accommodation providers. The research project was approved by the

ethics committee of the Universitat Ramon Llull (reference number 2504/16). Four hypotheses were researched, that act as the framework of the study:

Hypothesis 1: The travel constraints of intrinsic nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD.

Hypothesis 2: The travel constraints of interactive nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD.

Hypothesis 3: The travel constraints of environmental nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD.

Hypothesis 4: The higher the degree of disability of the child on ASD, the higher the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of their families.

2.3   Methods

An exploratory approach within a positivist paradigm was adopted, testing the above hypothesis. Since the study aimed to measure the intention to travel against the established dimension of the target population, a self-administered on-line survey was chosen. A convenience sampling technique was selected, being the target population 150 families with children on the autism spectrum living in Catalonia (Spain). The survey was administered to all parents with a child on ASD that were members of Autism Association Aprenem, the Institute of Diagnosis and Psychiatric and Psychological Support IDAPP and the School of Special Education Paidea, which are leading institutions in Catalonia that cater to children on the ASD. As previous literature on these issues highlights, these types of collaborations between academics and specific organizations enable both to benefit from academic research skills and credibility and ensure the priorities of families with children on ASD are considered in the research (Sedgley et al., 2017).

The data collection was carried out in December 2016 (150) and 117 usable online surveys were collected, filled by parents. Online surveys allowed families to respond openly and taking the time necessary to answer. In this way, when the interviewer is not present, the interviewees are prevented from giving socially accepted answers. Families had the support of the researchers throughout the data collection process to solve doubts and clarify questions. The survey consisted of two themes; accommodation-related constraints and socio-demographic profile, organized in 7 variables informed by previous studies. Socio-demographic questions collected included gender, numbers of members in the family party, marital status, education, and monthly household income of the respondent. Furthermore, demographic data related to the child was requested such as, age, gender, and severity of disability. Travel-related characteristics of the sample were also collected: overnight travel experience, number of trips and average length of stay. The survey used 5 Point-Likert scales, as previous literature that studied attitudes and constraints in the hospitality sector (Kim & Lehto, 2013; Allan, 2015). The survey was designed in English and later translated into Spanish by two researchers who had bilingual backgrounds and who were familiar with the questions being asked, as well as the nature of the research. The survey was validated by an ASD expert from IDAPP, and pilot tested with three families with children with ASD, which were not included in the final sample. Accordingly, minor revisions were made.

Being an explanatory study, an analytical tool with explanatory power such as logistic regression was chosen (Silva Ayçaguer & Barroso Utra, 2004). (Pallant, 2004, p. 178) suggests, "logistic regression allows you to assess how well your set of predictors variables explains your categorical dependent variable". In this study, the dependent variable was 'intention to travel to accessible accommodation'. For this study, intention to travel is formed by overcoming intrinsic, interactive, and environmental constraints, as the willingness of the family to travel to accessible accommodation. The dependent categorical variable was measured as follows: 'willingness to travel to accessible accommodation: yes/no'.

Open-ended questions, based on the ecological approach and social model of disability of (Poria et al., 2011), were included in the survey and analyzed. Questions were i) related to critical incidents or difficulties encountered by the families at the accommodation facility ii) families' coping strategies, and iii) suggestions to accommodation providers.

To analyze the results, missing values analysis (MVA) was conducted before proceeding with a multivariate analysis that was performed using a logistic regression model. A logistic regression model was developed using SPSS software to understand intention to travel according to the factors of influence: intrinsic, interactional, and environmental constraints. The entry method was applied: explanatory variables were entered into the formula at the same time. The intrinsic dimension was measured toward 5 items adapted from Lee et. al (2012): fear of not getting along with other people; travel imposes requirements beyond our capabilities; fear of causing others discomfort or inconvenience; being in a situation where we need others help to do something and fear of needing medical assistance. The interactional dimension was measured toward 4 items adapted from Lee et al. (2012): fear to receive others' burdensome glances; fear to being ignored by others; fear of being object of others' interest and 1 item related to the specificity of the study: fear of social exclusion of the child. The environmental dimension was measured toward 8 items: express check-in and check-out; accessible rooms to people on the ASD; silent rooms; express access to restaurant services; adapted menus to allergies and special dietary requirements; trained staff; personalized service adapted to the needs of the collective; leisure activities adapted to children on the ASD, adapted from Darcy, (2010), Figueiredo et al. (2012) and Lee et al. (2012). For all three dimensions, each item was measured with a five-point scale. A factorial analysis was conducted to group items in a single quantitative variable.

2.4   Findings and discussion

Descriptive statistics were used to obtain the demographic variables of the respondents and profiles of the children (Table 3). A higher female percentage (76.27%) answered the questionnaire. Most of the sample had family parties of 4 members (52.54%), were married (80.51%), attained university level (45.76%) and had a monthly household income between 1.000-2.999 Euros (72.63%). As for the children on ASD, 77.96% were male and 45,76% aged 6 to 10 years old. The severity of disability varied, 60.17% reported between 34 to 65%. As for travel-related characteristics of the sample, the majority (93.22%) had overnight travel experiences over the last three years, and 57.63% had undertaken 1 to 5 family trips in the same period; moreover, 44.97% had an average length of stay from 4 to 7 nights.

Variables	Categories	%
Gender	Male	23.72%
	Female	76.27%
Number of family members	2	4.24%
	3	38.13%
	4	52.54%
	5	6.78%
Marital status	Single	7.63%
	Married	80.51%
	Divorced/separated	11.86%
	Widowed	0
Education	High School	16.95%
	Vocational Studies	27.96%
	University	45.76%
	Postgraduate	9.32%
Monthly household income	Less than 1,000 Euros	5.26%
	1,000-2,999 Euros	72.63%
	More than 3,000 Euros	22.10%
Gender (child)	Male	77.96%
	Female	22.03%
Age (child)	0-5 years	16,95%
	6-10 years	45.76%
	11-15 years	27.97%
	16-18 years	9.32%
Severity of disability	Less than 33%	12.71%
	34% to 65%	60.17%
	More than 65%	27.12%

Table 3. General characteristics of the sample (N = 117)

The confirmatory factorial analysis (CFA) was used in order to check the validity of the scale. For this study, an exploratory (with SPSS) and confirmatory (EQS) analysis were conducted. When exploratory factor analysis is conducted in SPSS, measures of sampling adequacy are requested by checking the boxes for KMO (Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin) and Bartlett's test of sphericity. KMO's values greater than 0.8 lead to a good factor analysis. Added to this, Bartlett's test should be less than 0.05 (Pallant, 2004). Then, the most common extraction technique to identify the number of underlying dimensions was applied, called Principal Component Analysis (PCA). Finally, Cronbach's Alpha measures the reliability of the measurement scale. Usually, indexes are considered to be satisfactory when they are higher than 0.6 Malhorta (1993) in Halkos & Matsiori (2012) or 0.7 Nunnally (1978) in Halkos & Matsiori (2012).

The goodness-of-fit of the model was ascertained using a Hosmer & Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test, producing a Chi-square (x2) value of 12,234 (significance equal to 0,141, see Table 4). The non-significance of this value at the 0.05 level meant that the fit was appropriate as the observed and predicted classification lacked significant discrepancy. The Ómnibus test of the model's overall Chi-square value produced a significance of X2 0,015, meaning overall fitness was significant as well. The results demonstrated the efficacy of the model to differentiate those who intended to travel more if accommodation is accessible and those who do not with an assurance of statistical significance. In addition, the model correctly classified 36,8% of those who were willing to travel and a 90% of those who are not. The model had a general explanatory power of 71,3% (see Table 4).

Variables	β	*Wald*
Constant	-2.557	8.733***
Intrinsic constraints	.489	4.688**
Interactional constraints	-4.11	3.467*
Environmental constraints	-0.72	.104
Disability Degree	.862	5.309**
Ómnibus test	X^2 0.015	
Nagelkerke's *R* square	.149	
Cox and Snell	.108	
-2Log likelihood	127.746	
Hosmer and Lemeshow	$X^2 =$ 12.234	
	df8	
	Sig, .141	
Overall percentage correctly classified	**71.3**	

*p < 0.1; **p < 0.5; ***p <.01

Table 4. Logistic regression model

Earlier research focused on generic disabilities, whereas this study is aligned with research against a one-size-fits all solution (Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2010; Darcy et al., 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012; Michopoulou et al., 2015). Thus, it included constraints specific to the ASD condition (see hypothesis 1, 2 and 3). Regarding Hypothesis 1, reliability analysis of 'intrinsic constraints' factor was displayed. It revealed a Cronbach alpha of 0,805. The value showed an acceptable internal consistency. The factor analysis revealed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion for sampling adequacy was equal to 0,803 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was equal to 187,703 (with a P-value of 0.000 and 10 degrees of freedom). This shows the procedure was appropriate in this case. The factor intrinsic constraints explained the 56,83 % of the total variation in the data.

The results proved to be significant in the case of Hypothesis 1: the travel constraints of intrinsic nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on the ASD. The positive coefficient for intrinsic constraints indicated that customers with more intrinsic constraints are more likely to travel if accommodation is accessible (B: ,489), consistent with priory found direct relationship between travel constraints and intention to travel (Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Daniels et al., 2005; Israeli, 2002; McKercher et al., 2003; Shaw & Coles, 2004; Turco et al., 1998). As for the open-ended questions, a high number of mentions of critical incidents were related to other guests complaining about the child's behavior, as 'fear of causing others discomfort or inconvenience'. This goes in line with reported lack of support in dealing with the behavior of the child diagnosed with ASD and a great public lack of understanding and empathy for children with autism, especially regarding the nature of their condition (Amet, 2013). As for suggestions to accommodation providers there was an overwhelming high response to request training of the accommodation's staff, as increasing 'sensitivity'. In this line, autism-friendly staff proposals were one of the key findings at Amet (2013) study also consistent with Baker et al. (2002) and Poria et al. (2011) demonstrating that the staff attitude affects the experience.

Concerning Hypothesis 2, reliability analysis of the scale to measure 'interactive constraints' revealed that Cronbach was 0,902. The value showed an acceptable internal consistency. The factor analysis revealed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion for sampling adequacy was equal to 0,831 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was equal to 301,753 (with a P-value of 0.000 and 6 degrees of freedom). This showed the procedure was appropriate in this case. The factor interactive constraints explained the 77,35 % of the total variation in the data. As for Hypothesis 2: the travel constraints of interactive nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on the ASD, it was not confirmed. Families with more interactive constraints were less likely to travel to accessible accommodation. The dimensions analyzed were burdensome glances; fear to being ignored by others; fear of being object of others' interest and fear of social exclusion of the child. These constraints are related to the interaction of staff and other guests towards the family and the child. As Lee et al. (2012) pointed out it may not always be the case that there is a direct relation between travel constraints and intention to travel. Several authors addressed overt or subtle discrimination, social exclusion, and ignorance (McKercher et al., 2003; Shaw & Coles, 2004) as a source of stress to travelers with disabilities. However, in this specific case families reject the hypothesis, arguably because the interaction of staff or other guests will not be different or beneficial at accessible accommodation. In-depth interviews would be necessary to further explore these findings which are different from those initially expected.

As for Hypothesis 3, reliability analysis of the scale to measure 'environmental constraints' revealed that Cronbach was 0,952. The value showed an acceptable internal consistency. The

factor analysis revealed the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) criterion for sampling adequacy was equal to 0,931 and the Bartlett's test of sphericity was equal to 845,393 (with a P-value of 0.000 and 28 degrees of freedom). This showed the procedure was appropriate in this case. The factor environmental constraints explained the 75,21 % of the total variation in the data. In view of the results, Hypothesis 3: the travel constraints of environmental nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on the ASD, was not significant. Although the results are not significant as for the logistic regression model applied, the open-ended answers referred extensively to dimensions included in this constraint. The critical incidents mostly stated were related to dietary needs (limited offer, not adapted menus) in line with the dimension 'adapted menus to allergies and special dietary requirements', followed by problems at waiting times at check-in (dimension 'express check-in and check-out') and at the restaurants (dimension 'express access to restaurant services'). A high number of mentions had to do with the non-adapted leisure offer (dimension 'leisure activities adapted to children on the ASD'). Few comments referred to the restaurant personnel service (dimension 'express access to restaurant services'), level of noise in the room (dimension 'silent rooms'). Some families mentioned incidents with rooms that could not be locked.

When asked about coping strategies the families found no solution was provided by the accommodation company to their special request, thus some families formally complained or in a specific case, decided to leave the hotel. In few cases they were offered apologies. As for issues related to 'express access to restaurant services', families reported that they visited the restaurant very early or very late to avoid queues. In line with the dimension 'personalized service adapted to the need of the collective' families mentioned to have asked to be seated at a silent table. To reheat food was also mentioned as a dietary need. As for suggestions to accommodation providers, a high number of respondents mentioned specific training aimed at staff dedicated to the kid's leisure activities. At a great extent, requests related to adapted rooms were mentioned (ie. away from elevators, locks, etc.) and to facilitating waiting times (express check-in and check-out, restaurant). Reducing queuing time is in line with Amet's (2013) findings. Mentions linked to the restaurant offerings (adapted menus, quiet areas, visuals) should also be noted. Most of the information provided is related to the dimensions of environmental nature, arguably because those are tangible, visible, dependent on others (the hotel's management) and observable at first glance, and do not require such a self-knowledge or personal connection, as in the case of the intrinsic or interactive constraints.

For improving the tourist experience of families travelling with a child on ASD it is better to regard the disorder as one of the features that characterizes a certain customers' segment rather than as an impairment. Universal service supply guarantees a greater independence for these families considering that their specific needs, such as special menus, express check-in or access, silent rooms, have been already taken into account. Michopoulou et al. (2015) rightly point out that for providing inclusive models of accessible tourism, stakeholder collaboration is crucial. Accommodating for individual disability requires a higher level of service provision (McKercher & Darcy, 2018). The adaptations needed are simple so a social inclusive model where the needs are not treated as special but, instead, are considered in the universal design of the space and the service are plausible (Zajadacz, 2015); given that customizing the service provision is something the hospitality providers are used to do (McKercher & Darcy, 2018). In this line, accessible tourism becomes more than support to a specific community, it may translate into specific new codes of practice to develop hospitality offers in an inclusive way, in line with the views of Michopoulou et al. (2015). From this perspective, accessible tourism is a

business opportunity as much as it becomes a chance to promote social inclusion (Figueiredo et al., 2012).

Concerning Hypothesis 4: the higher the degree of disability of the child on the ASD, the higher the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of their families, it proved to be significant. The severity of the disorder increases the intention to travel to accessible accommodation (B: ,862). Consequently, the higher the disability degree of the child, the higher the probability of customers to travel if accommodation were accessible. Despite of the fact that at first, a high degree of disability might be associated to less intention of travel due to the lack of facilities and services, the findings in this study show that families are longing for accessible accommodation. There is here a clear market opportunity for accommodation providers in terms of making their offer more accessible. As mentioned before, the adaptations are simple and is mostly linked to adapting the service, to training the staff and implementing specific codes of practice. These findings follow the results from Darcy (2010) on the support needs of people with a higher degree of disability and it is consistent with Bi et al. (2007) findings that participants with low functioning encountered more accessibility and attitudinal barriers in the accommodation business (applied to physical disability). Findings are aligned with Burnett & Bender-Baker (2001) where environment-related, accessibility and activities decision criteria were valued more as disability severity increased.

As Lee et al. (2012) and McKercher & Darcy (2018) pointed out, there is not a linear relationship, participation by people with disabilities in tourism activities is a complex issue and the constraints are at different levels and operate in an interconnected manner. This might explain the findings. Applying the four-tiered-framework proposed by McKercher & Darcy (2018), it is clear that Tier 2: issues faced by all people with people with disabilities were very present, specifically ignorance and attitude. Furthermore, Tier 3: issues unique to specific disabilities (intellectually or physically disabled children) were in line with their findings such as suitable leisure kid's activities, behavioral problems and standing in line difficulties. As for Tier 4: moderating factors of impairment effects, in this case the severity of the child´s disability showed that it increases the family's intention to travel to accessible accommodation.

2.5   Conclusions

Results indicate that the intrinsic constraints and the severity of the condition influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation and confirm that families with a child diagnosed with ASD are a heterogeneous market with families who are more willing to travel if accommodations are accessible and families who are not. As mentioned throughout the study, ASD is a disorder that has its own specific characteristics such as communicative and social difficulties and learning and information-processing limitations. Families with children on the ASD do not just aspire to stay in a hotel, but fully live their tourism experience with minimum constraints. For this to be possible, researchers and accommodation providers need to fully understand the ASD, go in-depth in the experiences of the families while travelling and are required to propose appropriate strategies and tools to help improve the tourism experiences of this group.

This study contributes to the literature on accessible tourism by responding to the need to gain greater understanding about the uniqueness of this specific disability market segment (families travelling with children on ASD), consistent with research against one-size-fits-all solution

(Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2010; Darcy et al., 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012; Michopoulou et al., 2015). Specifically, this research extends earlier knowledge on travel constraints that did not include developmental disabilities (e.g. Darcy, 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012; Lee et al., 2012), while it also advances knowledge on the constraints' influence on intentions to travel to accessible accommodation.

The research findings have several practical implications. The results may help accommodation providers in their attempt to provide improvements in access to services, safety, and customer satisfaction. For the accommodation providers, better training on the ASD condition and their unique needs is highly recommended (McKercher & Darcy, 2018) as well as greater exposure to members of the community. In particular, ASD is still unknown by a significant part of the Spanish society, and it continues to be stigmatized. Being as it is a 'hidden disability', in the sense that it is not easily identified at a first sight, the challenges are greater. Besides that, behavioral issues associated to ASD may also impact attitudes of professionals in the field. These attitudes will be harder to change if the condition is not understood properly. There is immense potential for partnerships between health professionals, associations, and companies to address leisure opportunities for families with a child on ASD (Sedgley et al., 2017). Similarly, the study could also be of interest to other industry stakeholders that are participant to the tourism experience of families with a child on the ASD, as for providing inclusive models of accessible tourism stakeholder collaboration is crucial (Michopoulou et al., 2015). The uptake of recent legislative requirements on making tourism accessible for all transcend the earlier physical and sensory disabilities to include developmental disorders (Connell & Page, 2019), offers a positive outlook.

Regarding the limitations of this study, this exploratory study has depended on convenience sampling and the sample does not represent the whole population of families travelling with a child on the ASD, hence, results cannot be generalized. Furthermore, this study treats families as a homogenous group. Mainly, participating families had children with a moderate or severe condition, thus high-functioning children and their families are not represented, and their situation might be very different than the one portrayed at the study. As a result, the cases with their specificities are not examined, highlighting the crucial need for further in-depth research of this issue. ´Since tourism experiences are journeys of mixed emotions´ for families with children diagnosed with ASD (Sedgley et al., 2017, p. 22), it would be advisable to explore in more detail the dimensions of this study by means of mobile ethnography and in-depth interviews. In addition, all families participating was from Catalonia (Spain) thus, more cross-cultural research would be advisable (Poria et al., 2011).

Additionally, intention to travel was measured with a single item: willingness to travel to accesible accommodation (yes/no). It will be recommendable to measure intention to travel applying a more nuanced construct, at future fieldworks. Further research may expand upon the development of enabling practices (Michopoulou et al., 2015; Sedgley et al., 2017) to monitor the families' travelling patterns and understand their emotional engagement. It is also recommendable to explore replicating this study to other forms of mental, cognitive, or developmental disabilities as well as addressing other sub-sectors of the tourism industry (i.e., airlines, airports, recreation parks, museums, etc.).

Chapter 3. Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world

Abstract of the chapter

Women are strongly represented in the tourism workforce, albeit mainly in low-level, precarious positions. In management or on board of directors, on the other hand, women are seriously underrepresented. Interviews with female leaders from management associations in Catalonia (Spain) allowed us to identify the associations' goals and roles, the barriers women have encountered in their pursuit of high-level corporate positions, and the challenges to female leadership that lie ahead. Female associations create awareness of gender barriers, enhance social conscience on gender equality in decision-making bodies, and expand professional networks and access to resources. Our findings show that these associations empower women by means of different strategies acting as active agents of change that help transform both their members and society. This chapter introduces the second empirical qualitative study of this Ph.D. that enhances knowledge of SDG 5 Gender equality.

3 Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world

3.1 Introduction

The tourism industry is a large, rapidly growing service sector that accounts for a significant part of the global economy: in 2017, it was responsible for 1 in 5 new jobs (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018). According to UNWTO (2019), tourism is an important source of employment for women. For instance, women make up over 60% of the labor force in the hotel industry (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2018). This is also true in Spain, where most employees in the hospitality sector are women. Tourism offers a wide range of income generating opportunities for women in both formal and informal work. Tourism jobs are usually flexible and can be carried out in various places, such as at work, in the community or at home. It is widely accepted that the inclusion of women in the workplace is one of the positive impacts of tourism development.

However, profoundly negative consequences also emerge when analyzing women's role in the tourism sector. Gender inequality is a worldwide issue in all sectors, and the tourism industry is no exception. Due to the scale and deep entrenchment of gender inequality, addressing it is not an easy task (Ferreira Freire Guimaraes & Ramos Silva, 2016). As existing literature shows, there is also evidence that women face wage disparity and vertical segregation, two critical issues that have not been resolved (Huete et al., 2016; Kogovsek & Kogovsek, 2015). Women in the tourism industry often hold low level, low paying, precarious jobs (Hutchings et al., 2020; UNWTO, 2019). Moreover, the numerical superiority of women in tourism positions is not reflected in the sector's technical leadership or management (Baum, 2013). In Spain, women employed in accommodation, travel agencies, tour operators and air transport account for 57% of the total number of workers in these three industries. However, only a third of high-ranking positions are held by women with only 3% becoming CEOs of tourism companies (Canalis, 2019).

The low representativeness of women in decision-making positions is a global phenomenon that impacts negatively on equality and social justice (Chambers et al., 2017). The lack of gender equality in management positions is a global phenomenon, and the existence of barriers to women's access to leadership roles has been demonstrated in prior studies (Villamil López & Alonso Almeida, 2013). Globally, women face barriers such as family responsibilities, gender stereotypes and male-centric corporate cultures that make it difficult for them to be selected for top positions (International Labour Organization, 2016). In recent years, the business community has made significant progress in ensuring female representation in the highest spheres. The percentage of companies with at least one woman in top management has grown significantly, from 66% to 75%; this means that more companies have reached some level of gender balance (Grant Thornton, 2018). In the tourism industry the number of women on board of directors has also risen significantly. However, a growing number of women in top management positions does not ensure real gender equality. A global strategy based on diversity must determine the resources and actions plans needed to guarantee equality in tourism (Equality in Tourism, 2018). When women are underrepresented on corporate boards, companies cannot draw from a full range of talent. Boards are more effective in making decisions when women are included in mixed teams (Davies, 2011) as this means a wider variety of skills, knowledge and experiences are considered (Hoogendoorn et al., 2013).

Existing literature suggests that there is an urgent need to translate the long-standing awareness of gender inequality in the hospitality industry into practical solutions and change in organizations (Chambers et al., 2017; Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Munar et al., 2015, 2017). Prior studies have examined gender inequality on boards of directors and its characteristics. However, hospitality and gender studies barely converge in any constant or valid engagement (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). According to Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2015), journals of feminist studies include less than 10% on hospitality and gender. Gender itself remains of minimal interest to scholars researching hospitality. In the Spanish tourism sector, little attention has been paid to the field of gender studies, despite its impact on the Spanish economy and the importance of women in tourism as entrepreneurs and employees (Segovia-Pérez & Figueroa-Domecq, 2014). If success in the tourism industry is tied to efficient and committed employees who ensure high-quality service, labor policies should promote greater equality in opportunities, pay and working conditions. Moreover, COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the industry, destroying jobs, and exacerbating gender inequality and the lack of female empowerment (Moreno Alarcón, 2020). As women are the majority in the tourism workforce, the current situation of this vulnerable sector is very worrying.

Women's associations are a clear strategy for facing gender issues. They help women reach their professional objectives, providing support on a local, national, and international level. Support networks are crucial for female professional development (ESADE, 2019). However, there is limited research on women's associations and their role in ensuring gender equality and female empowerment. This paper analyzed how women's associations in Catalonia (Spain) help eradicate barriers to gender equality, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) from the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. SDG 5 strives to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, fighting any form of discrimination they face (UN, 2020). Our objectives were to identify the goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia, the barriers women face when accessing corporate positions and the challenges that lie ahead for women in leadership. We sought in-depth knowledge of how the leading women's management associations in Catalonia help minimize gender inequality, provided practical recommendations for different stakeholders and a better understanding of to what degree the tourism industry is respectful of the SDGs (Saarinen, 2019). In these difficult post-COVID19 times, studies like these, which seek tools and initiatives to solve collective problems are more than necessary.

3.2   Literature Review

3.2.1   Women in the worldwide workforce

Gender inequality is a phenomenon that persists throughout the world stagnating social progress. Women's equality is not just an ideology; rather it can be considered one of the main paths towards social improvement (Berkovitch, 1999). In fact, such is the importance of gender equality to ensure and hasten sustainable development, that it is one of the crucial SDGs. SDG 5 strives to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, fighting against any form of discrimination they face (UN, 2020). Although gender equality is specifically addressed in SDG 5, it must be a priority across all SDGs (Moreno Alarcón & Cole, 2019). All signatory governments have declared that the achievement of SDG 5 will contribute decisively to the other objectives. To achieve this goal and to implement the 2030 Agenda, governments request the support of both companies and civil society. Nevertheless, contradictions emerge when studying gender issues under the sustainable development paradigm. On one hand, sustainable

development can be associated with change, progress, and improvement, as in the effort to achieve gender equality and to promote women's empowerment. On the other, sustainability can also be related to continuity and the preservation of certain conditions, customs, and traditions. As a result, the debate on how women's issues are handled within sustainability in tourism is complex. For instance, cultural and contextual differences should be considered when analyzing women's empowerment and sustainable development to avoid inconsistencies (Tucker, 2020).

The status of SDG 5 varies widely across the globe. Even though many countries have reached parity between boys and girls in primary education, the cost of education seriously affects girls in developing countries (UN, 2020). While the number of children not being schooled has dropped since 2005, girls still make up a higher proportion of unschooled children than boys. Many low-income families choose to invest in sons rather than daughters. Often, sending girls off to school would mean lost labor. In contrast, in developed countries, girls and women have wider access to education. For example, recent research shows that in both the United States and several European countries, women's employment tends to be higher among those with a higher educational level (England et al., 2012). Some studies also claim that girls and women obtain less encouragement, experience, and opportunities in some areas because teachers and school management consider education a "male" subject, for which women lack skills, understanding or aptitude. For instance, girls are discouraged from pursuing courses such as science, engineering, technology, or math. Sometimes, teachers' attitudes, classroom atmosphere and approaches to learning help perpetuate gender stereotypes which are repeated by both teachers and students (European Parliament, 2011). Thus, as the International Labour Organization (2016) (henceforth ILO) states, the definition of "gender equality" not only refers to the workplace: what takes place at the professional level is often a reflection of wider issues on a social level. Gender equality means that women and men have the same conditions and same rights when contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural, and political development.

As a result of the growth in women's participation in the workforce from the 1960s to the 1990s and the number of women from the baby-boom generation entering the job market, the contribution of women to the labor pool has increased progressively. In 1950, 18.4 million women were present in the labor force, which accounted for about one-third of the total. In 2000, 66.3 million women in the labor force made up 46.5% of the total. Not only has this contribution been increasing, but it also continues to grow at a higher rate than the male labor force (Toossi & Morisi, 2017).

Nevertheless, while women represent two-thirds of the worldwide workforce, they still earn less than men (ILO, 2016). Although the number of female graduates in Europe rises year after year, once in the labor market women receive lower wages than their male colleagues with the same level of education, resulting in the so-called "gender wage gap" (Haasler, 2014; Triventi, 2013). Even if the gender wage gap has decreased, it is a continuing worldwide reality with complex causes (Brynin, 2017). The wage gap refers primarily to two things: women earn less money than men for performing a similar job or earn less because a job they do is not that valued (Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018). If we focus on Europe, the gender pay gap remains high. Across the economy, women in the EU, earn on average 16% less per hour than men. Considerable differences exist among EU member states: the gender pay gap ranges from 5.2% in Romania to 25.3% in Estonia. In Spain, women also earn less than men: up to 76.1% of the male salary (Huete et al., 2016). Thus, even when women do participate in the labor market, they tend to work in lower-paying sectors, work fewer hours, and occupy lower-ranking positions

than men; all this leads to considerable pay and earnings gaps (European Commission, 2016). Women are generously contributing to building the world's economies, but are denied countless basic legal, political, economic, social, and educational rights in many countries and cultures around the world (UNWTO, 2019; UNWTO & UNWOMEN, 2011).

In addition, women's careers tend to be interrupted, with women often driven to part- time work. They are successful at university and in their early careers, but as they rise through the ranks of an organization attrition rates increase (Davies, 2011). Women tend to be secondary wage earners within the family. Their careers usually slow down after some years of participation in the labor market, and once they have children, pauses in their professional career disadvantage them in future promotions (Haasler, 2014). It has traditionally been thought that the limitations women face in the development of their professional career are caused by internal psychological characteristics such as low self-esteem or fear of success (Tharenou et al., 1994). However, findings obtained in recent years reveal that both the capacity and the motivation are similar in men and women (Sarrió, Barberá Heredia et al., 2002; Sarrió, Ramos et al., 2002).

3.2.2   Women in the worldwide tourism workforce

In recent years, tourism has become one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. In the last 5 years, one in five of all jobs generated worldwide were tied to the travel and tourism industry (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2019). In many countries, tourism acts as an engine for sustainable development, contributing to the creation of both direct and indirect employment. As Saarinen, (2019) suggests, the tourism industry has the potential to promote, drive and enforce the SDGs. If managed properly, tourism leads to the positive society. Tourism offers greater possibilities for women's participation in the workforce, entrepreneurship, and leadership, than any other sector. Nowadays, women make up a large percentage of the labor force in the formal tourism sector. UNWTO, (2019) reports that 54% of people employed in tourism are women. Women's high participation in tourism was also confirmed by the World Travel & Tourism Council (World Travel and Tourism Council, 2014), making up 66% of the total tourism workforce in Australia, France, Germany, South Africa, and Turkey. Tourism is the third-largest sector in terms of female participation worldwide, after education, and health and social work with tourism jobs feminized; in other words, it is an economic sector that is largely sustained by women's work (Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018; Moreno Alarcón & Cole, 2019; Purcell, 1996).

The above-mentioned context seems ideal, with great potential to generate the socio- economic empowerment of women and achieve gender equality. However, UNWTO and UN Women issued a tourism-specific report in 2019 where opportunities were identified alongside challenges and barriers. Women in this industry receive less compensation than men (14.7% less) and do not reach the same levels of education (UNWTO, 2019). Different factors such as cultural values, training, labor environment and established policies impact on women's participation in the field (Almathami et al., 2020). Their numerical predominance is not reflected in the roles they occupy in the industry (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015). They tend to occupy precarious, low-level, low-paying positions. In addition, stereotypes, and gender discrimination cause women to hold positions related to cooking, cleaning, and lodging (UNWTO & UNWOMEN, 2011). Thus, studies have proven that gender plays a major role in employment in the tourism sector. For example, hotel staff, waiters and cooks are mostly female, while most tour guides, taxi drivers and maritime officers are men (Obadić & Marić, 2009). When domestic

work is transferred to the market it is often assumed that it is an easy job to do and it is therefore undervalued (Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018).

For years, academic and sector-specific literature has extensively explored these issues in the tourism industry. In recent years, interest in gender issues has grown rapidly in tourism literature (Chambers et al., 2017; Figueroa-Domecq & Segovia-Perez, 2020; Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Munar et al., 2017). Nevertheless, women in tourism still face the same difficulties, challenges, and oppression as their female counterparts in other sectors (Hutchings et al., 2020). When analyzing scientific and industry research on gender issues, dissonances and contradictions emerge between theory and reality, such as "femwashing" (Je et al., 2020). Although organizations often transmit positive discourses and images promoting gender equality, the reality demonstrates that they still perpetuate the gender gap (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019). Consistent and collaborative policies and strategies on gender issues should be defined collectively by all stakeholders and from a global perspective. The tourism industry, the public and private sector, academics, and practitioners must be seriously committed to achieving SDG 5 as a basis for contributing to the rest of the SDGs (Moreno Alarcón & Cole, 2019).

3.2.3   Women in top management positions

Gender inequalities have also been detected among global top management. As SDG 5 states, supporting female leadership will help to reinforce gender equality policies (UN, 2020). Companies from around the world have taken one step forward and one step back in terms of gender diversity in leadership. In 2017, although the number of companies with at least one woman in senior management increased, the proportion of senior positions held by women decreased marginally (Grant Thornton, 2018). Indeed, the 2018 Global Gender Gap Report, released by the World Economic Forum, estimates that it will take 202 years to achieve gender balance in boardrooms (WEF, 2018). In general, men still dominate most company boards worldwide. However, women's participation in boards of directors varies from country to country.

According to Grant Thornton (2018), the percentage of companies with at least one woman in senior management and the percentage of companies where senior positions are held by women, Africa tops the list of regions in terms of gender diversity. Eastern Europe is in second place when it comes to female participation in leadership. Poland and Russia follow their tradition of strong female participation, with 93% and 91% of companies having at least one woman in top management, respectively. In the third position in the ranking, we find North America.

The United States experienced significant growth in the percentage of companies with at least one woman in senior management, increasing from 69% in 2017 to 81% in 2018. Meanwhile, in Canada, this figure climbed from 23% to 25%. However, North America is at the bottom of the ranking of companies in terms of companies with senior positions held by women. In the European Union, the United Kingdom reached a historic record, with 75% of companies with at least one woman in senior management. It also achieved a slight increase in the proportion of senior positions held by women, which rose from 19% to 22%. Likewise, France registered the highest figure not only in the percentage of companies with at least one woman in senior management (79%), but also in the proportion of senior positions held by women (33%). Finally, at the bottom of the ranking are Asia Pacific and Latin America.

The situation in the tourism industry mirrors the situation worldwide. Vertically, the gender pyramid is changeless: there is significant gender segregation in the labor market. Lower

positions with fewer career development opportunities were occupied by women, while managerial positions were dominated by men (UNED, 1999). Even though it seems that discrimination in access to management positions has decreased in the tourism industry, different situations of inequality still occur (Sigüenza Poveda et al., 2013). Women are under-represented in top management positions in the tourism industry (Do Le, 2017; Equality in Tourism, 2018; Nyaruwata & Nyaruwata, 2013) for example in executive roles at cruise and tour operators in the UK (Glover et al., 2016). In the Spanish hotel industry, only 5% of women manage hotel chains, while only 15% become hotel managers (Canalis, 2019).

Several studies show positive relationships between gender and financial performance (Lückerath-Rovers, 2013; Terjesen et al., 2009), with companies with strong female representation on boards in top management positions performing better than those without women (Turban et al., 2019). Diversity in management teams enriches daily decision-making processes and provides a competitive advantage. Women contribute to decision-making as more diverse insights are considered. In other words, boards make better decisions when a range of voices can be heard, and when this mix of voices includes women (Davies, 2011). When women are underrepresented on corporate boards, companies do not draw from the widest range of talent. This does not mean that women's leadership abilities are needed to improve financial results, or that services demanded by clients are better developed by men; rather, it means that corporate boards perform better when a range of different skills, knowledge and experiences from both men and women are considered (Hoogendoorn et al., 2013). Companies with senior management teams made up only of men are encouraged to act quickly if they want to remain competitive. The current COVID-19 pandemic, the volatility of the world's economy, ongoing technological innovations and the disruptive effects of these innovations make this issue even more important (Grant Thornton, 2018). The main objective should be that top management positions be occupied by the most talented, with gender being neither a barrier nor a limitation.

3.2.4 Barriers women face when reaching top management positions

The lack of gender equality in management positions is a global phenomenon and the barriers women face when accessing leadership positions are proven by research (Villamil López & Alonso Almeida, 2013). According to (ILO, 2016) in Asia, for example, 30% of business leaders surveyed mentioned that most of the mid-career or senior women who left their jobs voluntarily did so due to family commitments. If we focus on Japan, despite anti-discrimination legislation, only 43% of women who tried to rejoin the workforce after childbirth found jobs, suggesting this is a major cause for the leaky talent pipeline. The study also shows that two-thirds of senior women from companies and professional firms across Europe have highlighted the stereotypes and preconceptions of women's roles and skills as the most important barrier to their career progression. Usually, a segregating organizational culture also determines imbalances and limitations (Huete et al., 2016) when it comes to being promoted to high positions (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2018; Segovia-Pérez, Figueroa-Domecq, et al., 2019). According to the theory of human capital, smaller investment in human capital is one of the factors that complicates women's job promotion. This theory claims that individuals succeed in increasing their production capacity by investing in themselves, and that the main sources of investment are education, training, and work experience (Sarrió, Barberá Heredia et al., 2002). This approach suggests that many women, lack time outside working hours to invest in training, and as a result are excluded from promotion opportunities.

Huete et al., (2016) described several invisible barriers encountered by women such as the "glass ceiling", "diamond ceiling", "cement ceiling" and "sticky floor". First, "glass ceiling", a term made popular by an article published in the Wall Street Journal on female executives in 1986, describes barriers that prevent women with high qualifications and personal and professional capacity from accessing the highest management positions and being promoted in the same conditions as men (Segerman-Peck, 1991). According to this concept, women face a set of invisible, impenetrable barriers as they approach the top positions in the corporate hierarchy (U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Second, "diamond ceiling" is related to the prejudice that prevents women from being evaluated according to strictly professional criteria (Valcárcel, 2008). In the third place, "cement ceiling" refers to women's own prejudices, which prevent them from growing in any public sphere because of gender roles and a lack of role models. This barrier is due to much higher pressure on women in managerial positions than on men, which sometimes even drives women to leave their positions (Chinchilla et al., 2005). Finally, "sticky floor" refers to tasks from the private sphere that patriarchal culture assigns to women and that hinder a balance between work and family life (Tandrayen-Ragoobur & Pydayya, 2015). Specifically, the task of looking after dependent family members is largely borne by women and is still not equally shared (de Luis Carnicer et al., 2007). Far more women than men choose to take parental leave. This fact, together with the lack of facilities for childcare and elder care, means that women usually interrupt their careers or work part-time to care for their families, which means that they get fewer years of work experience and face more interruptions, which slows their professional progress (Baum, 2013; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Hoyt, 2010; Keith & McWilliams, 1999; Peregort et al., 2013). This unequal division of labor due to household work also causes the wage gap (Polachek et al., 2015). Along the same lines, Sánchez-Sellero & Sánchez-Sellero, (2013) confirm that the increase in the number of family members reduces the likelihood of women being employed, while men's likelihood for employment remains unchanged.

Thus, it can be affirmed that the differences in working behavior stem from the maintenance of stereotypical gender roles and functions (Sarrió et al., 2002). As a result, perceptions of who is more capable of successful leadership can also be difficult to change (Grant Thornton, 2018). Stereotypes reinforce the view that women take care of people and help them, while men take control and focus on the task (Heilman, 1997; Hoyt, 2012). Generally, for leadership positions, the traits associated with men are more highly valued. Nonetheless, many authors indicate that adequate leadership requires a combination of characteristics associated with men and women, such as emotional intelligence, risk-taking, empathy, integrity, or the ability to persuade, motivate and inspire (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fernández et al., 2010; Hoyt, 2010; Powell, 1990; Vecchio, 2002). Several authors claim that women and men demonstrate the same degree of commitment to their jobs and the same motivation to seek leadership positions (Bielby & Bielby, 1988; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hoyt, 2010; Thoits, 1992). Unfortunately, people in business, in the workplace, in the family sphere and among friends still strengthen stereotypes.

Inclusion is key to eradicating these invisible barriers. Inclusion incorporates all forms of diversity, recognizing that in addition to aspects such as gender, age, or ethnic origin, it is also important to build on people with different backgrounds, experiences, behavioral styles, and skills to increase the effectiveness of a team (Grant Thornton, 2018). Some measures companies implement include ensuring top level commitment, driving gender intelligent actions such as analyzing specific gender barriers within the company and removing them through targeted action or promoting flexible working arrangements. Flexible work-life practices are key

to retaining women leaders. Finally, companies should create an enabling environment by creating programs to identify, nurture and value talented female employees (ILO, 2016). These patriarchal notions permeate many of our ways of acting and thinking and should be challenged and transformed (Chambers et al., 2017).

3.2.5 The contribution of female managers' associations to eradicating barriers

An association can be defined as a group of people with common interests and motivations that deal with different shared issues (Puñal, 2001). Associations and networks in the tourism industry, are a complex phenomenon as the sector is composed of many different businesses and different types of relationships are established between its multiple stakeholders. Existing literature suggests that networks in tourism might not only benefit destinations or companies, but also participants. Some initiatives promote innovation, competitiveness, and development for their members. Most of them increase the flow of information, knowledge, and resources, promoting the creation of alliances to enhance competitiveness and resilience (Zee & Vanneste, 2015).

Associations and networks play a significant role in legitimating change, endorsing innovations, and encouraging their spread, managing debate within the sector, redefining practices, and representing members in the field (Greenwood et al., 2002). For example in Spain, we find networks and associations in the tourism sector that operate at an international, national or local level, representing different stakeholders such as EXCELTUR (non-profit group formed by managers of Spanish tourism sub-sectors: airlines, hotels, transportation, etc.), CEHAT (independent hotels and chain hotels, apartments and resorts in Spain), ACAVE (specialized travel agencies), APARTUR (tourism apartments association in Barcelona), NECSTouR (network of European regions for sustainable tourism), KELLY's (national hotel housekeepers' association), or TRINET (academic network in tourism and hospitality), to mention a few.

Ever since the 19th century, women's associations have defended collective ideas and promoted them in society, raising awareness and sensitivity on gender-based concerns and encouraging a fair society. Women's associations were considered a channel for making demands on complex issues such as gender equality and women's emancipation (Puñal, 2001). Many historical, international initiatives fighting for the rights of women came from associated, organized, groups of women representing a global mobilizing force (Berkovitch, 1999). Thus, female collective initiatives have played an essential role in the economic, social, and political transformation of societies (Guérin & Nobre, 2014). From their origins until today, women's associations have multiplied and diversified to find answers to specific issues. Many of these associations attempt to solve problems neglected by the private or public sectors, alleviating women of daily concerns, and improving their lives. However, associations also have a societal role that cannot be left in the background. They should reflect and rethink the role of women in the community and the job market, promoting social welfare and women's rights in all sectors (Guérin & Nobre, 2014; Puñal, 2001). These women's initiatives, through their ability to challenge barriers, have a huge reforming potential (Guérin & Nobre, 2014).

Women's associations and networks help specifically women reach their collective and individual objectives. They contribute to the process of empowerment, understood as the process of gender awareness and capacity building (Madaha, 2011), where both elements contribute to participation in decision-making and the potential to transform reality (Pini et al., 2004). They are a vehicle for shaping opinions and raising awareness of the need to implement

gender equality at all levels of society. Women's networks and associations help overcome difficulties and encourage women to express their goals and motivations for professional development (ESADE, 2019). According to ESADE's gender monitoring report (2019), 75.35% of Spanish female managers consulted stated that informal support networks are important for the development of their professional and personal careers. A large percentage of respondents (58.62%) were members of at least one women's association, although 60.19% recognized that they were not able to spend as much time as they would like as members of these associations. 20% of the rest was interested in joining one in the future.

Existing literature explains that one of the barriers women face in their careers is the exclusion from organizational networks (O'Neil et al., 2011). Thus, networking not only helps women meet other women with the same interests and problems, but also helps them in their professional growth (Segovia-Pérez, Figueroa-Domecq, et al., 2019). Deeper studies within the field of tourism on women's associations and networks are needed to achieve a greater understanding of the sector on this issue. There is a lack of studies on the role of associations and how they can help women eradicate barriers in their access to executive positions in tourism. Women play a key role in the tourism industry at all levels and specific associations that address their needs can be relevant for their individual and collective progress.

3.3   Methods

In Catalonia (Spain), there are approximately 40 registered women's associations. Of these, 12 are managers' associations with two associations specifically focused on the tourism and hospitality sector. It is important to note though that generic associations include members that are active leaders at tourism companies. To explore how women's associations in Catalonia (Spain) helped women by eradicating barriers to gender equality (SDG 5), we chose a qualitative approach with an essentialist focus, reporting the experiences of participants. As the literature suggests, qualitative methodologies provide flexibility and facilitate a rich and detailed account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach supports researchers that warn of a decrease in these types of studies on gender and tourism (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015; Figueroa-Domecq, Palomo, et al., 2020), and that suggest that qualitative studies help create a robust and stable base for research on gender in tourism (Pritchard, 2018). The qualitative methodology chosen highlights the knowledge derived from women's experiences, although it by no means reflects a single voice or vision for women. In depth semi-structured interviews, in which participants are given the floor to talk about their experiences, views, and perceptions, were considered an appropriate research tool for this study.

As women researchers and practitioners in tourism we believe that there is an urgent need to promote gender equality and empowerment in the industry. Our beliefs, values and interpretations on gender and tourism are socially constructed and may have influenced the research design, data collection and analysis we decided to apply. It is important to note that we share similar experiences and backgrounds as the participants that could have impacted the research. To minimize potential bias and ensure credibility and accuracy in the research process two strategies were implemented. On the one hand, we ensured that the participants were selected independently of their point of view towards the topic. On the other hand, to secure that the data analysis was a trustworthy representation of the themes in the narratives rather than reflection of our biases, the co-researchers constantly consulted one another to consider the accuracy of the analysis.

All associations were contacted directly by the researchers via e-mail or telephone. We conducted a total of 15 face-to-face interviews with leaders of women's associations between March and June 2019, with each lasting approximately 60-80 minutes. The interviews were conducted in Catalan or Spanish - the interviewees' native language - and were recorded and transcribed in full. Participants signed consent forms, gave permission to be identified and were informed of the objectives of the study. The ethical procedures established by Universitat Ramon Llull were followed, and it was approved by the ethics committee of the School of tourism and hospitality Management Sant Ignasi. The participants' names will not be disclosed to ensure confidentiality.

Decision-makers of the following associations (in alphabetical order) were interviewed: Associació de Dones Directives, Empresàries i Professionals (ADE Vallès), Agima, ASODAME Dones Emprenedores/BPW Barcelona (ASODAME/BPW Barcelona), Círculo de Mujeres de Negocio (CMN), Asociación Española de Ejecutiv@s y Consejer@s (EJE&CON), Fundació Internacional de la Dona Emprenedora (Fidem), Lean In Barcelona, Professional Women's Network/Barcelona (PWN/Barcelona), Women in eTravel (WieT), Women in Hospitality & Travel Tech (WHTT) and 50a50. The scope of the associations varied, with some local, some national, and others as chapters of international associations. We ensured that interviewees were decision-makers at their respective associations as it was important to gain insights from leading individuals. In four specific cases (WieT, WHTT, EJE&CON and 50a50), we interviewed two decision-makers from each association. In the case of WieT and WHTT, as our focus was on the tourism industry, we deemed it convenient to obtain more detailed insights from these tourism-related associations. Eje&Con is the leading association supporting top managers, while 50a50 is the leading association for the public administration, so further interviews with these two institutions were arranged. The description of the sample's profile is summarized in Table 5.

The script of the interview (please see Appendix IX) was composed of three parts: the first contained a personal profile and the individual's trajectory in women's associations. The second focused on the goals, the role of the association, its contribution to associates and barriers encountered by women pursuing executive positions. The final part addressed the current situation of women and future challenges and strategies for ensuring female leadership. The quotations were translated from Spanish or Catalan into English by the researchers to their best of knowledge, so some inaccuracies might be expected from translation or interpretation. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with the support of Nvivo software.

We identified, analyzed, and reported themes across the data collected to find repeated patterns or meaning. First, two researchers familiarized themselves individually with the data by generating a first version of the coding scheme. Second, we reviewed the coding scheme, refining, and analyzing them. Third, the two researchers met to discuss the individual analysis and check for inconsistencies, reviewing all codes and producing a second and final version of the coding scheme to capture the essence of the data. Barriers faced by women in their professional life was a common pattern that emerged from the data analyzed. Finally, the following themes were included in the analysis: a.) goal and roles of women's associations in Catalonia; b.) barriers to women accessing corporate-level positions encountered by associations; c.) future challenges for ensuring female leadership.

Association	Start Year	Scope	Members	Profile of interviewee	Interview date
ASODAME BPW Barcelona	1994	Chapter	80	President	27.03.2019
EJE&CON	2015	Chapter	200	Vice-president	28.03.2019
				Board member	29.03.2019
ADE Vallès	2012	Local	60	President	03.04.2019
Fidem	1996	Local	100	President	12.04.2019
50a50	2017	Local	111	Vice-president	15.04.2019
				Board member	16.04.2019
WieT	2018	Chapter	200	Co-founder	18.04.2019
				Co-founder	19.04.2019
CMN	2005	Chapter	4500	President	27.04.2019
PWN/Barcelona	2007	Chapter	150	Executive team	27.05.2019
WHTT	2019	Chapter	200	Founder	30.05.2019
				Chapter leader	03.06.2019
Lean In Barcelona	2016	Chapter	1000	Co-leader	04.06.2019
Agima	2008	Local		President	14.06.2019

Table 5. Description of the sample's profile

3.4   Findings and discussion

To analyze how women's associations in Catalonia (Spain) contributed to eradicating barriers to gender equality, we first identified the goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia. Second, we discussed the barriers to women pursuing corporate-level positions that these associations encountered. Finally, future challenges to women in leadership were presented.

3.4.1   Goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia

The women's associations consulted differed in sizes, focused on a range of action areas, and had diverse objectives. For a description of those objectives and the activities offered by the associations, see Table 6. However, although each association consulted was different, they all shared the common goal of achieving gender equality in the workplace. All participants, whether from consolidated or recently created associations, mentioned that they are somehow involved in the fight against gender inequality and the barriers women face when pursuing top management positions.

Association	Objectives	Activities
ASODAME BPW Barcelona	Publish studies that contribute to consolidating companies founded by women. Identify the initiatives of freelancers and startups. Collaborate with public and private institutions to promote economic development. Enhance and exchange knowledge and experiences related to business creation. Participate in local, regional, and international conferences, symposiums, or meetings. Promote activities organized by the association. Organize conferences that help members gain effectiveness in their professional endeavors. Promote social and economic activities in developing countries with a special focus on training.	Consultancy Mentoring Discounts Excellence groups Entrepreneur mothers' program Networking
EJE&CON	Promote the access of female managers to senior management positions and boards of directors of both public and private entities, proactively enhancing their visibility with the aim of becoming a think-tank. Generate social awareness that prioritizes talent and diversity in its broadest sense, promoting the competitiveness and sustainability of organizations.	Conferences Managers in transition Genderless talent award Code of best practices Board of directors' program Leadership Mentoring Engagemen Networking Reports
ADE Vallès	Act as a point of reference and meeting point to promote talent and female leadership. Create of knowledge and professional opportunities Generate opportunities and best practices to share and influence the business and social world.	Training program Visits Networking ADE Vallès Awards
Fidem	Serve as a tool to enhance the influence and visibility of women in the main decision-making spaces in society, ensuring the equitable presence of women and men in all institutions. Share personal and professional knowledge to achieve economic independence for women and effective equality.	Fidem Awards Internationalization advice Networking Entrepreneurship mentoring Legal observatory Communication Discounts

Association	Objectives	Activities
50a50	Advance in the fulfillment of SDG 5 of the UN's 2030 Agenda, both personally and professionally. Influence our environment to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of living in a fairer, more equal, more ethical, and more transparent world. Promote lobbying actions with women from all areas of society to achieve 50 to 50 female representation in Catalan public institutions and public and private organizations.	Promote female candidacies in election processes. Promote women in technology. Improve the professional conditions of freelance women. Advocate for women in decision-making positions.
WieT	Encourage a more balanced female presence in the online travel sector. Encourage female participation in events, tradeshows, and meetings. Create a community to support and inspire women.	Networking Calendar of industry events Visibility of members
CMN	Promote systematic and effective cooperation between women's businesses. Increase visibility and recognition of women, as business creators and economy producers. Facilitate the search, identification, analysis, and execution of projects that improve their competitive capacity. Collaborate with the competent public bodies, in promoting the image of professional and businesswomen. Mentor professional and businesswomen. Encourage studies that promote the stability and promotion of companies led by women. Improve training, communication, competitiveness, and international projection of its associates. Maintain contact with other related organizations from any territorial scope. Represent and promote the interests of women.	Networking Mentoring E-learning Sharing of best practices for the reconciliation of work and personal life Promote a network of private investors Marketplace environment CMN Awards
PWN/ Barcelona	Create a movement of people who aspire to accelerate the current pace of change towards gender-balanced leadership. Connect people with a global network, inspiring the leaders of today to create exemplary leaders of tomorrow. Create an environment where members support one another, embrace new skills, learn to speak out on important issues and create sustainable action plans. Strategic partnerships with other networks and events.	Networking Learning events and webinars Mentorship programs Building alliances Interactive forums Content generation Access to research Network of male allies Volunteer program

Association	Objectives	Activities
WHTT	Advocate for a more diverse culture in hospitality and travel-tech organizations. Enable the professional growth of women and underrepresented groups through education, mentorship, and career development.	Training Mentorship Career upgrade Networking
Lean In Barcelona	Inspire and support female professionals in Barcelona. Assist women in their professional development. Create the largest community of connected women in the city.	Monographic sessions Panel of experts Women's circles Mentoring
Agima	Promote the visibility of women in complicity with men and in co-responsibility with the environment. Contribute to a society where people can choose their own ideal life within a framework of universal values. Promote all spheres of members' lives with complicity between men and women.	Networking Panel of experts Cultural and well-being events Learning activities Public forum

Table 6. Objectives and activities offered by associations (own elaboration based on official websites and information from interviews)

Associations clearly play a relevant role in society. They are a vehicle for generating opinions and awareness on issues like gender equality at all levels of society (Díez Herrero, 2016). As participant 6 stated: "I don't want to be favored, I'm not asking for favors. I'm asking to be treated as an equal." Some participants agreed that women mostly join associations to realize that what is true for them is also for many other women, and that it does not happen to them alone. Rather, they share concerns with an entire collective. Participant 3 explained that she was aware of gender discrimination and that she looked for an association to help change this situation. Meanwhile, Participant 2 stated that she used to think there were no structural problems related to gender, but after attending courses organized by the associations, she realized that discrimination did indeed exist. This example shows how these organizations can help women increase their awareness of gender discrimination.

As respondents explained, associations also serve as a "place to share". Within the group, women share their experiences, frustrations, opinions, and fears, as well as means of overcoming difficulties and of developing their careers. For example, Participant 5 explained that thanks to her women's associations she realized that a small number of women were giving speeches about technology and tourism: "I asked myself: aren't there any women capable of speaking publicly about technology and tourism? I doubt it. If there are, who are they and why aren't they present in public spheres today?". According to this participant, most women are not willing to speak publicly because they fear the exposure, because it is not their area of expertise or because they believe that they are not knowledgeable enough about the topic. This is closely related with what Chinchilla et al., (2005) introduced about the "cement roof": women's own prejudices prevent them from growing in public spheres because of gender roles and the lack of role models. Therefore, when women have spaces where they can share their experiences and doubts with others, a more critical perception of reality emerges.

Moreover, associations give visibility to female leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals, helping to create alliances among them. Associations promote the exchange of information, experiences, and resources, while encouraging professional and business collaboration. As the president of one of the organizations expressed "associates benefit from the support they five one another and the friendship and professional ties they eventually develop…" Participant 12 explained that she helps support business cooperation among members. She stated that "women aren't expected to be granted benefits just for being women, but also aren't willing to have opportunities taken away from them because of their gender." Associations help women establish collaborative alliances and enhance their visibility in society so that other women can see themselves in leadership positions and roles. That way, future generations will look up to them, and become empowered by following their example.

3.4.2   Barriers to women accessing corporate-level positions encountered by associations

As our analysis showed, one of the key roles of some of the associations consulted is to help women challenge the barriers they face when pursuing corporate-level positions. Why some women fail to reach leadership and executive positions is a complex issue influenced by several barriers that can determine or limit their career progress. Participants 5 and 3 agreed that in addition to networking opportunities, associations provided them with greater self-knowledge: "what happens to me, happens to us all. You can network, but at the same time you can learn new skills and content with things like the training sessions or talks that associations organize." Thus, we can see how these initiatives helped women challenge barriers such as a lack of motivation, training, or contacts.

Women's associations have also helped women challenge barriers related to a lack of support when aiming for top management positions. According to Participant 1, the biggest challenge was believing in her value as a woman: "we need to position ourselves, reinforce our desires and simply achieve what corresponds to us." Shared professional and personal spaces, and trust based on mutual support, allowed members to move forward more rapidly in their careers (Hicks, 2020). Participants 13 and 15 mentioned that belonging to a women's association helped them reflect on social stereotypes and discriminatory organizational cultures. As Segovia-Pérez et al., (2019) explain, policies that ensure gender equality in senior management positions are key to social development. When women participate in conferences, symposiums or meetings, awareness of certain issues increased, but ideas and initiatives for promoting social change also emerged. For example, Participant 4 pointed out that one of the issues that worries her most is technology. Her concern is that if women are not present where artificial intelligence is manufactured, this will create a new gender bias. She explained that society should be preparing young girls for technological careers. Associations have helped promote this view. However, being part of a women's association also has its drawbacks. Several participants agreed that one disadvantage being part of an association is how time consuming it can be. As participant 10 mentioned "when you're in a top position in a company, time is scarce". However, all interviewees saw that the results of participation are rewarding and enriching, so their commitment and sacrifice were deemed worthwhile.

Even the leaders of women's association faced barriers of their own, although their answers regarding these barriers differed. Some of the challenges mentioned were enrolling more associates, seeking the welfare of members, and getting women to achieve professional promotion in a much more equal way. Along these lines, Participant 8 stated that the greatest challenge was taking care of her associates and working on projects that go beyond networking.

According to ESADE's Gender Monitor (2019), 49.11% of women indicated that associations provide no benefits beyond networking. Participant 7 disagreed with this view: "this is not just networking; this is a community. Some women within the association have offered each other job opportunities, have supported each other. Somehow, they have created a family, an environment of trust that can give them ideas on how to face constraints." Participant 12 explained that her personal challenge was working together with other associations in a collaborative way. Women's associations need to weave many alliances to change society (San José, 2002). The respondent supported the idea that cooperation and mutual benefits are the way to accelerate progress. As Guérin & Nobre, (2014) explain, these women's initiatives can go through different phases of trial and error in trying to achieve their goals and accomplish their mission. Time, resources, and individual and collective commitment are key to achieving significant results.

3.4.3   Future challenges for ensuring female leadership

As for the situation of female managers in Spain, Participant 5 found it worrying: "we estimate that only 15% of women have a presence on executive boards in Spain. The main challenge is to change this situation as soon as possible". In the Spanish tourism sector, several studies also indicated that the number of women in corporate management positions is disproportionately low if we consider the total representation of women in the labor force, even when women and men have proven to be equally efficient when it comes to taking on management responsibilities. They have also noted, as mentioned before, that women's wages are lower (Marco-Lajara & Úbeda-García, 2013; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Obadić & Marić, 2009). Associations have raised awareness of how society is losing economic resources when subjecting women to invisible barriers. Participant 6 stated: "if companies are not convinced by ethical or moral arguments, they should implement changes based on business profitability, they should look at the numbers." Associations help raise awareness of the benefits of including women in managerial positions not just for social purposes, but also for economic progress. It is not only companies that need to improve in this sense so, should the public administration. Participant 11 supported the idea that extra pressure on the public administration is required to promote diversity and a balanced presence of women and men.

As the existing literature explains, the hospitality sector faces the same situation as other industries: women are under-represented on boards of directors, and the sector further perpetuates the problem (Do Le, 2017; Equality in Tourism, 2018; Nyaruwata & Nyaruwata, 2013). Some respondents believed that every industry has peculiarities regarding gender issues that are difficult to cover with a general approach. For example, they mentioned that a widespread issue such as the "glass ceiling" is common to all sectors, but that each sector then has its own characteristics. Participants agreed that inclusion is key to eradicating invisible barriers. Inclusion incorporates all forms of diversity, recognizing that in addition to aspects such as gender, age, or ethnic origin, it is also important to include people with different backgrounds, experiences, behavior styles and skills to increase the effectiveness of a team (Grant Thornton, 2018).

In Spain the number of female managers who perceive gender barriers in their companies has increased (ESADE, 2019). Mainly they mentioned difficulty reconciling work and family life, wage inequality and a lack of recognition for their tasks. The number of women who suffered mobbing from colleagues or bosses has also increased. Furthermore, 63.41% of female managers believed that gender balance was not seen as a priority in their companies. The future

is not promising, but respondents agreed that working together helps in many ways. Along the same line, Participant 1 believes it is essential to work together with men if the goal is to break barriers such as the invisible "glass ceiling". These barriers prevent many women with high qualifications and personal and professional capacity from accessing the highest levels of management and responsibility in the same conditions as men (Segerman-Peck, 1991). Participant 7 also agreed that the commitment of men in this fight for equality is key to achieving strategic objectives in organizations and the political sphere. As existing literature explains, men are crucial agents of change and ought to be involved in gender equality issues (R. W. Connell, 2003). Finally, Participant 3 felt that to have a real impact, we need to educate society in general on these issues: "when you educate children, nephews or friends, please educate them on equality." Women's associations accomplish a relevant role in the transmission of these values within society. Women must remain firm on gender issues in different contexts and organizations while demanding women's rights from their collectives and associations (Puñal, 2001).

3.5   Conclusions

Women still have a long way to go to achieve gender equality in executive-level positions, with many barriers to overcome and many constraints to face. Despite companies making efforts to achieve gender balance, the situation on boards of directors is still not equitable. Achieving equal rights for men and women is still a big challenge for many organizations. However, solidarity, cooperation and commitment among equals do make the journey easier. Existing women's associations seem to be capable of impacting the future of gender. They play the key role of providing visibility for collective problems, reflecting on them, and seeking solutions. Women's associations serve as essential elements that encourage women to participate actively while also developing initiatives on what institutions and companies do. They are the driving force behind women's progress, allowing them to join forces and make themselves heard (San José, 2002). Women associations have the potential to transform both their members and society. As a recommendation, it would be advisable for associations in Catalonia (Spain) to join forces and support one another more than they currently do. The information collected in interviews made clear that when women work together, they achieve outstanding results. In this sense, there is room for improvement. In Catalonia, efforts are scattered even though joint strategies would be beneficial to associations, their members, and women in general.

This paper has reviewed gender issues and has discussed the importance of women's associations in facing gender inequality, especially when pursuing leadership positions. This study contributes to the growing body of research on tourism and gender and has especially increased knowledge of how women's associations empower women and help them progress professionally. The findings of this research provide remarkable knowledge on how women's associations help accomplish SDG 5 of the UN's 2030 Agenda, which defends gender equality as a critical objective on the path to sustainability. In addition to playing many other roles, the women's associations in this sample, empower women using a range of strategies. They enhance social conscience on gender equality in the workplace, support women with training, courses, and meetings, give visibility to gender issues and actions, and expand professional networks and access to resources. According to respondents, women's associations helped them overcome constraints in their lives and contributed to their personal and professional growth.

Each of the consulted associations has its own way of supporting women based on their size, objectives, the profiles of associates and their areas of action. Most help members be aware of the barriers they face when pursuing management positions. Participants explained that their level of awareness and self-reflection increased when members shared insights and experiences with other women or attended courses and training on these issues. Also, associations provided their members with constant support which allowed them to develop both professional and personal connections with others. However, associations contributed to both individual and group welfare. They inspired women to reach their goals and offered role models. Associations contributed to a cultural change, regarding issues like equal access to top management positions. Therefore, associations pursued a shared goal achieving gender equality in the workplace and contributing to progress in women's professional development. These collective initiatives find into innovative ways of overcoming barriers and turning them into advantages. They are vital to improving women's current professional circumstances and achieving gender parity in corporate management in Spain, an area that has moved at a very slow pace so far.

In fact, at present it is developing much too slowly in most countries. With the current rate of change, most governmental bodies agree that more than 200 years are needed to achieve parity in top management positions. This is a major issue for the tourism industry. The percentage of women working in tourism is very high, but women are still not equitably represented on decision-making bodies. Associations help speed up this process. The training these associations provide, the studies published, support from other women, role models and mentors are valuable aids on the path to management (Freund, 2019). Although a range of different associations were interviewed, the female leaders consulted agreed that gender equality ought to be a priority for companies, although this is rarely the case for companies in Spain. In recent months, with the increase of telecommuting caused by COVID-19, although three out of four women acknowledge that their employer has adapted to their family situation, 19.4% indicate that they have had a harder time balancing work and family than their male colleagues, with 28.4%, having a harder time than their partners (ESADE, 2020). Therefore, this is a current, pressing issue.

The findings of this study open several courses of action for stakeholders in the tourism sector. In Catalonia, private businesses, the public administration, educational institutions, and civil society should collaborate in adopting gender equality measures to drive a noticeable change in both their own parity indicators and in gender equality across the sector. If agents work together and network, promote these objectives and defend them without reservation, all the accumulated knowledge on gender and sustainability can be implemented exponentially in the post-COVID19 period.

In our view, tourism universities should work closely with women's associations to increase the visibility of women as role models. At least in Catalonia, there is a pool of women willing to collaborate that would be of added value as guest professionals, for example. Most students of tourism and hospitality in Catalonia are women, yet female role models are scarce. The protagonists of most case studies, guest speakers or relevant tourism authorities are men. Furthermore, educational institutions need to support companies, destinations, and public bodies by offering training, research and debate on gender and sustainability in tourism. Another stakeholder, tourism businesses, might also contribute to female empowerment and equal opportunities by working with associations. For example, they could provide internal training sessions, sponsor initiatives launched by associations, share reports and material, ensure fair promotion systems, and minimize gender bias in their selection and salary processes.

Tourism is a people's sector, and people are diverse. An inclusive business culture that fosters diversity will strengthen companies. We need inclusive values, promoted by a corporate culture, that enhance equal opportunities and does not discriminate by either gender, culture, age, religion, or special needs. Companies with diverse and inclusive DNA are not only more sustainable, but also more attractive and profitable. Diversity increases the creativity of teams and the profitability of companies. While social justice and legal compliance are often the initial triggers, many successful companies understand diversity as the source of a competitive advantage, and specifically as a key facilitator of growth. The public sector should also actively promote equality and support and broaden the impact of their strategies and campaigns with the help of women's associations. A close relationship and representation of women's associations in the corresponding public committees is therefore highly advisable.

This study was limited by using qualitative data, which increases the probability of the information obtained being biased. Additionally, the fact that the interviews were not conducted in English may have led to misunderstandings or translation inaccuracies. Furthermore, the associations consulted were diverse and not strictly focused on tourism. This research has shown that more precise data is needed to evaluate and understand the situation of women's associations in Catalonia (Spain). An additional study should assess which barriers prevent associations from working together using shared strategies. Further work is needed to fully understand the situation of other associations in other locations, so replicating the study elsewhere in Spain or abroad to consider cultural differences is advisable. Further research could explore the views of female associates. This would add their view and perceptions to the analysis. Moreover, as Boluk et al., (2017; 2019a; 2019b) suggest, to ensure effective sustainable development, critical thinking and multiple points of view should be fostered on how to achieve the SDGs in different communities and realities. In this sense, a more holistic view of the SDGs and tourism is needed that also analyses the role of associations, the views of female associates and the dynamics of power. Lastly, barriers to female entrepreneurs in the tourism industry were scarcely analyzed in this study; it seems advisable to encourage further research on the role of women's associations in supporting female entrepreneurs.

To conclude, if we were only to count the number of men and women, we might be satisfied, as the tourism industry currently employs more women. However, our objective is more ambitious: to pursue inclusive and co-responsible models (Freund, 2018). Only then we will achieve a greater presence of women in leadership positions. This is not about counting women and men, but about the men and women leading responsible tourism initiatives and contributing to a better world. Laura Liswood, the general secretary of the Council of Women World Leaders, affirmed: "women are like snowflakes; one alone may melt, but together we can stop traffic." Gender diversity generates greater gender diversity. The more snowflakes, the more things change. Associations' contributions to female managers are crucial. To put it one way, they serve as valuable "snow machines".

Chapter 4. Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation

Abstract of the chapter

This mixed-method case study is the first of the two educational interventions. It proposes campus-based pedagogy aimed at training undergraduates who are capable and willing to help reduce inequality in hospitality accommodation, in line with SDG 11. Students' agency was developed through a combination of innovative, transformational pedagogical approaches: an action-based challenge related to accessibility in tourism, applying design thinking as a problem-solving method, and using learning logs as self-regulating reflective tools. Results showed a positive change in students' attitudes towards people with disabilities and the development of students' critical reflexivity. Students combined self-regulation and co-regulation strategies to overcome challenges. Students perceived the 'real-life' scenario as extra challenging, so connecting to purpose was their main strategy for self-regulation. Feedback and positive reinforcement were the main take-aways, with experiential lessons being valued as more relevant than theoretical sessions. Disciplinary, epistemic, procedural knowledge improved along with creativity, teamwork, empathy, project management and oral skills. Results showed that the experiential educational program ensured students' agency and enhanced transformative competencies, specifically regarding accessible accommodation. From this perspective, accessible tourism is as much of a learning opportunity as it is a chance to promote social inclusion.

4 Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation

4.1 Introduction

Academia plays an unquestionable role in preparing professionals with strong inclusive values to lead change. There is a common agreement that students' agency is key to gaining a sense of responsibility and feeling more connected to the societal challenges that lie ahead (OECD, 2019b). In recent years, Tourism & Hospitality Education (T&HE) scholars have widely recognized the crucial role of tourism curricula in achieving students' agency. When these curricula focus on reducing inequalities, they have the power to help develop citizens with humanitarian values and a sense of collective good. Also, they provide future graduates with the ethical basis that can inspire them to act as responsible stewards in the development of sustainable tourism (Belhassen & Caton, 2011; Boyle et al., 2015; Dredge & Schott, 2013b; Garcia-Rosell, 2013; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2015; Tribe, 2002). Sustainability is still an issue in the tourism and hospitality industry, which is far off from reaching the targets of the UN 2030 Agenda. Accessibility is one of the areas that needs further development in the tourism industry, in line with SDG 11 that aims to ensure cities and human settlements are inclusive for all.

In this context, although what needs to be proposed to students is somehow clear, the "how" is still a work in progress. Although in recent years scholars focused on pedagogy that answers the call for critical thinkers and reflectors in tourism with the capacity to fight for fairer approaches in the tourism sector, there is still demand to further develop this field (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Garcia-Rosell, 2015; Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Jost, 2011; Pritchard et al., 2011). In particular, we need studies that help us identify which methodologies are more capable of eliciting students' agency and fostering transformative competencies aligned with sustainability practices (Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2015; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012; Stone & Duffy, 2015).

In this study, we addressed this gap by exploring how innovative pedagogical approaches foster students with inclusive values who are willing and able to commit to accessible accommodation. Based upon the principles of transformational learning theory (Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Mezirow, 1997; Sharpley, 2015; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012), action learning and problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Leonard, 2015), we analyzed students' agency by following the Learning Compass 2030 model (OECD, 2019). This model suggests that for learners to exercise their agency, core foundations composed of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are required. In line with this, an undergraduate educational module was designed focused primarily on an action-based challenge, applying design thinking (DT) as a human-centered problem-solving method. Also, learning logs were used as self-regulating reflective tools.

The selected authentic challenge had to do with accessibility in hospitality: exploring how a real hotel could become more welcoming to families with children on the Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD), a developmental impairment that has not been sufficiently researched in the field of tourism (Hamed, 2013; Sedgley et al., 2017; Stuhl & Porter, 2015). ASD is stigmatized and still unexamined by most hospitality providers and T&HE students. Unfortunately, although reducing inequality towards people with disabilities is regarded as a relevant Sustainable Development Goal of the United Nations 2030 Agenda, is a major concern for public policymakers and an important issue for governments, institutions and industries worldwide, not enough attention has been paid to how ASD impacts the experience families may have of their vacation or hotel stay (Darcy, 2012; Freund et al., 2019; McKercher & Darcy, 2018; Michopoulou et al., 2015). Adaptations for this group in the hospitality sector are simple (Freund et al., 2019; Sedgley et

al., 2017) so results might benefit more than this specific community—they may lead to specific new codes of practice that develop hospitality offers in an inclusive way.

The main objective of this study was to train undergraduates and future leaders of change who are capable and willing to help reduce inequality in hospitality accommodation. To reach this objective, in line with the Learning Compass 2030's concept of student agency (OECD, 2019b) and Goal 11 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), we developed a mixed-method multiple case study (Hall & Ryan, 2011; Stake, 2013) aimed specifically at: (i) analyzing changes in students' attitudes during their participation in the module; (ii) identifying challenges students faced when working on the module and the regulation strategies they applied to solve them; and (iii) analyzing their perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience.

4.2   Literature review

Humanistic education is essential to ensuring that newer generations internalize the need to work towards a more sustainable world. Leading institutions such as the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) support this approach. Specifically, the OECD proposes the Learning Compass 2030 model, which focuses on students' agency and suggests that for learners to exercise this agency, core foundations composed of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are required. Agency is defined as "the competency to think, initiate and act intentionally and responsibly to shape the world towards individual and collective well-being" (OECD, 2019b, p. 32). This model proposes iterative cycles of anticipation, action and reflection that give students a sense of responsibility and the belief that they can make a difference in society. Collective agency is needed to drive changes for the common good. "Collective agency" refers to the idea of individual agents working together for a community, a movement, or a global society.

A seminal article by Tribe (2002; influenced by Schön, 1983) opened up the debate by proposing that tourism curricula should develop tourism for all stakeholders, not just for businesses. A wide range of scholars have reflected on this issue, specifically about the responsibility that T&HE has towards graduates: not just to provide them with professional skills but to go even further, ensuring they also have critical management and student reflection skills (Airey et al., 2015; Belhassen & Caton, 2011; Boyle et al., 2015; Dredge et al., 2015; Lashley, 2015; Morgan et al., 2018). Although this line of research does not believe that tourism studies should neglect a business approach, it also believes that if too much focus is given to practical content graduates will only focus on "how" to do things (Boyle et al., 2015; Lashley, 2015). Thus, scholars suggest that tourism studies should go beyond business to embrace reflection and critical academic inquiry (Airey et al., 2015; Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Boyle et al., 2015; Dredge & Schott, 2013b; Lashley, 2015; Pritchard et al., 2011; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2015; Tribe, 2002). Boluk, Cavaliere et al. (2019b), specifically propose a framework that fosters critical tourism citizens that includes five strategies, critical topics, dialogue, positionality, reflection, and praxis.

This is in line with the call for "philosophical practitioners" (Dredge et al., 2015) fostered by initiatives such as Tourism Education Futures Initiatives (TEFI), a collective response from educators concerned with building leadership capacity in the industry through education (Dredge et al., 2015; Dredge & Schott, 2013a; Pritchard et al., 2011). We agree with TEFI, and believe that the way travel and tourism is taught needs to change—education needs serious

rethinking (Dredge, Schott, et al., 2015; Stone & Duffy, 2015). There are several challenges related to modes of delivery, appropriate pedagogy, skills and graduate capabilities (Dredge, Benckendorff, et al., 2015). There is also a need to review traditional teaching models, pedagogies and approaches (Boluk et al., 2019a; Dredge, Airey, et al., 2015). Once we understand that change is required, the question is: how may tourism programs adopt educational innovation to ensure accessibility?

4.2.1 Educational innovation

One of the most widely accepted educational theories for fostering transformation is Transformative Learning Theory (TLT). This adult-learning framework aims to transform existing attitudes and behaviors into more open and inclusive views, suggesting that learning transforms participants if the frames of reference change (Mezirow, 1997, 2000). TLT allows students to critically reflect on their assumptions and to contribute to complex understanding (Mezirow, 2000). More recently and along the same lines, activity theory and its concept of expansive learning have advocated for questioning existing standard practices, analyzing cases, and modelling new solutions as a way to drive transformation (Engeström & Sannino, 2010). Although TLT was introduced years ago, studies as applied to tourism and hospitality higher education are still in their infancy (Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Jost, 2011; Stone & Duffy, 2015).

Researchers call for more educators to adopt TLT as a strategy that encourages learning for transformation. Stone & Duffy (2015) claim that only 14 publications in tourism journals refer to this theory, mainly focusing on educational travel. There is clearly a gap in studies about tourism in campus-based pedagogy, so researchers suggest including it in the curricula. TLT applies different pedagogical approaches, similar in essence, that share related theoretical roots: action learning, collaborative learning, experiential learning, student-centered learning and problem-based learning (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012). For this study, we applied specifically problem-based learning and action learning methods combined with design-thinking.

4.2.2 Problem-based learning and action learning

Problem-based learning (PBL) is an instructional method within transformational learning theory that applies learning to complex problem-solving contexts. This is a student-centered pedagogical method where students learn by solving open-ended problems as part of a team. With PBL, students develop problem-solving skills and self-directed learning while fostering teamwork and a flexible knowledge base. The real cases they are confronted with can be solved in multiple ways and require an integrated approach. Hmelo-Silver (2004:261) describes it as a technique that has the potential "to help students become reflective and flexible thinkers who can use knowledge to take action." It differs from traditional instruction in that PBL involves students in building knowledge, and the educator's role moves from that of a knowledge provider towards that of a learning facilitator.

Similar to PBL, action learning links theory-based teaching to actual business problems and fosters flexibility with its wide range of approaches (Pedler, Burgoyne & Brook, 2005). Leonard (2015) suggests that action learning is a platform for problem-solving and developing leadership skills that provides a series of disciplined steps to understand what we know, how to learn about a problem and how to come up with innovative and tested solutions. Its main principles are: (i)

the experimental nature of learning and problem-solving, (ii) seeing change as an iterative process and (iii) the key role that stakeholders on all levels play in problem solving.

4.2.3   Design thinking

One of the most effective problem-solving methodology is Design Thinking (DT) (OECD, 2019b). The first serious discussions and analyses about the designer's cognitive process emerged during the 1950s. Although its origins are linked to improving product design, more recently it has been applied to societal problems (Mugadza & Marcus, 2019) since it develops engagement, adaptability and collaboration (Chin et al., 2019; Lake et al., 2019). Design thinking fosters creativity, and its innovative, iterative format helps to educate transformational leaders (Mugadza & Marcus, 2019). As a reflective practice (Schon & DeSanctis, 1986 cited in Lee et al., 2019), it is described as a series of processes aimed at creative problem solving with a strong focus on empathy and collaboration (Glen et al., 2014; J. Lee et al., 2019) that help students become more innovative (Chin et al., 2019; Glen et al., 2014; Lake et al., 2019; Sándorová et al., 2020).

A large and growing body of literature has investigated design thinking in higher education from a more generic perspective (Chin et al., 2019; Glen et al., 2014; Guaman-Quintanilla et al., 2020; Lake et al., 2019; Lee et al., 2019), with a specific focus on leadership (Mugadza & Marcus, 2019) or entrepreneurship (Lynch et al., 2019). However, there is dearth of the literature applied to T&HE (Bhushan, 2019; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Sándorová et al., 2020), and this is problematic considering the intensive use of this methodology in the provision of tourism services and experiences.

There is a drive towards design thinking assessment approaches (Guaman-Quintanilla et al., 2020) and an increased interest in its outcomes as a teaching approach and how it is perceived by students (Lynch et al., 2019) and educators (Sándorová et al., 2020). In higher education, empirical findings show that it enhances students' creativity, empathy, problem-solving and communication skills (Retna, 2016 cited in Sándorová et al., 2020). Several models of the DT process have emerged in the past, though all share a common essence. Our study implemented Brown's (2009) model, also referred to as Stanford's "d.school model." It consists of five stages: empathize, define, ideate, prototype and test.

4.2.4   Self-regulated learning and reflection

If student agency is the objective of this study and our aim is to prepare our students to be agents of change to foster accessibility, our educational approach should ensure student metacognition, self-regulation and reflection (Alsina et al., 2017). Methods of instruction outlined in the previous section are closely tied to these three concepts.

Reflection is key to transforming experience into knowledge (Lynch et al., 2019). On-going reflection is important specifically in between assessments, courses and experiences (subjective reframing).

Aligned with TLT, critical reflection reviews how the problem was solved. This critical review adds different viewpoints and perspectives which become the basis for an attitudinal or behavioral transformation (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012). The ultimate goal is to not only develop critical thinkers, but to develop students with a capacity for critical reflexivity (Garcia-Rosell, 2015). In this respect, critical thinkers understand the realities of a subject area whereas reflectors challenge those realities by shaping them. In hospitality, an inclusive attitude does not

flourish by ordering individuals to act in a specific way, but from the deep reflection on the value of being hospitable and a thorough self- and social-reflection (Caton, 2012).

First, it is important to mention that the challenge posed to students is not an end in and of itself, but a means of achieving a learning goal related to their own metacognition (Pilling-Cormick & Garrison, 2007). Second, students' approaches to learning from problems differ qualitatively depending on their degree of self-regulation (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Self-regulated learning emphasizes the constructive and cognitive process of learning (internal monitoring processes). Third, regulation is applied to both individual and collective activity; this is called co-regulation, situated regulation or socially shared regulation (Castelló et al., 2010).

4.3 Methods

4.3.1 Context and participants

An educational module, "Tourism for all," was designed using TLT principles (Dredge, Airey, et al., 2015; Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Mezirow, 1997; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012), problem-based and action learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Leonard, 2015), and following the Learning Compass 2030 model. A combination of innovative pedagogical approaches to developing student agency was chosen, including an action-based challenge (please see the module's tool workbook at Appendix X. The challenge applied design-thinking as a customer-centered problem-solving method (objective reframing) and used learning logs as self-regulating tools for reflection (subjective reframing). The challenge presented to students involved proposing accessibility solutions for the AC Victoria Suites Marriott hotel[3] in Barcelona to better cater to families traveling with children on ASD. They were asked to consider insights from previous research on the barriers and constraints these families face (Freund et al., 2019; Sedgley et al., 2017).

The module lasted for four months, with a cohort of twelve undergraduate exchange students (9 female and 3 males). Students ranged in age from 20 to 26 and were of five different nationalities (Dutch, French, American, Hungarian, and Romanian). Students were informed of the objectives of the study and voluntary agreed to participate. All instruments were gathered in accordance with ethics procedures, and the study was approved by the ethics committee of Universitat Ramon Llull (Reference Number 2504/16).

4.3.2 Data collection

In line with the research objectives, the quantitative data collected included a validated measurement scale, an Attitude to Disability Scale (ADS) (Power et al., 2010) and three indexes extracted from the module's satisfaction survey. Qualitative elements gathered included two open-ended question surveys, six reflective learning logs and an in-depth semi-structured interview, complemented by a methodological device, *Journey Plot*, created to capture information about participants' learning experiences over time in a visual way (Castelló et al., 2018). All instruments were collected in English, this being the medium of instruction. In the first class, the Attitude to Disability Scale and an open questions survey were distributed. In the second class, we introduced the learning logs after the hotel visit, ideation, feedback,

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[3] https://hotelacvictoriasuites.es/

prototyping, oral presentation, and final session. In the last class of the module, we administered the Attitude to Disability Scale, an open question survey and the satisfaction survey. One week after the module came to an end, in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. A promotional video[4] was recorded showcasing testimonials and relevant sessions.

The Attitude to Disability Scale, a psychometrically validated 0-5 Likert scale developed under the auspices of the World Health Organization's Quality of Life Group, was chosen to analyze changes in students' attitude towards people with disabilities (PwD) (Objective 1). It was chosen for its reliability and its cross-cultural validity (Power et al., 2010); this is important, as our cohort was composed of five different nationalities. The scale was administered twice to reflect the variations encountered before and after the module.

to analyze the challenges that students faced throughout the module, the strategies they applied to problem-solving and their perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience (Objectives 2 and 3, respectively), the instruments we chose were open-question surveys, learning logs, in-depth semi-structured interviews, and the *Journey Plot*. Interviews lasted from 40-50 minutes, and right before the start, we asked participants to draw a *Journey Plot* on a graphic with two axes: time and relevance of the learning experience. The horizontal axis represented the timeline of the twelve sessions of the module, and the vertical axis represented their learning experience with a scale of positive or negative relevance ranging from -5 (negative) to 5 (positive). Students were asked to "draw a line that showed how they would grade the relevance of the learning experience considering the different sessions of the module." Students completed the task quickly and without hesitation. Additionally, to evaluate general satisfaction, knowledge and skills acquired, and workload (Objectives 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3), we complemented qualitative results with three quantitative elements extracted from the closed questions in the module's general satisfaction survey.

4.3.3 Data Analysis

The analysis was conducted in different phases following a phenomenological approach (Altinay & Paraskevas, 2008). In the first phase, we calculated participants' Attitude to Disability Scale results from before and after the module and the cohort's results from the three modules' satisfaction survey to obtain quantitative scores. In this phase, we familiarized ourselves with the participants' discourse to obtain a general picture of the data. Familiarization included repeated readings of the elements collected. Interviews were digitally recorded and transcribed in their entirety. During transcription and analysis, respondents were given pseudonyms to conceal their identities. In the second phase, we examined the quantitative ADS scores for each participant and their qualitative insights by analyzing the data collected with Atlas.ti and choosing different principles of analysis for each objective (see Table 7).

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[4] https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=R0Kiuf_ONhk&t=8s

Objectives	Dimensions of analysis	Data collecting instruments	Short description	Type of data	Type of analysis
Objective 1 Analyzing changes in students' attitudes towards people with disabilities	Attitude change	Attitude to disability scale	16-item validated scale for assessment of attitudes to disabilities (Power et al., 2010). Administered twice: before and after module.	Score	Quantitative
		Open question survey	Survey with 7 open questions related to familiarity with tourism for all, accessible tourism, and learning methodologies. Collected twice: before and after module.	Textual	Thematic
		Learning logs	6 reflective logs with open questions on the learning process. LJ 1-5 with 5 open questions and LJ6 with 1 open question. Delivered after: LJ1 hotel visit / LJ2 ideation session / LJ3 feedback / LJ4 prototyping session / LJ5 oral presentation / LJ6 final session.	Textual	Thematic
		Interview	Individual, 40-50-minute, semi-structured interview reviewing the module retrospectively. Conducted at the end of the module.	Textual	Thematic
Objective 2 Identifying challenges students faced and the strategies they applied to solve them	2.1 Challenges 2.2 Strategies	Open questions survey	See Objective 1.	Textual	Thematic
		Learning logs			
		Interview			
		Journey Plot	Visual representation of the most relevant and less relevant learning experiences linked to the sessions, in retrospective. Collected at the end of the module.	Visual	Content
Objective 3 Analyzing students' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience	3.1 General satisfaction 3.2 Knowledge and skills 3.3 Workload	Open questions survey	See Objective 1.	Textual	Thematic
		Learning logs			
		Interview			
		Journey Plot		Visual	Content
		Satisfaction survey	3 closed question (0-5 Likert scale): Assessing general satisfaction (3.1) Reviewing competencies and skills acquired (3.2) Assessing workload (3.3)	Score	Quantitative

Table 7. Description of data collection instruments and data analysis

Attitude is understood as "the principles and beliefs that influence one's choices, judgements, behaviors and actions on the path towards individual, societal and environmental well-being" (OECD, 2019, p. 100). Changes to students' attitudes through participation in the module (Objective 1) were analyzed considering quantitative (ADS scores pre-and post-module) and qualitative data (students' comments related to attitude changes expressed in the surveys, learning logs and interview). Following the established processes of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) we segmented students' discourse to identify changes in their attitudes across the different qualitative data collected. The basic unit of analysis were quotations that expressed a change in attitude during the module. Data categorization used open coding to classify the data, which was organized into wider thematic clusters and re-ordered. The final clusters were awareness of own limitations, awareness of required changes in the industry, empathy and service orientation, and commitment to change. As a result from this analysis, three groups of students emerged: those with a highly positive attitude towards change, those with a positive attitude towards change and those with no significant changes in attitude.

We analyzed the challenges students faced during the module and the strategies they applied to overcome them (Objective 2) by reviewing qualitative elements several times, first individually and then in cross-case comparisons, we grouped codes by thematic categories to reduce the complexity of the analysis. Four distinct categories of challenges emerged: lack of previous knowledge of the subject, perceived limitations related to creative skills, difficulty with the selection of ideas and insecurities about the oral presentation. As for strategies, the unit of analysis was explicit regulation episodes (adapted from Iñesta & Castelló, 2012), defined as a sequence of actions that students implemented to solve a difficulty identified during the learning process. After reducing and re-ordering the categories, strategies were coded as leaving the comfort zone, self-confidence and connecting to purpose, research, teamwork, facilitator's support, use of tools, partner's help and seeking feedback. Emerging strategies were grouped into two pre-established categories: self-regulation or co-regulation.

To analyze students' perceptions of the teaching and learning experience (Objective 3) the basic unit of analysis was what students referred to as "relevant learning experiences." For this study, "relevant" is defined as an experience that students perceived as a learning experience that shaped their module in any way. Following established processes of Thematic Analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) quotations related to knowledge and skills were classified using pre-existing dimensions introduced in the Learning Compass 2030. It distinguishes four different kinds of knowledge: disciplinary, interdisciplinary, epistemic, and procedural knowledge, and three skills categories: cognitive and meta-cognitive; social and emotional; and practical and physical skills. Qualitative data was complemented by quantitative results gathered from three specific questions from the survey that assessed the module: the satisfaction index, competencies and knowledge acquired and workload questions. These indexes were analyzed for the cohort since it was an anonymous survey.

4.4   Results

4.4.1   Changes in students' attitudes

Students' attitudes are seen as twofold: on the one hand, this refers specifically to attitude changes towards PwD measured with the Attitude to Disability validated scale (see Table 8). On the other, it refers to attitude changes towards PwD and students' agency as analyzed through the qualitative elements collected.

#	Participant	Scale result (before start of module)	Scale result (upon completion of module)	Variation (absolute values)	Variation (percentage)
1	Mary	42	45	3	7.1%
2	Anne	25	31	6	24%
3	Grace	47	47	0	0%
4	Helen	38	41	3	7.9%
5	George	33	44	11	33%
6	Mia	39	54	15	38%
7	Lucas	42	55	13	31%
8	Lily	32	39	7	22%
9	Amelia	27	26	-1	-3.7%
10	James	50	49	-1	-2%
11	Ava	36	41	7	19%
12	Olivia	47	38	-9	-19%

Table 8. Results variation on attitude changes towards people with disabilities

The highest possible score was 80 points. Most sample results ranged between the 50th and the 75th percentile, so the cohort's attitude at the start of the module was positive. Quantitative results showed a high positive change in attitudes towards PwD in the case of eight students, with percentages ranging from 7.1% to 38% increases in positive attitude. One student showed no difference, two showed slight decreases (-2% and -3.7%) and one showed a significant decrease (-19%). Figure 3 presents the results in a graphic format.

Figure 3. Graphic display of variations in attitude changes towards PwD

In addition to the scale focusing exclusively on attitudes towards PwD, we analyzed quotations that expressed a change in attitude throughout the module. Three groups emerged: students with a highly positive attitude change (42%), students with a positive attitude change (50%) and one student that showed no significant change. Examples are displayed in Table 9. Students with a positive attitude change showed awareness of their own limitations, awareness of changes required in the industry, and empathy and service orientation. Students with a highly positive attitude change showed, moreover, commitment to change in society as future leaders. One student only expressed change related to the professional skills they gained.

Objective 1	Emerging groups	Areas of change	Examples
Changes in students' attitudes	Highly positive	Commitment to contribute to change	I want to improve my knowledge to work for a better world. The fact that "we can do something useful" resonates with me, and I feel that we can keep things moving. (p1)
	Highly positive and positive	Awareness of own limitations	For me it opened my mind […]. Because I never thought about it. […] When someone shows you, you start okay, maybe the world is not the way I always saw it. (p6)
		Awareness of changes required in the industry	I believed everyone would go the extra mile for PwD. That isn´t the case however There is a severe lack of knowledge when it comes to how hotels should act towards disabilities, and that needs to change drastically. (p2)
		Empathy and service orientation	It was possible to […] be more empathic, and this is going to help me all my life to understand people around me as a worker, a student, a manager, and a human. (p7)
	Not significant	Competencies gained in accessibility	After learning about this topic, I will always take those things in consideration in my professional future. (p10)

Table 9. Examples of changes in students' attitudes

4.4.2 Challenges students faced during the module and strategies they applied to solve them

Problem-solving was at the core of the module: students faced challenges and applied different strategies to overcome them. Four distinct categories of challenges emerged: lack of previous knowledge of the subject, perceived limitations of creative skills, difficulty selecting ideas, and insecurity during the oral presentation. Most challenges were reported at the ideation and presentation phase, with few challenges related to prototyping or design-thinking as a methodology.

Strategies applied to the different challenges were classified using two pre-established categories: self-regulation or co-regulation. After categorization, strategies were coded as self-confident and connecting to purpose, corresponding to self-regulation and research, teamwork, facilitator's support, use of tools, and feedback for co-regulation strategies. For challenges involving a lack of previous knowledge and difficulty selecting ideas, no self-regulation strategies were described. Mentions of co-regulation outperformed self-regulation strategies in all categories. No students implemented only self-regulation strategies. The co-regulating strategies valued as effective by 83% of students were teamwork and seeking feedback. Moreover, overcoming nervousness during the oral presentation was a challenge shared by all students. The jury—composed of professionals in the field—and the proposals being evaluated by the hotel contributed to a "real-life" scenario that was perceived as extra challenging. Students stressed the fact that feeling involved in a worthwhile, real-life challenge connected them to the purpose and was their main self-regulation strategy (see Table 10 for examples). A cross-case comparison showed two different groups of students: students only applying co-regulation strategies, and a group of students combining self-regulation and co-regulation strategies.

Emerging challenge	Self-regulation	Examples
Insecurity during oral presentation	Connecting to purpose	We think that we have a role, that we can help the hotel, so we feel engaged: that's nice. I worked with a vision. (p1) The fact that I was passionate about setting up our project with my partner helped me to overcome my shyness when speaking in public, and I really appreciated this presentation. (p8)

Table 10. Self-regulation strategies to overcome insecurities in oral presentations

4.4.3 Students' perception of the teaching and learning experience

Students' perception of the teaching and learning experience was analyzed by considering the cohort's quantitative data and an in-depth qualitative analysis. Quantitative results were extremely positive, showing a cohort satisfaction index of 4.6/5 (response rate 58%). Students agreed with the statement "my competencies and knowledge have improved since the start of the course" (4.9/5). The workload (4.7/5) was, in their view, adequate and well-distributed.

The Learning Compass suggests that for learners to exercise their agency, core foundations composed of knowledge, skills, attitudes, and values are required. Two dimensions were analyzed in the qualitative analysis: quotations on acquired knowledge and on skills (see Table 11 for examples). Attitudes were analyzed in a previous phase (Objective 1). Values were not analyzed in the current study, though this is recommended as a future line of research.

Knowledge and skills	Categories	Examples
Disciplinary knowledge	Tourism for all	I learnt a lot about the concept of tourism for all. I feel more knowledgeable now. (p11)
Epistemic knowledge	Highly valued "real-life challenge"	You have real-life data. And talk with the GM and go there and do the research. I thought it was really good to do the research there. (p4)
	Confidence in making a change	This module opened my eyes and my mind, too […] I'm sure this will give me a plus in my career. In the future, I'll be able to find solutions. (p6)
	Transferable competencies	I learned how to create a project from the beginning. It's a lot of work, but I can do it again. (p1)
Procedural knowledge	Tools	I learned a lot of prototyping, and how to think about different ideas. (p12)
Cognitive and metacognitive skills	Creativity	This experience allowed me to become more creative and for that I will be forever appreciative. (p3)
	Reflection on own learning	I learned constructive criticism is a valuable tool. People don't want to judge or be mean, they want us to reach our fullest potential. If I want to be a manager, I won't be in charge because I know everything; I'll be in charge because I take people's ideas and I help them, make them better. I'm going to apply that heavily. In other courses, we would just sit in a classroom for two hours and listen, and then regurgitate information; I learned, but it didn't stick. Everything we learned really stuck with me. (p2)
Social and emotional skills	Teamwork	I learned how to work in a group and figure out problems and solutions together. (p12)
	Empathy	Linked to objective 1 (see quotations in Table 2).
Practical skills	Project management	I feel like now I can break it down and slowly piece everything back together and solve it. (p3)
	Oral skills	I improved on oral presentations. That's something that you need to improve on daily. Especially for hospitality is important. (p4)

Table 11. Student's perceptions of acquired knowledge and skills

The model distinguishes four kinds of knowledge: disciplinary, interdisciplinary, epistemic, and procedural. 83% of students mentioned improvements in their disciplinary knowledge specifically related to tourism for all. No references were made to interdisciplinary knowledge acquired. As for epistemic knowledge, the complete cohort felt they had enhanced their professional expertise, highly valuing the "real-life" challenge and setup. 75% of the cohort mentioned feeling confident about having been able to make changes in the industry and felt they had gained transferable skills. Regarding procedural knowledge, all students mentioned tools they had learned which were mainly creative or for prototyping. 83% mentioned the usefulness of the problem-solving process and their will to implement it in their future careers.

Skills are divided into three categories: cognitive and meta-cognitive, social, and emotional, and practical and physical. In cognitive and meta-cognitive skills, 83% of students stated that they had developed creative skills, the most relevant skill in this dimension; 50% explicitly reflected on their learning process. As for social and emotional skills, 75% showed development. All

students mentioned teamwork as a perceived acquired skill, and 58% of the cohort claimed to have enhanced their empathy skills. Leadership, open-mindedness, communication, and proactivity were also mentioned. In terms of practical skills, half of students listed oral abilities as their main developed skill. During the interviews, students greatly valued the feedback provided by lecturers, professionals, and peers. 75% of students referred to becoming aware of the importance of giving and receiving feedback and pointed to positive reinforcement as one of the main take-aways.

Table 12 shows that experiential sessions were valued as relevant for the learning experience, scoring 4.2/5 on average in the Journey Plots, whereas theoretical sessions were valued, on average, as less relevant (3.4/5). Final presentations were valued as highly relevant (5/5) by 83% of participants, obtaining the highest score of all.

Session description (t) theoretical (e) experiential	Journey Plots' scores by participant												Journey Plots' average score
	P1	P2	P3	P4	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	P12	P1-P12
Introduction (t)	3	3	0	3	1	0	1	3	3	4	3	4	2.3
Theoretical (t)	3	4	2	3	2	1	2	3	3	3	3	4	2.8
Hotel visit (e)	4	5	4	3	3	3	3	5	3	4	3	5	3.8
Theoretical (t)	4	4	4	3	4	3	2	3	3	3	4	5	3.5
Ideation (e)	4	5	4	4	4	3	3	1	3	5	5	5	3.8
Theoretical (t)	4	4	4	4	4	3	3	3	3	3	5	5	3.8
Proposal (e)	4	5	5	5	4	3	4	5	2	4	5	5	4.3
Feedback (e)	3	5	5	5	2	3	5	5	5	5	5	4	4.2
Prototyping (e)	4	5	5	5	2	3	1	5	5	5	5	4	4.1
Theoretical (e)	4	4	3	5	2	4	5	4	5	4	4	3	3.9
Presentation (e)	5	5	5	5	2	5	5	5	5	5	4	5	4.7
Wrap-up (t)	4	4	5	5	2	5	5	3	3	3	4	5	4

Table 12. Evaluation of sessions based on Journey Plots

In the last phase, each participant's data was analyzed by looking for relationships between changes in attitudes, challenges and strategies applied, and their perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience. Before the module started, half of the cohort stated that they were acquainted with autism. Four students had previously participated in action-based challenges, and five had experienced design thinking as a learning methodology. In general terms, phases that presented more challenges were valued as more relevant to the learning experience. Most students who showed increases in attitudinal changes shared that they were not acquainted with the autism spectrum disorder, action-based challenges and/or design-

methodology before. Findings showed that the student with no significant attitudinal changes experienced difficulties working with design-thinking and mostly applied co-regulation strategies.

4.5   Discussion & conclusions

The present mixed-method case study sought to train undergraduate students willing and able to foster accessible accommodation by focusing on pedagogy that supports this call. Students' agency was analyzed with a combination of innovative, transformational pedagogical approaches: an action-based challenge related to accessibility in tourism, applying design-thinking as a human-centered problem-solving method, and using learning logs as self-regulating reflective tools. In our view, the combination of task-oriented problem solving (objective reframing) with self-reflection (subjective reframing) was highly relevant to achieving positive results.

The first objective analyzed changes in students' attitudes before and after participating in the module. Both quantitative and qualitative results showed a positive attitudinal change towards PwD. Participant 12 showed a significant decrease in the quantitative scale; however, the qualitative data was, unexpectedly, extremely positive. In the qualitative analysis, students showed commitment to ensuring accessibility as future leaders, with only one participant only mentioning changes related to the acquisition of professional skills. Thus, we may conclude that most of the cohort, based on their perceptions, gained inclusive values. Findings are consistent with Mezirow, (1997), suggesting that learning might have transformed participants by changing their frames of reference in respect to accessibility in tourism. Furthermore, the module appeared to allow students to critically reflect on their assumptions and help them transform existing attitudes and perceived future behaviors into more open and inclusive views, as found in previous studies (Belhassen & Caton, 2011; Garcia-Rosell, 2013; Pritchard et al., 2011).

Moreover, findings are in line with Lynch et al. (2019), we see students describe their new insights as a module that has changed how they view themselves (psychological transformation), how they see the world (convictional transformation), and how they assume they will act in the future (behavioral transformation). The combination of a challenge, design-thinking and reflective tools confronted students with their implicit beliefs, making them reflect upon their role as future tourism professionals. The pedagogical model that was introduced contributed to students being critically reflective; and self-reflection, in turn, might lead to personal transformation. The pedagogical methodologies implemented helped students not only to understand the realities of the subject area but also to challenge those realities, helping them develop their critical reflexivity (Garcia-Rosell, 2015). It is interesting to mention that the categories that emerged have points of contact with the dimensions proposed by TEFI's values-based approach to tourism education (Dredge, Schott, et al., 2015; Dredge & Schott, 2013a): stewardship, knowledge, professionalism, ethics and mutual respect.

The second objective was to identify the challenges students faced and the strategies they used to solve them, classified either as self-regulation or co-regulation strategies. Results were in line with Hmelo-Silver (2004), showing that self-directed learners were proactive in achieving their goals. In other words, learners adapted their personal strategies to what the situation demanded. Moreover, all students implemented co-regulation strategies; therefore, the numerous mentions of this study corroborate that feedback contributes to a better problem-solving performance in line with Chin et al. (2019), to positive changes in attitudes, values and

beliefs (Mezirow, 2000), and to the importance of students "learning by doing with others" (Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012, p. 583). The design, in line with Mezirow (1997) proposed experiential activities, reflection and debriefing as a way to stimulate transformative learning. Furthermore, immersive activities were planned as they are an important base for TLT (Stone & Duffy, 2015). Findings showed that learning logs did improve students' reflection as proposed by previous research on TLT (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Stone & Duffy, 2015).

The third objective was to analyze students' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience by combining quantitative and qualitative data. Quantitative results were extremely positive. From a qualitative perspective, disciplinary, epistemic, and procedural knowledge was improved. Several students mentioned feeling confident that they would be able to make changes to the industry. Cognitive, metacognitive, social, emotional, and practical skills were improved, teamwork being the one most highlighted followed by empathy and oral skills. Students' agency implies a "sense of responsibility, as students participate in society and aim to influence people, events and circumstances for the better" and includes capabilities such as empathy, responsibility, creativity and problem-solving (OECD, 2019b, p. 34). Results of the case study showed that the methodologies enhanced students' agency, as defined by OECD, and fostered transformative competencies such as creativity and problem-solving, empathy and teamwork. In other educational contexts teaching through design-thinking made students more agentic (Lynch et al., 2019), as also suggested by the present study. In this case, the international representation of students adds significant value to design thinking offering diverse perspectives. Moreover, findings are in line with previous empirical studies in higher education that showed that design-thinking enhanced students' creativity, engagement, adaptability, empathy, problem-solving, collaboration, and fostered change-agent skills (Chin et al., 2019; Lake et al., 2019; Mugadza & Marcus, 2019).

For humanistic values to emerge and develop transformative attitudes, problem-solving capabilities are essential (UNESCO, 2015). Problem-solving requires the use of a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (OECD, 2019b). The findings of the study demonstrated that the module succeeded in enhancing students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes on accessibility in hospitality, which are the foundation of students' agency. The module not only contributed to graduates' professional competencies but also developed student reflexivity and inclusive attitudes, in line with the recommendations of T&HE scholars (Airey et al., 2015; Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a; Boluk, Cavaliere et al, 2019b; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Boyle et al., 2015; Dredge & Schott, 2013b; Lashley, 2015; Pritchard et al., 2011; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2015; Tribe, 2002).

One of the most significant findings to emerge is that a relatively short educational program, like the one showcased, can effectively change students' attitudes related to people with disabilities and accessible accommodation in a positive way. These findings support a previous study by Daruwalla & Darcy (2005), which proved that the attitudes of tourism employees and students towards people with disabilities can be changed through intervention programs. A change in attitude is important as attitudes might guide behavior (Bizjak et al., 2011; Daruwalla & Darcy, 2005). The combination of innovative pedagogical approaches that developed action and reflection fostered student agency specifically regarding accessibility in tourism. The findings are aligned with the profile of the critical tourism citizen proposed by Boluk, Cavaliere et al. (2019b). Transformational leaders with inclusive values are greatly needed in the tourism industry to lead change. Young professionals who commit to economic, social, and environmental issues might have a positive impact, especially on the most vulnerable groups. In this sense, it is encouraging that by implementing short modules aligned with these values,

educational institutions can contribute to the SDGs of the 2030 Agenda, in this specific case to SDG 11: make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable.

This study delivered inclusive proposals to the hotel and involved a challenge that addressed concerns in hospitality and tourism in a co-creative way. Tourism stakeholders must work together towards tourism for all, and this study provides a positive example of fruitful cooperation between a hospitality company and an educational institution. Critical thinking and a concern for host-guest relations were also encouraged, influencing the practice and development of those entering managerial roles in the sector (Lashley, 2015). Conscious and agentic graduates might have a positive impact on the hospitality industry, understanding tourism and management not only as an economic sector but as a social force. The challenge chosen was related to accessibility in hospitality, specifically to ASD, still unknown to most hospitality providers and T&HE students. From this perspective, accessible tourism is a learning opportunity as it becomes a chance to promote social inclusion. Focusing on people with disabilities provides an excellent opportunity to get back to the core of what hospitality is all about: meaningful encounters where genuinely service-oriented interactions are offered to all guests, regardless of their condition.

This study has implications for educational innovation. First, we set out to respond to a clear gap in studies on T&HE campus-based pedagogies that foster critical thinkers in tourism (Garcia-Rosell, 2013; Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Stone & Duffy, 2015). Second, it contributes to a call for TEFI that urges universities to implement transformational learning theory at the highest level, hoping that this approach will transform habits of mind (Joppe & Elliot, 2015). Third, the study provides a better understanding of TLT, its impact on students' outcomes and how it is perceived by them, and assesses transformative experiences in a learning context—all areas for further scholarly research—with rigorous application and measurement (Castelló et al., 2018; Guaman-Quintanilla et al., 2020; Lynch et al., 2019; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012; Stone & Duffy, 2015). Moreover, the mixed-method methodology itself is a contribution, provided the limited number of studies that apply it to tourism and hospitality classroom contexts.

4.5.1   Limitations and further lines of research

We are aware that our study has limitations. Although its contributions to T&HE are significant, the Attitude to Disability Scale, like other scales of this type, might present certain biases—like social desirability—that may disguise true attitudes. Furthermore, the participants' background, such as values or personal traits, were not measured and might have impacted the results. Values, classified into four categories (personal, social, societal and human), are guiding principles that underpin what people believe to be important when making decisions in all areas of private and public life, and vary depending on social and cultural contexts (OECD, 2019a). The influence and impact of values were not considered at this study and should certainly be explored in future research. It is important to mention that differences are likely to appear in other groups, disciplines, and contexts. However, the results of this study offer clues regarding how similar interventions might obtain positive results in other contexts.

Furthermore, this study was limited by the closeness of the researcher to the intervention. We must factor in the difficulties in measuring attitude changes, learning and outcomes in the context of a module, designed, delivered, and then evaluated by the researcher. This design requires some teaching conditions we were unable to control. While we are aware that having a control group would have reinforced the results, current trends in educational research

interventions pointed to ethical issues and the need to reverse groups to guarantee that all students can benefit from interventions.

We suggest that further research explore different accessibility issues in hospitality or apply a similar pedagogical model to a broader range of diversity or sustainability-related challenges. Furthermore, tourism sub-sectors other than hospitality could be chosen. It would also be interesting to replicate similar studies with students from other cultural contexts or disciplines. The issue of values is important as well and should certainly be explored in further research. Finally, mixed-method studies in pedagogical innovation in tourism and hospitality education are scarce, so further studies would be beneficial.

Overall, results show that this short experiential educational module contributed to a positive attitudinal change towards people with disabilities in students, developed inclusive values related to accessible accommodation and fostered students' agency. Students showed the ability to extend empathy towards others, and many reported being committed to driving change and contributing to ensure accessibility —things essential to ensuring a fairer future in tourism. T&HE should foster educational initiatives for accessible tourism, training responsible professionals who are willing and able to contribute to reducing inequality in society. We hope the pedagogical issues raised in this study drive more educators to adopt educational innovation for social transformation and inclusion. We fully concur with one of the participant's comments: "the hospitality world needs to adjust its services for people with disabilities to make life easier for them. It's just part of being hospitable."

Chapter 5. Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models

Abstract of the chapter

Incorporating a co-created educational intervention focused on gender equality to an existing core course allowed us to explore SDG 5 gender equality, combining multi-stakeholder involvement with an open innovation focus, not currently standard practice within universities. This approach allowed us to bridge knowledge learned in the classroom into real-life sustainable practices, while the direct access to the initiatives and to professionals in the field by students and facilitators was a further learning outcome. This chapter introduces a first pilot educational intervention, and the proposed assessment tools for subsequent iterations that was a starting point to equip students with knowledge, skills, and tools to address challenges related to gender equality. Moreover, it is an example of implementing practical solutions that accelerate change through partnerships, in line with SDG 17, the guiding principle informing this Ph.D.

5 Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models

5.1 Introduction

The need to move towards a common European Higher Education Area (also known as 'Bologna process') invited universities to rethink their role and consider the need to combine the 'knowledge for the sake of knowledge' approach (the classic purpose of university education as considered by university theorists from Humboldtian times) with a new approach that, simply speaking, was considered to be more student-oriented and which proposed various combinations of the 'knowledge for employment' approach (especially valuable in the context of increasing competition in the market of university formation, where institutions are compelled to ensure the effectiveness of schools in placing students after graduation) and the 'knowledge for societal impact' approach[5] (especially valued by society and public organizations claiming universities should assume responsibility in leading the way towards a more sustainable and socially responsible world). This societal impact approach has gained further relevance with the launch of the SDGs. 'Education for the SDGs', a term coined by the Sustainable Development Solutions Network, one of the leading experts' organizations that have emerged in the last years to accelerate the adoption of the SDGs in higher education, is a critical mission for universities. There is wide agreement that educational institutions are in a privileged position to provide this service to society (SDSN, 2020).

Until lately, however, this rethinking stayed mostly at the theoretical level, i.e., many white papers were and still are being published to identify the kinds of competencies regarded as key by employers, or competencies regarded as transformative for societal impact. Many books, papers and conferences were and are being held to find ways to respond to the need for change. How all that is translating into actual changes in program's curricula and in educational practices is difficult to assess, although national and international quality accreditation processes play a decisive role enhancing institutions implement actual changes in the curriculum as well as account for students' competence development. To give support to educational institutions, several international organizations have emerged in the last years (see SDSN, PRME or TEFI, to mention a few). In Spain, some thirteen years-in from the introduction of tourism Bachelor degrees, we should be reaching some sort of consolidation in this area, though we are still far from that objective.

The scarce academic and research attention to tourism in Spain has undoubtedly been a consequence of its recent configuration as the first sector of activity and its late entry into the university study system. Tourism in the higher education context in Spain is a rather new discipline. It was only as of 1996 that Spain approved tourism and hospitality studies at a higher education diploma-granting level. This fact largely explains the lack of consideration of tourism as a potential contributor to economic, social, and environmentally sustainable development. In addition, a widespread consideration of tourism as a conjunctural activity, with little recognition as a development factor and sometimes with an emphasis on its most negative impacts, has contributed to underestimating tourism in Spain as a field of academia and to delay the process

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[5] The value proposition of higher education institutions as expressed in their mission and vision statements usually share the classic focus on knowledge and then combine the focus on aiming at contributing to social advancement and professional placement in different degrees.

of reflection regarding its regenerative potential. Both in terms of tourism training and research in this field, there is an evident disproportion between the magnitudes generated by tourism as an economic sector and agent of country development and the insufficient attention paid to its knowledge from the academic field, considering that tourism has brought about important changes and transformations on the territory, the economy and society.

It was not until 2009 that tourism and hospitality studies were officially recognized at the Bachelors-level by the Spanish Ministry of Education. That same year, HTSI launched a Bachelor degree in Tourism and Hospitality Management under the umbrella of Universitat Ramon Llull, a federation of Christian-inspired higher education schools. The competencies included in the study plan we decided upon by a commission created with other national universities. Benchmarks were established with other universities in the tourism and hospitality field, nationally and internationally, contrasting them with the industry via an expert panel and focus groups. Unfortunately, at the time, not enough attention was paid to sustainability and the SDGs within the study plans.

Not until recently were Spanish university programs required to include a gender equality perspective. The organic law 17/2015 of 21st of July on the Effective equality of women and men introduced specific legal requirements for universities, which are audited by the Spanish quality accreditation organizations, such as the National Agency for Quality Assessment and Accreditation of Spain (ANECA) on a national level or the Catalan University Quality Assurance Agency (AQU Catalunya), at regional Catalan level. However, this was not a legal requirement affecting the current Bachelor Degree in Tourism and Hospitality Management program accredited at HTSI, so it was not contemplated at the moment of the program design in 2007. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and, at the same time, a necessary foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world (UN, 2020). Women are key to achieve sustainable development and to implement the SDGs in tourism (Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a). Moreover, there is an urgent need for practical solutions and change in organizations (Chambers et al., 2017; Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Munar et al., 2015, 2017).

When implementing education to equip students with knowledge, skills and tools to address the challenges related with SDGs, SDSN (2020) suggests that universities might opt for two main choices. One option is to develop new courses that focus specifically on the SDGs or a particular SDG, which is the approach we applied at Study 3 (presented in Chapter 4). In that case, Tourism for All, presented in the previous chapter, was a newly created educational module, that was specifically designed and implemented to train undergraduate students on accessible-related competencies, in line with SDG 11. A second option is to integrate relevant elements related to the SDGs or a particular SDG into the existing curriculum. In the view of SDSN (2020), this option is specially indicated for profession-specific contexts, which is our case in the tourism and hospitality studies. Moreover, the advantage of the latter option is that it is faster than developing a new module.

To achieve a higher impact, SDSN recommends that transformative learning approaches are best delivered through hands-on course-related projects with multi-stakeholder involvement (SDSN, 2020). In their expert view, education to equip students with knowledge, skills, and tools to address challenges related with SDGs can be accelerated by engaging actors who are involved in addressing the SDGs in their professional field. These actors bring: "deep insights on the challenges and strategies of putting knowledge learned in the classroom into complex real-world situations, provide inspiration for and testament to the relevance of education for the SDGs outside the university, bridge knowledge gaps in teaching resources, bring issues to life,

and make the offerings more current and topical" (SDSN, 2020, p. 14). This approach is in line with open innovation educational experiences previously mentioned in the literature (Chesbrough, 2003; de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021).

Following this suggestion, with the aim to educate for SDG5, we co-designed we co-designed with the consultancy company Ideas for Change[6] a pilot educational intervention combining multi-stakeholder involvement, action learning and problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Leonard, 2015). The intervention followed an open innovation[7] focus, in which the sources and exchange of knowledge were extended beyond the organizational borders of the University (Chesbrough, 2003; de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021). The educational intervention was embedded within an existing course of HTSI's Bachelor Degree of tourism and hospitality management, and integrated insights of Study 2 (presented in Chapter 3) and the learnings obtained from the experiential module undertaken as part of Study 3 (presented in Chapter 4).

The intervention revolved around a project that addressed SDG 5, gender equality. The project itself responded to a call Commissioned by Fitur[8], a leading tourism and hospitality annual trade fair, organized by Ifema Madrid[9,] and was led by FITURNEXT Observatory[10], FITUR's platform dedicated to promoting good practices in tourism. Ideas for Change was the consultancy selected for developing and implementing the call. For its focus on gender equality, open innovation and tourism, collaboration with Ideas for Change and Fitur was viewed as an ideal and valuable partner. It allowed HTSI to introduce education to equip students with knowledge, skills, and tools to address challenges related with SDG 5, while contributing HTSI to disciplinary and societal impact. This educational intervention was co-created by two of HTSI's faculty members responsible for facilitating the course, one of them being the Ph.D. candidate, jointly with two members of the Ideas for Change team.

In Study 4, entitled "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models" and presented here, the overarching objective was to co-design and implement a pilot educational intervention within an existing course focused on gender equality, proposing thereafter assessment tools for future iterations (objective linked to SDG 5). Our specific objectives were:

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[6] Ideas for change is a pioneer consulting and research company in innovation with impact. It designs and builds open and contributory business models that encourage the improvement of cities, organizations, public institutions, and social entities. Website: https://www.ideasforchange.com/

[7] Open innovation is a business management model introduced by Henry Chesbrough in 2003. It refers to innovation that promotes collaboration with people and organizations outside the company itself. In the last years, this approach has been implemented to higher education contexts.

[8] https://www.ifema.es/en/fitur

[9] Founded in 1980, IFEMA is a consortium formed by the Community of Madrid, the Madrid City Council, the Chamber of Commerce and Industry, and the Montemadrid Foundation. Website: https://www.ifema.es/en

[10] The FITURNEXT Observatory acts as a guide for identifying future tourism trends and to disseminate guidelines that bring benefits for visitors, residents, destinations, and the environment, economically, socially, culturally, and environmentally. Website: https://www.ifema.es/en/fitur-next

SO9. To explore the processes involved in co-designing and implementing an educational intervention applying a multi-stakeholder and open innovation approach.

SO10. To analyze students' and collaborating facilitators' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience

S011. To propose assessment tools for subsequent iterations.

5.2   Methods

5.2.1   Participants and data collection

The educational intervention was integrated within a core course (Business strategies and corporate social responsibility) of the 4º Year of the Bachelor's degree in Tourism and Hospitality Management, which lasted for four months (February-June 2020), and accounted for 12 European Credit Transfer Systems. The cohort was composed of eighty-nine Bachelor students enrolled in this course (64 female and 25 male). Students ranged from 21 to 25 years old. To complement students' information, data were collected by the two external stakeholders that co-created the pilot project jointly with the facilitators.

For this first pilot educational intervention, which was framed as a case study (Yin, 2003), the process of co-designing the educational intervention was the focus of our attention. The reason for this is that we aimed at exploring which educational experience conditions may be said to enhance students' learning and engagement in a gender equality project in the tourism and hospitality sector. The intervention focused primarily on a public project, which was integrated within the course, whose guiding principle was to help students understand innovation as a business strategy that adopts sustainable solutions already underway and respond to the needs of the sector. Based on insights from previous gender-related research (i.e., Study 2), the students were requested to help identify, analyze, and evaluate initiatives that contribute to gender equality and women empowerment launched at the global level by companies, organizations, and destinations.

The selected initiatives contributed to FiturNext Observatory by detecting, analyzing, selecting, and presenting replicable and high-impact initiatives. At Fitur 2021, a selection of proven and easily replicable initiatives was then shared with the tourism community to improve the quality of tourism activity worldwide with focus on gender-equality.

Applying a fast innovation approach (Brown, 2009; de Salles Canfield & Moreira e Silva Bernardes, 2018; Glen et al., 2014; Sándorová et al., 2020), qualitative and quantitative data were collected from participating students and external stakeholders to measure its effectiveness. Qualitative data were collected by using a set of reflective questions distributed to participants at the end of the course, and content analysis was chosen to analyze students' responses (Braun & Clarke, 2006). Prior to the content analysis, we re-coded participant´s code names to ensure confidentiality. Quantitative data were collected through students' satisfaction indexes.

5.2.2   Context

In the following lines, we present the main characteristics of the educational intervention in its design and implementation phases.

Educational intervention design

The educational intervention entitled "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models" revolved around a project that addressed SDG 5, as explained in section 5.1 and 5.2.1. Specifically, the aim was to contribute to the question: "How can tourism contribute to gender equality and women empowerment?". Table 13 shows the course objectives.

Complementary to the project, the course alternated theoretical, practical and project supervision support sessions. Theoretical sessions included plenary lectures introducing concepts related to business strategies, corporate social responsibility, innovation, and gender-equality. Practical sessions were aligned with the project, which was at the heart of the educational intervention, and with content-related workshops. Project supervision support sessions were arranged particularly to advance on the challenge. Students were distributed in groups of 4 and 70% of the course final grade (group mark) was allocated to this project, while the remaining 30% corresponded to the assessment of individual knowledge acquisition by means of three exams. A total of 90 contact hours were rendered distributed among workshops (18 hours), invited professionals (20 hours), plenary lectures (14 hours), supervised work (34 hours), and presentations (4 hours).

Apart from the project itself being co-designed with an external stakeholder, following the recommendation of SDSN, multi-stakeholder involvement included inviting several stakeholders from the professional and academic fields to share real-life examples, challenges and opportunities from their daily practice. A pool of invited professionals from companies, startups, NGOs, and partner universities complemented the sessions facilitated by the school's team (i.e., Alastria, Marriott Hotels & Resorts, ChartOk, Oxford School of Hospitality Management).

Course's objectives
1. Explore how organizations can gain competitive advantage and cooperate successfully in the marketplace.
2. Apply principles of corporate social responsibility and how it impacts on stakeholders with a special focus on gender equity (SDG 5).
3. Introduce elements related to open innovation and lean management in hospitality.
4. 4. Apply the tool ''Replicability Barometer'' to analyze and present replicable tourism-related initiatives with societal impact.

Table 13. Course's objectives

Educational intervention implementation

To advance on the project, identify and assess the initiatives contributing to SDG 5, the students were proposed to work in three distinct phases: 1. Identification of good practices, 2. Analysis and preselection of good practices and 3. Evaluation of good practices.

Moreover, the practices were classified into four impact areas: (i) Women workers: Projects that ensure equal pay, opportunities, and respect; (ii) Entrepreneurs: projects that promote the participation of female entrepreneurs in the tourism sector; (iii) Visitors: products, services and experiences designed to guarantee women's freedom of movement and relationship, and (iv) Host communities: practices that influence the advancement of rights in destinations for residents.

For the completion of phase 1 students, working in groups, identified replicable tourism initiatives with positive effects on at least one of the four established areas: women workers, entrepreneurs, visitors, and host communities. At the completion of the project, the cohort identified a total of 185 worldwide good practices addressing gender equality-related challenges.

In phase 2, students, in their respective groups, organized the innovations according to the challenges addressed and examined the positive effects they generate. In addition to conducting research on secondary data, good practices selected by students were validated, meaning that students had to contact the organizations in charge of the initiatives, explain the objectives of the FiturNextbservatory and the call for good practices, interview them and assist them in the completion of the required documentation in case they were willing to present their initiatives to the call. This allowed data to be obtained from primary sources. An interview script composed of 20 questions was provided (please see Apprendix XI. Interview questions for initiatives).

For the analysis of the initiatives selected, students used a tool that measured their replicability and feasibility: the replicability barometer. This analytical tool (see Table 14) developed by FiturNext Observatory (2020) measures the replicability potential of a practice based on two dimensions: its maturity level and the degree of feasibility. Each dimension consists of three variables that are calculated on a 5-level scale, each of which is measured according to the scope of a key performance indicator.

Replicability Barometer				
Dimensions	**Maturity level**	Development – Current state of development of the practice	5. Standard 4. In consolidation 3. Developing 2. Recent implementation 1. Concept idea	
		Documentation – Degree of detail of the existing documentation	5. Fully documented 4. There is documentation, but it is not ready to be shared 3. Several processes documented 2. Partial documentation 1. No documentation	
		Resources – Sum of resources required for its development	<u>Human resources</u> More than 500 people From 100 to 500 people From 25 to 100 people From 5 to 25 people Less than 5 people	<u>Economic resources</u> More than $500,000 From $100,000 to $500,000 From $25,000 to $100,000 From $5,000 to $25,000 Less than $5,000
	Feasibility	Dependencies – Regulatory context	5. Does not require any specific regulatory context 4. Requires support of the regulatory context 3. Requires official entity approval 2. Requires specific regulations articulated by the ecosystem 1. Requires specific regulations for the development of the activity	
		Transfers – Access to documentation	5. Open to everyone 4. Shared under certain conditions 3. Exploit it commercially 2. Share it in exchange of a specific benefit 1. Would not share it	
		Ecosystem – Ecosystem of actors to mobilize	5. Ecosystem of articulated actors 4. Actors involved but rarely articulated 3. Requires actors to take an active role 2. Requires actors to change procedures 1. Requires transforming the ecosystem in a radical way	

Table 14. The replicability barometer (adapted from FiturNext Observatory, 2020)

In phase 3, after having calculated the replicability potential of the identified practices using the replicability barometer, students selected the initiatives with the highest score. Combining quantitative (replicability barometer) and qualitative methods (interviews) they assessed the potential contribution of the initiatives to the challenge pre-determined areas, and finally, based on those criteria, presented their selected initiatives. From the 185 good practices that responded to SDG 5 identified by students, each group selected 2 to be submitted at the written report, and 1 good practice to be shared via a video presentation. That accounted for 42 submitted initiatives at the report and 21 initiatives presented on video by the cohort (please see Appendix XII).

The project was supervised by HTSI's lecturers and by a team member of Ideas for Change. Table 15 shows the elements assessed in the written report and Table 16 shows the elements assessed in the video. The report and video were evaluated by the HTSI's lecturers while the videos were additionally screened by three members of the team of Ideas for Change.

Written report			
Elements assessed		**Competencies evaluated**	**Max. points**
Challenge description	Description of the gender challenge, specifically the link to SDG 5 and the context of the assignment within the course.	G11	2
Method	Description of the method: the replicability barometer.	S19, E4, E5	1
Results	Description of results, complete list of projects, description of 5 selected projects, detailed description of the validated project.	G2, G7, G9	3
Group reflection	Reflection on the synergy between your selected project and some of the other projects presented on video by the rest of the teams.	G10	2
Assignment reflection	Reflection on the assignment's objectives, methodologies, role distribution, limitations, and recommendations.	B2, G8	1
Formal aspects	Formal aspects and referencing following HTSI's guidelines.	B1, B3, B4	1

Table 15. Elements assessed at the written report

Video			
Elements assessed		**Competencies evaluated**	**Max. points**
Presentation of results	A detailed and complete presentation of the selected project following the methodology.	B4, G7	5
Persuasion	Evidence and arguments used to persuade the viewer while demonstrating challenge's alignment.	B4, G15	3
Originality	Innovativeness in presenting the results.	G3	2

Table 16. Elements assessed at the video

5.3 Findings and discussion

The first specific objective of this study was to explore the processes involved in co-designing and implementing an educational intervention applying a multi-stakeholder and open innovation approach. We achieved excellent collaboration between the external stakeholders and the HTSI facilitators. However, COVID-19 moderately affected the project developed by students, specifically the planned collection of primary data. The project was launched in February 2020, right at the start of the semester. In March 2020, the outburst of the COVID-19 pandemic deeply affected the initially planned face-to-face sessions and data collection, which included interviews with initiative leaders, several of them startups. Though the originally planned face-to-face

sessions were immediately resumed online, the pandemic significantly altered the access to the initiative leaders and the students' possibilities of interviewing them.

The philosophy guiding the project was to help students understand innovation as the ability to adopt sustainable solutions that are already underway, and to respond to the needs of the sector. By identifying initiatives with a high impact and with a high potential of replicability, tourism can address global challenges in an effective way. Replicability is based on the concept of open innovation models, for this case study defined as "the provision of documentation, whether written or audiovisual, related to a project or part of it that collects enough information so that another interested actor can start it up" (FiturNext Observatory, 2020, p. 12). It can benefit tourism by implementing solutions that have worked elsewhere in a successful manner. Following this approach, valuable benefits were there for the promoter of the initiative, for the receiver (replicator) and for the destinations, which can be both senders and receivers, and direct or indirect beneficiaries of replicability (FiturNext Observatory, 2020). Table 17 shows the main benefits for the three parties involved.

This approach is in line with SDG 17, and with its target 17.17: Encourage and promote effective public, public-private, and civil society partnerships, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships (UN, 2020). Strong partnerships are indeed one transversal SDG relevant for the success of the 2030 Agenda. By replicating high impact feasible initiatives with a high potential of replicability, tourism can address global challenges in an effective way, with a multiplying effect. This approach is an example of implementing practical solutions that accelerate change through partnerships, the guiding principle informing this Ph.D.

Benefits replicability model		
Promoter	**Receiver**	**Destinations**
Adoption of good practices generating value quickly and easily, while reducing project development costs and efforts	Reduces the entry barriers and, therefore, an increase in the chances of success	Attracts tourism in a more socially sustainable way
Allows other people to contribute to this project, improve it and create new ideas	Increases efficiency through collaboration	Increases the possibilities of local entrepreneurship with a positive impact which in turn generates inclusive employment
Allows multiplying their positive impact on global issues	Contributes to a community, improving employee's engagement and the company's reputation	Improves the image that local communities have from tourism

Table 17. Benefits of the replicability model (own elaboration based on FiturNext Observatory, 2020)

The second specific objective was to analyze students' and collaborating facilitators' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience. Students were requested to reflect upon their teaching and learning perceptions, and the challenges they faced while working on the project. Qualitative data showed that when sharing their teaching and learning perceptions, students highly valued the opportunity to connect with worldwide initiatives, the possibility to learn about SDG 5 in an applied manner, contributing to a project that involved national and international NGOs, companies, and startups, and that aimed at making societal impact.

Findings are aligned with benefits suggested by SDSN (2020) and previous literature (Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021; Segovia-Pérez et al., 2019). The possibility to co-design a project with stakeholders who address the SDGs in their professional field increased the perception of applicability and relevance. Moreover, students appreciated the opportunity to approach worlwide good practices that are introducing practical solutions to minimize gender inequality. Table 18 shows examples of the students' perceptions of the teaching and learning experience.

Students' perception of the teaching and learning experience
This project was a great way to learn and be in touch with the professional world. (p2)
Collaborating with Fitur is a very good way to be in contact with the professional world. (p12)
We would like to highlight the contact with the initiative and their willingness to help the society. This is what we really bring home from this project. (p3)
The project has enabled us to learn about SDG 5, gender equality initiatives around the world, and gender inequalities that happen that woman face in their everyday life in several parts of the world. (p15)
This project has given us the opportunity to learn about initiatives that are being done in different continents to empower women. We have found out that there is a lot of work, hours, and effort as well as passion that goes into creating women empowerment initiatives and to help women in every possible way. (p4)
This project is a key differentiator compared to other universities as the SDG 5 is vital for the development of a fair society. With this assignment, we have learnt how companies apply innovative tools and methods by developing collaborative projects aligned with the SDGs. This course has allowed us to enrich our knowledge and be even more aware of the reality in which we live. (p18)
We got the excellent opportunity to bring our skills and competencies, namely research skills, communication, or our creative abilities to a real-world example. (p20)
Another key course objective that has been fulfilled with this project is looking at the SDGs from a real working lens. We incorporated all the course knowledge into this project. (p8)
Through this assignment we have had the chance not only to discover initiatives and how they can be introduced into tourism but also to work on a project that is real and different to many others we have done in the past. (p6)

Table 18. Examples of students' perception of the teaching and learning experience

When sharing the challenges faced, the analysis of qualitative data showed that students focused exclusively on the impacts of the Covid-19 pandemic situation. Lockdown-related obstacles that students encountered to materialize the interviews were clearly their main source of struggle (see Table 19). Unfortunately, the difficulties that emerged from the Covid-19 pandemic situation were of such a magnitude that this external hurdle hindered an optimal development of the project.

Examples of challenges students faced during the project
Despite our efforts and continued follow-ups, we had no response from some of the initiatives. (p1)
The global lockdown and having to continue the challenge remotely without guaranteeing the initiatives' involvement and participation caused a lot of uncertainty. (p3)
This pandemic has contributed to the no answer of almost all the projects that we have contacted. (p5)
We had trouble reaching out to the initiative developers, because they had no time to respond to us or had other priorities due to this pandemic situation. (p14)
The current situation of the Covid-19 has resulted in the refusal of many companies to participate in FiturNext. (p8)
Amidst personal frustrations and trying to do our best, we realized that most initiatives were reluctant or at least not interested in our project. So, we had to reinforce the advantages, try to talk to them and be emphatic. (p17)

Table 19. Examples of challenges students faced during the project

On the other hand, the analysis of quantitative results showed a cohort satisfaction index of 4/5 (response rate 42%), situated above the average semester's satisfaction index (3.8/5) which, considering the Covid-19 exceptional circumstances, might be considered a positive result. Students valued the statement "my competencies and knowledge have improved since the start of the course" with a 3.9/5. Also, the workload (4.1/5) was, in their view, adequate and well-distributed.

Regarding the external stakeholders, the analysis of their feedback revealed that participating in the module was an overall positive experience for them. Please see Table 20 to find examples of participants' testimonial excerpts. Integration of the challenge and gender equality-related topics to the existing course worked well. Combining the implementation of the challenge itself, complemented by academic papers and conferences on gender-equality, allowed for a holistic approach to the SDG. Ideas for Change's previous experience working with the SDGs in the field of tourism and hospitality, contributed to enhance the knowledge of the HTSI's lecturers, helped equip students with knowledge, skills, and tools to address SDG 5, and in our view, accelerated the impact of raising awareness of the SDGs at our school. Moreover, it was an opportunity to connect the knowledge shared in the classroom to real-life examples. Testimonials suggest that the open innovation approach and close collaboration of lecturers and consultancy professionals was beneficial for both HTSI and the Ideas for Change, in line with other scholars' findings (e.g. de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021). Furthermore, perceptions are in line with the suggestions of SDSN (2020).

External facilitator's testimonial excerpts, participant 1

"The experience of joint and collaborative work between Ideas for Change and HTSI, with the Fiturnext project as a common thread, was very intense and rewarding. Working closely with students and seeing how they get involved in a project like this certainly confirms that defining a purpose for any action is the driving force behind the participants. If this purpose is also related to how tourism can contribute to gender equality, as was the case, we met some students, and especially female students, who went out of their way to locate, analyze, interview, and show through visual material, created by themselves, and written works, the replicable initiatives of high positive impact that they selected.

This project allows us to see that the collaboration between companies and the academic world can go beyond the required internships to complete the study plans. The generation of synergies between the students of a course and the business sector can be beneficial for both parties. For the students, due to the fact of approaching the professional world in a practical way, with a minimum of responsibility and the possibility of making interesting contacts, as happened with at least one of the students when contacting one of the practices analyzed. Also due to the fact of learning a new methodology, in this case the replicability barometer, which allows them to broaden their vision of how to carry out a project in a different way. On the part of companies, having the vision of students can help to refresh approaches and detect elements for improvement, a key element when we talk about disruptive innovation.

Finally, an essential factor in this type of relationship is the teaching staff. Having teachers with a disruptive mindset is key to generating the nexus between companies and the academic world and thus allowing their students to have a very positive opportunity to complement their study plans, thus facilitating their entry into the labor market."

External facilitator's testimonial excerpts, participant 2

"I think that when we designed the collaboration between HTSI and FiturNext so that students were involved in the search for tourism initiatives that had a positive impact on gender equality and were ripe to be replicated, we did not imagine the quantity and quality of the response we received. Not from everyone, not from the very first moment.

The first impact was in the presentation of the challenge. Some of those students who seemed shy, withdrawn, or simply disinterested, suddenly became enlightened: it was not necessary to choose between generating sustainable business models and contributing to the common good, the task was just the opposite, to find and contact those who already did. To offer them recognition and support!

During the research project the students had to overcome various barriers, and according to their drive and dedication they did so with different levels of success. […] At least five of the papers presented could be rated as excellent: they described and rated an initiative in terms of impact and replicability.

The experience has been so positive that we are planning to tackle the next editions not only with the collaboration of HTSI's faculty and students, but also with other tourism schools in Spain and Latin America. […]"

Table 20. External facilitator's testimonials

The third specific objective of the study was to propose assessment tools for subsequent iterations of the educational intervention. Several tools in line with previously shared educational interventions (Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021; Segovia-Pérez, Laguna-Sánchez, et al., 2019; Shollen, 2015) are proposed hereafter, to assess the benefits of subsequent iterations of the intervention.

Firstly, we would propose using a mixed methods approach to collect data from students and facilitators, as this allows for cross-validation. In our view, for students, a sequential design with two distinctive research phases should be prospected (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011). In phase 1 indicators from students may include quantitative data obtained from a self-administered survey questionnaire at the end of the module, including a text box for participants to include any comments they may wish to add.

In phase 2, qualitative data should be collected to gain deep comprehension, by means of voluntary focus groups. The number of focus group to be arranged would depend on the size of the cohorts, with a recommendation of maximum 8 participants per group. Our proposal would be to organize the focus groups a couple of weeks after the module's end, to allow time for reflection by the participants. An open script to guide the groups might include the three main questions, namely the perception of the proposed teaching and learning experience, challenges faced, and strategies used to overcome the challenges.

Regarding facilitators, our proposal would be to collect data through in-depth interviews with the objective of analyzing their perception of the teaching and learning experience, collaboration with the stakeholders and insights about their work. This data would be analyzed through content analysis.

5.4   Conclusions

With the increased pressure to move towards the achievement of the SDGs, rethinking the purpose of education in tourism and hospitality studies has never been more urgent. For Spain, one of the main world tourism destinations with an increasingly internationalized industry, it is essential to promote sustainability principles and to integrate those into the tourism and hospitality higher education study plans. From our view, and particularly in Spain, professionals with adequate mindsets are urgently needed to address the complex sustainable development challenges articulated by the SDGs (SDSN, 2020). Importantly, to regenerate tourism it is critical to break from economic systems stemming from corrupted behaviors. As such, critical analyses of discourses that perpetuate structures of gender inequity are necessary (Cave & Dredge, 2020) and in the Spanish tourism sector, little attention has been paid to the field of gender studies, despite its impact on the Spanish economy and the importance of women in tourism as entrepreneurs and employees (Segovia-Pérez & Figueroa-Domecq, 2014).

Incorporating a co-created educational intervention focused on gender equality to an existing core course allowed us to explore SDG 5 combining multi-stakeholder involvement, action learning and problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Leonard, 2015) with an open innovation focus (Chesbrough, 2003; de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021), not currently standard practice within universities (SDSN, 2020).

The co-design and implementation of the educational intervention connected three stakeholders – higher education, a private consultancy company and a private-public consortium. This approach as advised by SDSN (2020), allowed us to bridge knowledge learned in the classroom into complex real-world situations and proved successful in terms of the perception of students and facilitators, in line with open innovation educational experiences previously mentioned in the literature (Chesbrough, 2003; de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021). Moreover, it

allowed for a fast implementation and the conditions may be said to have enhanced students' learning and engagement in a gender equality project in the tourism and hospitality sector. Collaboration by the stakeholders and the HTSI facilitators was successful at this first iteration and helped students understand innovation at an applied context, bridging theoretical models and real-life sustainable practices. Moreover, it reinforced the students view of the importance of partnerships and collaborative contexts. The direct access to the initiatives and to professionals in the field by students and facilitators was a further learning outcome that accelerated the impact of raising awareness on the SDGs.

This first pilot educational intervention, and the proposed assessment tools for subsequent iterations was a starting point to equip students with knowledge, skills, and tools to address challenges related to SDG 5 within an existing course, that we hope might serve as an inspiration to engage on similar initiatives at HTSI or at other hospitality and tourism educational institutions. After the pilot ended, a first iteration of the course is being currently conducted.

Chapter 6. Cross-sectional conclusions

Abstract of the chapter

The studies undertaken as part of this Ph.D. dissertation contribute to the UN 2030 Agenda, with focus on the inclusion of vulnerable groups. In our view, tourism and hospitality higher education institutions should not only aim for excellence in research, outstanding education, and relevant public outreach, but we claim they should be committed to advancing a just society by being the catalysts for positive social change themselves and to help enable others to achieve societal impact. Educational innovation plays a key role in this process, especially if we are aiming for deep, long-lasting transformational societal impact. This chapter presents the cross-sectional conclusions of the Ph.D. dissertation, the main disciplinary, educational, and societal impact contributions. Furthermore, it proposes 'societal multiple-impact projects' that better align learning, research, and public outreach outcomes to the SDGs and the needs of society. By applying a collaborative, multiple-stakeholder, and user-centered approach this approach might serve as a way for universities to achieve transformation and the attainment of the SDGs, or at least to get closer to achieving them. Finally, we discuss limitations and future lines of research ending with final remarks.

6 Cross-sectional conclusions

The studies undertaken as part of this Ph.D. dissertation contribute to the UN 2030 Agenda which is a long-term action plan, proposing sustainable development goals, for people, the planet, prosperity and peace (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017). There is a divide between the concept that has been envisioned and the current reality. The inequity of wealth and the national realities between countries are not taken into consideration which has resulted in tremendous pressure and burden on poor countries to meet the impossible targets with the lack of funds and resources (Pogge & Sengupta, 2016). Furthermore, there is a high risk that the implementation of the SDGs may neglect vulnerable groups and local communities (Boluk et al., 2017; Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a; Seraphin & Gowreesunkar, 2021; Slocum et al., 2019; Zamora-Polo & Sánchez-Martín, 2019), exacerbated now by the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Thus, responding to this concern, our focus was on the inclusion of vulnerable groups, such as people with disabilities and women, often subject of discrimination (UNESCO, 2015).

Research was divided into two phases, presenting two empiric descriptive-interpretative studies in the first phase that contribute to SDG 4 Quality education (target 4.7) and to analyze 2 SDGs: Inclusion for all (SDG 11, target 11.7) and gender equality (SDG 5, target 5.5), specifically focused on families with children with developmental disabilities travelling to accessible accommodation, and on the role of women associations to foster women leadership. In the second phase, building on the insights of the first phase, two educational interventions (one empirical and one pilot course) provide educational innovation pedagogy to educate tourism and hospitality students who are capable and willing to foster accessibility (SDG 11), and gender equality (SDG 5). Both educational interventions, one a newly created module and one a course within an existing module, were offered at the Bachelor's degree in Tourism and Hospitality Management from the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull).

Moreover, to accelerate the attainment of the SDGs, the United Nations and the renowned international organizations that have emerged in the last years to accelerate the adoption of the SDGs in higher education (European Commission, 2021; PRME, 2013; SDSN, 2020; UNESCO, 2015), point out to the importance of building partnerships (SDG 17). In this line, on this dissertation, we have adopted a multi-stakeholder partnerships approach closely collaborating with relevant private and civil society stakeholders such as tourism and hospitality companies, autism-related associations, families, women associations, public administrations, consultancy companies, and students. This multiple-stakeholder approach fosters partnerships with the objective of multiplying the societal impacts.

In this section the main transversal contributions of the studies conducted as part of this Ph.D. dissertation are presented. First, we summarize the disciplinary research contributions. Second, the main educational contributions of the dissertation for the tourism and hospitality studies are introduced. Third, societal impact contributions are outlined. Finally, we discuss some limitations and future lines of research ending with final remarks.

6.1 Disciplinary research contributions

In this section, disciplinary research contributions are presented, corresponding mainly to the two objectives investigated in phase 1 of the dissertation.

The first overarching objective of the dissertation was to analyze accessibility by characterizing families travelling with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder and their intention to travel to accessible accommodations. The specific objectives were to analyze the influence of travel constraints (intrinsic, interactive, and environmental) and the severity of the disorder on the intention to travel to accessible accommodations of these families, and to explore their strategies for coping with such constraints.

Findings indicate that the intrinsic (intrapersonal) dimension that relate to an individual's psychological condition including personality factors, attitudes, religious beliefs, and moods (Crawford et al., 1991) and the severity of the disorder, influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation. The intrinsic dimension was measured based on 5 items adapted from Lee et al. (2012): Fear of not getting along with other people; travel imposes requirements beyond our capabilities; fear of causing others discomfort or inconvenience; being in a situation where we need others help to do something and fear of needing medical assistance. Findings are consistent with priory found direct relationship between travel constraints and intention to travel (Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Daniels et al., 2005; Israeli, 2002; McKercher et al., 2003; Shaw & Coles, 2004; Turco et al., 1998), and widen earlier knowledge on travel constraints that did not include developmental disabilities (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011; Burnett & Bender-Baker, 2001; Darcy et al., 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012; McKercher & Darcy, 2018; Michopoulou et al., 2015). In previous studies, research on families with children with developmental difficulties focused primarily on analyzing the leisure constraints (Emira & Thompson, 2011), travel (Perry & Kozub, 2011), vacation experiences (Amet, 2013), and the effectiveness of travel agents (Hamed, 2013; McKercher et al., 2003). Very little is known about the travel experiences of families where one member has a developmental disorder (Hamed, 2013; March & Woodside, 2005b; Schänzel et al., 2012; Sedgley et al., 2017) and our findings are one step in this direction.

By focusing on accessible accommodation, an area that was scarcely researched into, this dissertation provides data regarding the factors that would account for a more satisfying accommodation experience for these typologies of families. Specifically, it shows that the necessary adaptations are simple and mostly require adapting the service, training the staff, implementing specific codes of practice, and greater exposure of tourism services staff to members of the community (McKercher & Darcy, 2018). Our study, therefore, contributes to gain understanding of these families' experiences and needs, while it also advances knowledge on the influence of such constraints on these families' intentions to travel to accessible accommodation.

SDG 11 of the UN's 2030 Agenda aims at making cities inclusive by promoting Inclusion for all. In this case, this dissertation provides insights to accommodation providers clearly contributing to deepening knowledge on these specific SDG. Specifically, the results obtained show that accessible tourism becomes more than support to a specific community: it may translate into specific new codes of practice to develop hospitality offers in an inclusive way, becoming a chance to promote social inclusion (Figueiredo et al., 2012; Michopoulou et al., 2015). In this line, the educational intervention "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation", delivered inclusive proposals to the collaborating hotel. At least one of the proposals, addressed at their restaurant facilities (i.e., adapted children menu) was

implemented, illustrating a concrete contribution that turned insights into a practical solution. Moreover, the dissertation may be of assistance to other industry stakeholders that are participant to the tourism experience of families with a child on the autism spectrum disorder, and that are committed to inclusive and sustainable cities and human settlements.

The second overarching objective of the dissertation was to investigate gender equality by analyzing women's associations in Catalonia, Spain, and their contribution to female empowerment and to eradicating barriers to gender equality. The specific objectives were to identify the goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia, Spain; to discuss the barriers to women pursuing corporate-level positions that these associations encountered; and to explore the future challenges women in hospitality face to ensure women's full participation and equal opportunities for leadership.

Gender inequality is difficult to address and very much present in the tourism and hospitality industry (Almathami et al., 2020; Ferreira Freire Guimaraes & Ramos Silva, 2016; Hutchings et al., 2020; UNWTO, 2019). UNWTO (2019) reports that 54% of people employed in tourism are women, however women hold low level, low paying, precarious jobs (Hutchings et al., 2020; UNWTO, 2019), face wage disparity (Marco-Lajara & Úbeda-García, 2013; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Obadić & Marić, 2009) and vertical segregation (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015, 2018; Huete et al., 2016; Kogovsek & Kogovsek, 2015). The lack of gender equality in management positions is a global phenomenon, and the existence of barriers to women's access to leadership roles in tourism and hospitality has been demonstrated in prior studies (Equality in Tourism, 2018; International Labour Organization, 2016; Villamil López & Alonso Almeida, 2013). This low representativeness of women in decision-making positions impacts negatively on equality and social justice (Chambers et al., 2017). Unfortunately, the sector further perpetuates the problem (Do Le, 2017; Equality in Tourism, 2018; Nyaruwata & Nyaruwata, 2013), and COVID-19 has exacerbated gender inequality and the lack of female empowerment (Moreno Alarcón, 2020).

The dissertation contributes to the growing body of research on tourism and gender (Figueroa-Domecq, de Jong, et al., 2020) that aims to translate the long-standing awareness of gender inequality in the hospitality industry into practical solutions and change in organizations (Chambers et al., 2017; Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2018; Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Munar et al., 2015, 2017; Segovia-Pérez, Figueroa-Domecq, et al., 2019). It supports SDG 5, increasing knowledge on how female associations in Catalonia, Spain, empower women and help them progress professionally, showing how support networks are crucial for female professional development (ESADE, 2019; Greenwood et al., 2002; Hicks, 2020; Segovia-Pérez, Figueroa-Domecq, et al., 2019; Zee & Vanneste, 2015), capacity building (Madaha, 2011), and for societal impact (Díez Herrero, 2016; Guérin & Nobre, 2014; Puñal, 2001).

Our findings show that the participating associations empower women by means of different strategies to become proactive change agents that help transform both their members and society, in line with SDG's 5 goal of ensuring women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making in political, economic, and public life (UN, 2020). Raising awareness, serving as a "place to share", and giving visibility to female leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals are the main goals these associations pursue. Another finding is related to barriers to women accessing corporate-level positions encountered by associations, such as lack of motivation, training, contacts, or lack of support (Hicks, 2020; Segovia-Pérez, Figueroa-Domecq, et al., 2019). Our results suggest that women's associations in Catalonia, Spain create awareness of gender barriers, enhance social conscience on gender

equality in decision-making bodies, and expand women's professional networks and access to resources.

These findings might assist tourism businesses to foster female empowerment and equal opportunities by working with associations and might also encourage the public sector actively promote equality and support and broaden the impact of their strategies and campaigns with the help of women's associations. A close relationship and representation of women's associations in the corresponding public committees would be therefore highly advisable. This dissertation encourages tourism and hospitality higher education and vocational institutions to work closely with women's associations to increase the visibility of women as role models. At least in Catalonia, there is a pool of women willing to collaborate that would be of added value. Most tourism and hospitality students in Catalonia are women, yet female role models in leadership positions are scarce.

Finally, our findings raise awareness to the worrying situation of female managers in Spain, a course for concern for the associations. This situation unfortunately is not only present in Spain or solely affects the tourism and hospitality industry, but is also similar in other countries and sectors (Hutchings et al., 2020). The number of female managers who perceive gender barriers in their companies has increased, as has been demonstrated in prior studies (Grant Thornton, 2018; Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Villamil López & Alonso Almeida, 2013). The main barriers mentioned being the difficulty reconciling work and family life (Baum, 2013; de Luis Carnicer et al., 2007; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hoyt, 2010; International Labour Organization, 2016; Keith & McWilliams, 1999; Peregort et al., 2013; Tandrayen-Ragoobur & Pydayya, 2015), wage inequality (Marco-Lajara & Úbeda-García, 2013; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Obadić & Marić, 2009; Polachek et al., 2015; Sánchez-Sellero & Sánchez-Sellero, 2013; UNWTO, 2019), and a lack of recognition for their tasks (Almathami et al., 2020; Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015, 2018; Huete et al., 2016; Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018).

Women may experience some of the worst negative impacts that tourism may bring (Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a). This dissertation identified worldwide good practices that are working as a catalyst for positive societal change, that help accomplish SDG 5 of the UN's 2030 Agenda. Despite the UN and the European Commission have reported progress on this specific SDG over the last decades, many challenges remain. Unfortunately, on a global scale, COVID-19 is threatening to reverse the limited progress that has been made. In fact, the health-related pandemic has dramatically impacted the tourism and hospitality industry, destroying jobs, and exacerbating gender inequality and the lack of female empowerment (Moreno Alarcón, 2020). As women are the majority in the tourism workforce, the current situation of this vulnerable group is worrying and more research into ways to revert it are required.

6.2   Educational innovation contributions to tourism and hospitality studies

In this section, the educational innovation contributions of this dissertation to tourism and hospitality studies are presented, relating mainly to the two objectives investigated in phase 2 of the dissertation. In the following lines, we introduce contributions of a more generic nature, to focus then on contributions of the educational interventions.

The role of higher education to the promotion of sustainability has been pointed out for many decades. SDG 4 points out explicitly to ensuring that all learners acquire the knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development. Presently, with the launch of the SDGs and

the COVID-19 pandemic crisis, this debate has become imperative on a global scale. There is an urgent need for the educational sector to accelerate their action, with this pressure increasing at local, regional, national, and international level. On a European level, Horizon Europe, places a strong focus on tackling climate change, promoting diversity and inclusion, involving citizens and civil society organizations in co-designing and co-creating responsible research innovation agendas, promoting gender equality and strengthening the gender dimension (European Commission, 2021).

Attaining societal impact will not be achieved without successfully driving educational excellence within the university's teaching and learning communities, placing the focus on a commitment to advancing a fair society. In this context, educational institutions face similar struggles to educate future professionals to address SDG–related challenges, independently of their location, size, and commitment (PRME, 2013). Educational innovation is a complex process, connected to the increased complexity of society in general (Dredge & Schott, 2013a; Fullan, 2002; Rivas, 2014; Soler, 2016). A society immersed in changes such as globalization, diversity, technological advances, constant change, moral and political distrust, etc. (Bauman, 2006). While there is clearly wide consensus on the need of higher education institutions to support the SDGs, the how to do so is complex and multi-faceted (PRME, 2013).

The design of educational interventions to select and examine a specific SDG is a first educational innovation contribution of this dissertation, in line with the 'Science with and for Society' approach, promoted by the European Commission, that encourages a match between science and societal concerns. This Ph.D. dissertation aims to respond to the call from the European Commission for higher education institutions to introduce changes to bring them closer to citizens and civil society via Horizon 2020, and currently via Horizon Europe.

Specifically, this dissertation provides the results obtained from the implementation of two educational experiences aimed at equipping tourism and hospitality students with the knowledge, skills and tools to address two SDG-related challenges (SDG 11 and SDG 5), designed following experts' suggestions (SDSN, 2020; PRME, 2013). The educational module presented in Chapter 4 was of new creation, specifically designed, implemented, and assessed to train undergraduate students to hinder inequality related to accessible accommodation. The pilot educational intervention introduced at Chapter 5 integrated an open innovation project focused on gender equality, into the existing curriculum.

Both educational interventions show successful case studies involving external stakeholder involvement. In the case of the educational intervention that focused on accessible accommodation, the challenge benefitted a hotel. In the case of the intervention that focused on gender equality, it was jointly co-designed and co-facilitated with a consultancy company addressing a challenge lead by a publicly funded organization. This goes in line with suggestions from experts that indicate that educating to raise awareness for SDGs can be accelerated by making impact through networks, by engaging actors who are involved in addressing the SDGs in their professional field (PRME, 2013; SDSN, 2017), and by following an open innovation educational approach (de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021). These positive concrete examples of fruitful pedagogical cooperation between an educational institution and society might serve as a reference to other tourism and hospitality educational institutions.

Additionally, the educational intervention "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation" contributes to students' agency by responding to the third overarching objective of the dissertation, aiming to design, implement and evaluate an educational

experience to train undergraduate students who are capable and willing to foster accessible accommodation. Students' agency implies a "sense of responsibility, as students participate in society and aim to influence people, events and circumstances for the better", fundamental for introducing the transformative changes intended by the SDGs (OECD, 2019b, p. 34). The specific objectives were to analyze the changes in students' attitudes before and after participating in the module, to identify the challenges students faced and the strategies they applied to solve them and to analyze students' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience.

One of the most significant contributions is that a relatively short educational program, like the one showcased, can effectively change students' attitudes related to accessible accommodation in a positive way. Suggesting that this example of educational intervention might be effective to advance on the attainment of SDG 11: Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient, and sustainable. The proposed campus-based pedagogy that elicited students' agency and enhanced transformative competencies aligned with sustainability practices responded to fill a clear gap in the research on tourism and hospitality studies (Garcia-Rosell, 2015; Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2015; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012; Stone & Duffy, 2015).

Students' learnings in this educational intervention, based on their perceptions as reflected by the quantitative and qualitative elements analyzed, seemed to contribute to the transformation of participants, in respect to accessibility in tourism, by changing their frames of reference, helping them transform existing, and perceived future attitudes and behaviors into more open and inclusive views, as proposed by Mezirow (1997), and found in previous studies (Belhassen & Caton, 2011; Garcia-Rosell, 2013; Pritchard et al., 2011). Moreover, students' implicit beliefs were confronted, helping them develop critical reflectivity (Garcia-Rosell, 2015; Lynch et al., 2019), in line with results obtained by Boluk, Cavaliere et al. (2019a) which point towards critical thinking bringing light into environmental, social, and economic injustices present at the tourism industry.

Complementing critical thinking with problem-solving capabilities is essential for humanistic values to emerge, to develop transformative attitudes (UNESCO, 2015) and for individual and collective agency (OECD, 2019c). Problem-solving, in turn, requires the use of a combination of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (OECD, 2019b) that the module succeeded in enhancing, specifically in relation to accessibility in hospitality. Not only the module fostered the students' acquisition of professional competencies but also it developed students' agency, reflectivity, and inclusive attitudes, in line with recommendations by scholars and experts from specialized agencies on advancing the SDGs (Airey et al., 2015; Boluk, Cavaliere et al., 2019a; Boluk & Carnicelli, 2015; Boyle et al., 2015; Dredge & Schott, 2013b; Lashley, 2015; Pritchard et al., 2011; Sheldon & Fesenmaier, 2015; Tribe, 2002; PRME 2013; SDSN 2020; UNESCO, 2015).

The way the different pedagogical tools were combined to elicit student agency is a further contribution, providing a better understanding of transformative learning theories and their impact on students' outcomes. The combination of a challenge, design-thinking and reflective tools confronted students with their implicit beliefs, making them reflect upon their role as future tourism professionals. Action learning and design thinking were applied to a societal problem (Mugadza & Marcus, 2019) and developed engagement, empathy, teamwork, creativity and innovation (Chin et al., 2019; Glen et al., 2014; Lake et al., 2019; J. Lee et al., 2019; Sándorová et al., 2020). Findings show that learning logs did improve students' reflection as proposed by previous research on transformational learning theory (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Stone & Duffy,

2015) and that the 'real-life' scenarios were perceived by students as extra challenging. This in turn, fostered their critical thinking, self-regulation, and co-regulation capabilities (Alsina et al., 2017). Students expressed that connecting to purpose was inspiring, in line with what SDSN (2020) suggests is an effective strategy for students to understand and commit to the advancement of the SDGs. The pedagogical model was applied focusing on SDG 11, but it is replicable to the advancement of other SDGs.

The mixed-methods approach of assessment of the transformative experience in a learning context with rigorous application and measurement responds to a call for these type of research given the limited number of studies that apply it to assess tourism and hospitality education in classroom contexts (Guaman-Quintanilla et al., 2020; Joppe & Elliot, 2015; Lynch et al., 2019; Slavich & Zimbardo, 2012; Stone & Duffy, 2015). The research methodology applied, combining a validated quantitative scale, and diverse qualitative elements is a distinctive methodological contribution.

Finally, the design of an interview that combined oral and visual elicitation and reflection of undergraduate students' experience might be of interest to other scholars. The Journey Plot proved to be a useful tool to retrospectively capture participants' significant experiences along the module, place them in a timeline and reflect on the whole educational experience (Castelló et al., 2018).

Regarding the educational intervention "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation", it responded to the fourth overarching objective of the dissertation that was to co-design and implement a pilot educational intervention project within an existing course focused on gender equality (objective linked to SDG 5). The specific objectives were to attain the overarching objective with multi-actor involvement and an open innovation approach, to present students' and collaborating facilitators' perceptions regarding the teaching and learning experience and to propose assessment tools for subsequent iterations.

Multi-stakeholder involvement is a faster and less complex approach than creating specific courses, subsequently offering an effective way in advancing on the sustainable development goals (SDSN, 2020). For the pilot educational intervention project we combined action learning and problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Leonard, 2015) following open innovation focus (Chesbrough, 2003; de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021). The task of identifying, analyzing, and evaluating initiatives around which the gender equality-related educational experience revolved is available in open access format and had not been applied to a classroom context before. In this sense, it contributes to SDG 5 specifically, though its application is applicable to other SDGs in further iterations at HTSI. Moreover, it can be further implemented by other educational institutions, not limited to SDG 5 but for any other SDG.

The pilot educational intervention course allowed for a fast implementation and the conditions may be said to have enhanced students' learning and engagement in a gender equality project in the tourism and hospitality sector, in line with SDG 5. Findings hints to students' raised awareness towards gender equality issues. Testimonials suggested that the open innovation approach and close collaboration of lecturers and consultancy professionals were beneficial for both HTSI's students and the external stakeholder, as indicated in previous studies (e.g. de las Heras-Rosas & Herrera, 2021; Howells et al., 2012; Huggins et al., 2020; Iglesias Sánchez et al., 2015; Laguna-Sánchez et al., 2021), and as suggested by SDSN (2020). Moreover, the facilitators' perceptions of the teaching experience were positive, stressing the added value of

collaboration among the different stakeholders participating in the team. This first pilot educational intervention, and the proposed assessment tools for subsequent iterations might serve as an inspiration to engage on similar initiatives at HTSI or at other hospitality and tourism educational institutions.

6.3   Societal impact contributions

For us, educational innovation for sustainable development should be comprehensive since it is a holistic concept (SDSN, 2020). In this sense, ambition is needed for aiming to impact, not only in education but also in as many different lines of higher education as possible, to accelerate societal impact. Transformation is needed and is needed fast. Thus, societal multiple-impact projects might be a way for universities to achieve transformation and the attainment of the SDGs, or at least to get closer to achieving them. The term 'societal multiple-impact projects' refers to those projects in line with sustainable goals that may have a positive impact in more than one of the different lines of university activity. Such lines are mainly research, education, and public outreach. Traditionally, projects at universities contribute to one or a maximum of two lines.

Sustainable development progress can only be attained by means of strong partnerships and cooperation, at the local, regional, national, and global level, placing people and the planet at the center (UN, 2020). Hence, Goal 17: Partnership for the goals, stresses the fact that SDGs advancements will clearly not be achieved unless we strengthen and stream-line cooperation on a macro and micro level. This mandate was a guiding principle of this Ph.D. dissertation. It will be difficult to advance on the SDGs if we do not act strategically, join forces and work in greater networks to scale the impact. COVID-19 has further exposed the need of strategic networks showing us the fragility of dependencies in a globalized world.

If we aim at providing inclusive tourism models stakeholder collaboration is crucial (Michopoulou et al., 2015). With this goal in mind tourism and hospitality must engage commitment of all the range of tourism's stakeholders. As Taleb Rifai (UNWTO & UNDP, 2017, p. 6), Former Secretary-General, World Tourism Organization suggests "Policymakers, business leaders, scholars, civil society and travelers themselves should stand ready to act together and deliver on the vital tenets of sustainable development". In line with this view, on this dissertation, we closely collaborated with relevant private and civil society stakeholders such as tourism and hospitality companies, autism-related associations, families, women associations, public administrations, consultancy companies, researchers, faculty, and students.

This collaborative approach added richness, contrasting views and responded to the call of Horizon Europe to co-design and co-create responsible research and innovation agendas (European Commission, 2021). Moreover, Horizon Europe suggests that the engagement of citizens and civil society in research and innovation should be coupled with public outreach activities (European Commission, 2021). In this sense, several public outreach activities were organized by the HTSI's team with the aim to maximize societal impact, and to disseminate knowledge generated by the different studies conducted as part of this dissertation, mainly focused on the research and education lines of activity. A detailed list of public outreach activities developed by the Ph.D. candidate can be found in Appendix XIII.

One of the most relevant public outreach activities offered were Open Days simulations, addressed to families with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder. Applying a

collaborative approach by closely involving civil society, the school co-designed Open days in partnership with the airport of Barcelona and Teatre del Liceu, a leading cultural venue in the city. The societal impact contribution combined giving back to families, training provided to professionals in the field, applied research, and service-learning opportunities for students. The format of the simulations, pioneer experiences in Spain, can be explored in Appendix XIV.

While varied efforts by tourism stakeholders are currently underway in Spain to attain the SDGs, there is still a long road ahead with a rather slow speed of change. In our view, tourism and hospitality educational institutions not only should play a significant role towards development of the UN 2030 Agenda, but most significantly, should lead the way. Higher education has a privileged position as a hub, interconnecting the different stakeholders such as students, Alumni, companies, NGOs, and public administration. As extensively introduced in this dissertation, transformational leaders with inclusive values are greatly needed in the tourism and hospitality industry to reinforce change. Professionals who commit to economic, societal, and environmental issues might have a positive social, economic, and environmental impact at all levels of the tourism value chain.

In our view, tourism and hospitality higher education institutions should not only aim for excellence in research, outstanding education, and relevant public outreach, but we claim they should be committed to advancing a just society by being the catalysts for positive social change themselves and to help enable others to achieve societal impact. Educational innovation plays a key role in this process, especially if we are aiming for deep, long-lasting transformational societal impact. We believe the impulse related with the incorporation of educational innovation for societal impact needs to proceed from different forces, some more ecological with the culture of the institution (and thus slower but easily actionable by the community) and some more disruptive (and thus fast and capable of generating change movements with the potential to engage only a few members of the community, in a first stage, and the potential to engage a wider scope as the seed flourishes).

The four studies this dissertation focused on, guided by a multi-stakeholder partnership approach, crystalized into societal multiple-impact projects. These societal multiple-impact projects may be associated with the disruptive forces mentioned above in the sense that they began with the seed of finding solutions to a particular selected SDG in the first phase (i.e. accessibility or gender), they grew into collaborative research and flourished not only into co-designed educational experiences provided to future generations of managers in the tourism and hospitality sector, but also into a strong bond to private and public stakeholders, public outreach activities, and students' and faculty volunteering. Our proposal of societal multiple-impact projects combined all three lines to maximize the impact.

Societal multiple-impact projects better align learning, research, and public outreach outcomes to the SDGs and the needs of society, applying a collaborative, multiple-stakeholder, and user-centered approach. In this sense, it is encouraging that by applying this approach of combining research and education with sustainable focus, specifically by mapping areas that contribute to vulnerable groups, and consequently implementing educational modules and public outreach activities aligned with these values, as outlined at this dissertation, a higher education institution, can contribute to societal impact and the ambitious UN 2030 Agenda.

The societal multiple-impact projects under the umbrella of the SDGs, may be said to have crystalized the sense of purpose of the School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi-HTSI (URL) while responding to current tourism and hospitality accessibility (SDG 11) and gender-related challenges (SDG 5), maximizing the impact in the three activity lines. They

hopefully inspire educational institutions to become a transformative force that promotes a humanist view of education towards a global common good, endorsing research that responds to social demands with transparency and that collaborates with stakeholders for developing social, economic, and environmental dimensions of sustainable development. Table 21 summarizes the disciplinary, educational, and societal impact contributions of the Ph.D. dissertation.

Doctoral dissertation. Educational innovation in tourism and hospitality studies: addressing accessibility and gender equality-related challenges		
Phase 1		
Aim	Analyzed the constraints that hinder inclusion for all (SDG11) and gender equality (SDG5) in tourism and hospitality contexts	
Studies	**Study 1. Accessibility in hospitality**	**Study 2. Women associations in tourism**
Disciplinary contributions	* Advanced knowledge on the influence of constraints on families with children diagnosed with ASD, with intention to travel to accessible accommodation. * Provided data on the factors that account for a more satisfying accommodation experience for these families. * Gained understanding of these families' needs and experiences and present insights to accommodation providers.	* Increased knowledge on how female associations in Catalonia, Spain, empower women and help them progress. * Showed strategies that the associations implement for female professional development, capacity building and for societal impact. * Contributed to raise awareness to the worrying situation of female managers in Spain.
Phase 2		
Aim	Provided clues regarding the kind of educational innovation pedagogy that may contribute to educate students to favor accessibility (SDG11) and gender equality (SDG5)	
Studies	**Study 3. Educational intervention accessibility**	**Study 4. Pilot educational project on gender equality**
Disciplinary contributions	* Delivered inclusive proposals to the collaborating hotel.	* Identified worldwide good practices that work as catalyst for positive societal change.
Educational contributions	* Enhanced students' knowledge, skills, and attitudes regarding accessible accommodation, contributing to students' acquisition of professional competencies, developing students' agency and inclusive attitudes. * Provided a better understanding of transformative learning theories and their impact on students' outcomes, by combining different pedagogical tools. * Proposed a mixed-methods approach of assessment with rigorous application and measurement.	* Raised students' awareness towards gender equality issues. * Co-designed and co-facilitated a course with external stakeholders addressing a challenge lead by a publicly funded organization, to advance on education related to SDG 5. * Applied an open access format of evaluation of initiatives to a classroom context.
Guiding principle		
Multiple-stakeholder approach, building on the experience and resourcing strategies of partnerships, for multiplying the societal impacts (SDG 17)		
Societal contribution	* Proposed societal multiple-impact projects as a way for universities to achieve transformation and the attainment of the SDGs, or at least to get closer to achieving them. * Contributed to SDG 5 and SDG 11 by the three main activity lines of HTSI, research, education, and public outreach. * Acted strategically, joined forces, and worked with a multi-stakeholder partnership approach to scale the impact.	

Table 21. Contribution of the studies of the Ph.D.

6.4 Limitations and future lines of research

We are aware that this dissertation is not without limitations, and our experience conducting the studies included as part of this Ph.D. dissertation provides us with insights regarding future lines of research. In this section we discuss both the main limitations along with the future lines of research.

First, the study "Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder" has depended on convenience sampling of families from Catalonia. Hence, the sample does not represent the whole population of families travelling with a child on the ASD. Therefore, results cannot be generalized. Furthermore, in this study high-functioning children and their families are not represented, and their situation might be very different than the one portrayed at the study. In future research we recommend replicating this study applying it to families of children diagnosed with other forms of mental, cognitive, or developmental conditions as well as addressing other sub-sectors of the tourism industry (i.e., airlines, airports, recreation parks, museums, etc.). Tourism experiences are complex and entail for the families' emotional labour, so as a further line of research, we propose to explore the dimensions of this study in more detail adopting a phenomenological methodology, for example by means of in-depth interviews or mobile etnography. Further research may also expand upon the development of enabling practices (Micholopolou et al., 2015; Sedgley et al., 2017) to monitor the families' travelling patterns and understand their emotional engagement. In this line, we suggest a more comprehensive account of gender should be given, as most caregivers are the mothers of the children diagnosed with ASD. Although the perspective of the social model of disability is accepted for those with physical and sensory disabilities, we are still faced with the challenge of getting society in general and the private sector to look at developmental disability from this point of view. More efforts need to be exerted to change the mind set of just desiring to meet the disabled guests' needs to commendable service provision. Future research on hospitality service provision is indeed in need.

Second, the study "Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world" presents the limitation of being a qualitative study with no generalizations intended. Additionally, the fact that the interviews were not conducted in English may have led to misunderstandings or translation inaccuracies, since the researchers were non-native English speakers. Furthermore, the associations consulted were diverse and not all of them strictly focused on tourism. Future studies should assess which barriers prevent associations from working together using shared strategies, in line with SDG 17. Also, further research is needed to fully understand the situation of other associations in other locations, so replicating the study elsewhere in Spain or abroad to consider cultural differences is advisable. Further research could explore the views of associated members not contemplated at the present study.

Third, in the study "Tourism for all. Educating to foster accessible accommodation", the attitude to disability scale used, like other scales of this type, might present certain biases—such as social desirability—that may disguise true attitudes. Furthermore, the students' background, such as values or personal traits, were not measured and might have impacted the results. Values, classified into four categories (personal, social, societal and human), are guiding principles that underpin what people believe to be important when making decisions in all areas of private and public life, and vary depending on social and cultural contexts (OECD, 2019a). The influence and impact of values were not considered at this study and should certainly be explored in future research.

Furthermore, the study was limited by the closeness of the researcher to the intervention. We must factor in the difficulties in measuring attitude changes, learning and outcomes in the context of a module, designed, delivered, and then evaluated by the researcher. This is applicable to both this study and the educational intervention on gender equality. For further interventions it might be advisable to work with control groups, while considering the need to reverse groups to guarantee that all students can benefit from the proposed interventions. We suggest that further research explores different accessibility issues in hospitality or apply a similar pedagogical model to a broader range of diversity or sustainability-related challenges. Furthermore, tourism sub-sectors other than hospitality could be chosen. It would also be interesting to replicate similar studies with students from other cultural contexts or disciplines.

Fourth, the study "Women in tourism. Shining a light on replicable, gender equality-related models" was a pilot educational intervention, as such exploratory data was collected, and proposals were presented. It is advisable to evaluate its potential benefits after analyzing the results of the subsequent iterations. Furthermore, the task of identification, analysis and evaluation of initiatives included in study 4, is on an open access format and has not been applied to a classroom context before. In this sense, it is an approach that may be further explored. If future research identifies further good practices related to SDG 5 or to further SDGs, a database of initiatives contributing to the SDGs might be established.

Fifth, mixed-method studies in pedagogical innovation in tourism and hospitality studies are scarce, so further studies would be beneficial. Specifically, rigorous assessment of transformative educational experiences, its impact on students' outcomes and how it is perceived by them is an area that requires further scholarly research.

Sixth, focus was given to three main lines of activity of HTSI, research, education, and public outreach. Stewardship was hardly mentioned, though how universities act as stewards to their employees, faculty and students is an additional factor to be considered (PRME, 2013; SDSN, 2020, 2017). Therefore, including stewardship in the analysis requires further research.

Finally, contribution to the SDGs is not only the educational institutions' responsibility, but a goal to be improved by all stakeholders. In this Ph.D. dissertation, we included this perspective with the proposal of societal multiple-impact projects by exploring the view of families travelling with children on the autism spectrum disorder, women's associations leaders, co-facilitators, and students. Collecting the perspectives of collaborating companies, other participating researchers or faculty members could have provided new insights and constitutes a line for future research.

6.5   Final remarks

The COVID-19 pandemic has had a profound effect on the tourism and hospitality industry, impacting in vulnerable groups such as women workers. The effects of the pandemics made us more conscious of its importance as an economic and social force. Tourism, properly designed, has great potential at the service of human, cultural and ecological diversity. In COVID-19 post-pandemic times, it is important that tourism actors react to the sustainability and justice challenges by rethinking, redefining and reorienting tourism (Higgins-Desbiolles, 2020), reinforcing sustainability values and justice principles (Rastegar et al., 2021).

Education has always been considered essential for the transformation of people and societies. In this sense, tourism and hospitality education plays a major role in the humanization of tourism, to incorporate a vision that promotes the development of sustainable tourism. Every day, vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities, or women, face countless barriers in the tourism and hospitality sector. These are shadows that prevent people with disabilities to enjoy tourism to its fullest potential or that hinder women to reach leadership positions in tourism and hospitality to stand out on theirs' own. These shadows are difficult to overcome so, at times, we cannot avoid plunging into absolute darkness.

However, far from being discouraging, another interpretation is possible. These shadows are more present nowadays because people are gaining major awareness of the barriers. And this opens a space of light. There is undoubtedly an increase in awareness. Here is where all stakeholders of the tourism and hospitality sector, dedicated to advancing a just society, to the SDGs, and devoted to transform the world into a more inclusive one, play an important role. There is an opportunity for a major transformation by designing more responsible, ethical, and sustainable forms of tourism.

There are shadows, it is undeniable, but there are also committed tourism and hospitality educational institutions that can light the way, joining forces with the varied tourism stakeholders. It is more necessary than ever. We are confident that this Ph.D. dissertation contributes with a ray of light in this direction and maintain the hope that fewer shadows will be present in a not-too-distant future.

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Appendixes

Appendix I. Letter to associations for collaboration

<u>Spanish version</u>

Barcelona, 15 de noviembre de 2016

Apreciada Sra. XXX:

La Facultad de Turismo y Dirección Hotelera Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull) lidera el proyecto de investigación "Alas para el autismo" para crear y adaptar servicios para personas del espectro autista en el sector hotelero.

Agradecemos desde ya su colaboración y solicitamos formalmente la posibilidad de contactar a las familias vinculadas a la Asociación para que participen en un cuestionario voluntario. Adjuntamos junto con el cuestionario, la hoja informativa y el consentimiento informado para hacerlo llegar a las familias. A las familias participantes y a la Asociación, si así lo indican, se les remitirán los resultados obtenidos del cuestionario.

Para resolver cualquier duda respecto al proyecto de investigación, contacte con la Sra. Daniela Freund (Facultad de turismo y dirección Hhtelera Sant Ignasi-HTSI): teléfono 93. 252.28.90 / e-mail: daniela.freund@htsi.url.edu.

Creemos firmemente que este proyecto significará un paso adelante en la mejora de la experiencia de ocio y turismo de las personas con TEA y de sus familias.

Quedamos a la espera de su confirmación y aprovechamos para saludarles atentamente.

<u>English translation</u>

Barcelona, November 15, 2016

Dear Ms. XXX:

The School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull) leads the research project "Wings for autism" to create and adapt hospitality-related services for people on the autism spectrum disorder.

We thank you in advance for your collaboration and formally request the possibility of contacting families of the Association so that they can participate in a voluntary survey. We enclose together with the questionnaire, the information sheet, and the permission form to be forwarded to the families. The participating families and the association, if so indicated, will be forwarded the results obtained from the survey.

To solve any queries regarding the research project, please contact Ms. Daniela Freund (School of tourism and hospitality management Sant Ignasi-HTSI): telephone 93. 252.28.90 / e-mail: daniela.freund@htsi.url. edu.

We firmly believe that this project will mean a step forward in improving the leisure and tourism experience of people with ASD and their families.

We look forward to your confirmation and take the opportunity to greet you sincerely.

Appendix II. Information letter and permission form

<u>Spanish version</u>

Cuestionario "Alas para el autismo"

La Facultad de Turismo y Dirección Hotelera Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull), lidera el proyecto de investigación "Alas para el autismo" de accesibilidad universal en turismo para las personas con autismo y sus familias. En el marco de este proyecto hemos diseñado el siguiente cuestionario con la finalidad de conocer mejor las necesidades y barreras que se encuentran las familias con menores con TEA a la hora de viajar. Nuestro interés último se centra en crear y adaptar servicios para familias con menores con autismo en el sector hotelero. Para contactar con las familias susceptibles de colaborar en el proyecto, nos hemos dirigido a la Asociació Aprenem, Fundació Paideia e IDAPP. Como miembro de alguna de estas asociaciones, le invitamos formalmente a participar y cumplimentar el cuestionario.

La participación es voluntaria y los datos serán tratados de forma anónima y confidencial tanto en el proceso de recogida, el tratamiento y las publicaciones posteriores. El fichero de datos del estudio estará bajo la responsabilidad de la Fundació Xavier (entidad jurídica titular de la Facultad), ante la cual podrá ejercer en todo momento los derechos que establece la Ley 15/1999 de Protección de Datos Personales. Para resolver dudas contacte con Daniela Freund (Facultad de Turismo y Dirección Hotelera Sant Ignasi): teléfono 93. 252.28.90 / email: daniela.freund@htsi.url.edu

☐ Confirmo que he leído, he entendido el objetivo del cuestionario "Alas para el autismo" y que me han brindado la oportunidad de clarificar dudas.

☐ Entiendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que puedo retirarme de la investigación en cualquier momento, sin alegar razones.

☐ Acepto cumplimentar el cuestionario.

☐ Acepto que la Fundació Xavier gestione mis datos personales y difunda la información que el proyecto genere. Se garantiza que se preservará en todo momento mi identidad e intimidad, con las garantías establecidas en la ley 15/1999 de protección de datos y normativa complementaria.

☐ Acepto que la Fundació Xavier conserve todos los registros efectuados sobre mi persona en soporte electrónico, con las garantías y los plazos legalmente previstos, si estuviesen establecidos, y a falta de previsión legal, por el tiempo que fuese necesario para cumplir las funciones del proyecto para las que los datos fueron recabados.

Nombre/Apellidos: …….……………………………………………………

Fecha:………………………………………………………………………

Firma:………………………………………………………………………

Survey "Wings for autism"

The School of Tourism and Hospitality management Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull), leads the research project "Wings for autism" of accessibility in tourism for people on the autism spectrum disorder and their families. Within the framework of this project, we have designed the following survey to better understand the needs and barriers faced by families with children diagnosed with ASD when traveling. Our ultimate interest is focused on creating and adapting services for families with children on ASD in the hotel sector. To reach the families likely to collaborate in the project, we have contacted the Aprenem Association, the Paideia Foundation and IDAPP. As a member of one of these associations, we formally invite you to participate and fill in the survey.

Participation is voluntary and the data will be treated anonymously and confidentially both in the collection process, the treatment, and subsequent publications. The study data file will be under the responsibility of the Xavier Foundation (legal entity that owns the school), before which you can exercise at any time the rights established by Law 15/1999 on the Protection of Personal Data. To answer questions, please contact Daniela Freund (School of tourism and hospitality management Sant Ignasi): telephone 93. 252.28.90 / email: daniela.freund@htsi.url.edu

☐ I confirm that I have read, I have understood the objective of the survey "Wings for autism" and that they have given me the opportunity to clarify doubts.

☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the study at any time, without stating reasons.

☐ I agree to fill in the questionnaire.

☐ I accept that the Xavier Foundation manages my personal data and disseminates the information generated by the project. It is guaranteed that my identity and privacy will be always preserved, with the guarantees established in Law 15/1999 on data protection and complementary regulations.

☐ I accept that the Xavier Foundation keep all my records in electronic format, with the guarantees and the legally foreseen deadlines, if they were established, and in the absence of legal provision, for as long as necessary to fulfill the functions of the project.

Name/First name:………….……….…………………………………………

Date:………………..……………..…………………………………………….

Signature:……………………………………………………………………..

Appendix III. Permission form for interviews

Spanish Version

Entrevista "Asociaciones de mujeres"

La Facultad de Turismo y Dirección Hotelera Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull), lidera el proyecto de investigación "Asociaciones de mujeres" en línea con el Objetivo de desarrollo 5 de Naciones Unidas. En el marco de este proyecto entrevistamos a líderes de asociaciones de mujeres en Cataluña, España con la finalidad de conocer los objetivos de estas, identificar barreras al talento directo femenino y explorar retos de futuro.

La participación es voluntaria y los datos serán tratados de forma anónima y confidencial tanto en el proceso de recogida, el tratamiento y las publicaciones posteriores. El fichero de datos del estudio estará bajo la responsabilidad de la Fundació Xavier (entidad jurídica titular de la Facultad), ante la cual podrá ejercer en todo momento los derechos que establece la Ley 15/1999 de Protección de Datos Personales. Para resolver dudas contacte con Daniela Freund (Facultad de Turismo y Dirección Hotelera Sant Ignasi): teléfono 93. 252.28.90 / email: daniela.freund@htsi.url.edu

☐ Confirmo que he leído, he entendido el objetivo de la entrevista "Asociaciones de mujeres" y que me han brindado la oportunidad de clarificar dudas.

☐ Entiendo que mi participación es voluntaria y que puedo retirarme de la investigación en cualquier momento, sin alegar razones.

☐ Acepto realizar la entrevista.

☐ Acepto grabar la entrevista.

☐ Acepto que la Fundació Xavier gestione mis datos personales y difunda la información que el proyecto genere. Se garantiza que se preservará en todo momento mi identidad e intimidad, con las garantías establecidas en la ley 15/1999 de protección de datos y normativa complementaria.

☐ Acepto que la Fundació Xavier conserve todos los registros efectuados sobre mi persona en soporte electrónico, con las garantías y los plazos legalmente previstos, si estuviesen establecidos, y a falta de previsión legal, por el tiempo que fuese necesario para cumplir las funciones del proyecto para las que los datos fueron recabados.

Nombre/Apellidos:……….……………………………………………………………

Fecha:……………….…………………………………………………………………

 Firma:………………………………………………………………………………….

Interview "Women's Associations"

The School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi (Universitat Ramon Llull) leads the research project "Women Associations" in line with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goal 5. In the framework of this project, we interview leaders of women's associations in Catalonia, Spain to know their objectives, identify barriers to female talent in ladership and explore future challenges.

Participation is voluntary and the data will be treated anonymously and confidentially both in the collection process, the treatment, and subsequent publications. The study data file will be under the responsibility of the Xavier Foundation (legal entity that owns the school) before which you can exercise at any time the rights established by Law 15/1999 on the Protection of Personal Data. To answer questions, please contact Daniela Freund (School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi): telephone 93. 252.28.90 / email: daniela.freund@htsi.url.edu

☐ I confirm that I have read and understood the objective of the interview "Women's Associations" and that they have given me the opportunity to clarify doubts.

☐ I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I can withdraw from the investigation at any time, without stating reasons.

☐ I agree to conduct the interview.

☐ I agree to record the interview.

☐ I accept that the Xavier Foundation manages my personal data and disseminates the information generated by the project. It is guaranteed that my identity and privacy will be always preserved, with the guarantees established in Law 15/1999 on data protection and complementary regulations.

☐ I accept that the Xavier Foundation keep all the records made about me in electronic format, with the guarantees and the legally foreseen deadlines, if they were established, and in the absence of legal provision, for as long as necessary to fulfill the functions of the project for the that the data was collected.

Name/First name:…………..……………………………………………………

Date:………………..…………..…………………………………………….

Signature:…………………………………………………………………..

Appendix IV. Letter to hotel company for collaboration

<u>Spanish version</u>

Barcelona, 8 de enero de 2019

Apreciado Sra. Natalia de la Fuente:

Me dirijo a ustedes como directora de la investigación del proyecto "Alas para el Autismo" de la Fundació Xavier, con NIF G65469546, para solicitar formalmente la colaboración del hotel que dirige, el AC Victoria Suites Barcelona, con fines académicos y de investigación para contribuir a la mejora de la accesibilidad turística del colectivo de familias con niños diagnosticados con trastorno del espectro autista.

Creemos firmemente que este proyecto educativo significará un paso adelante en la mejora de la experiencia de ocio y turismo de las personas con trastorno del espectro autista y de sus familias.

Quedamos a la espera de su confirmación y aprovechamos para saludarle atentamente.

<u>English translation</u>

Barcelona, January 8, 2019

Dear Mrs. Natalia de la Fuente,

I am contacting you as the research leader of the "Alas para el Autismo" project of the Xavier Foundation, with NIF G65469546, to formally request the collaboration of the hotel that you manage, the AC Victoria Suites Barcelona. We request you to contribute for academic and research purposes, to the improvement of tourist accessibility of families with children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder.

We firmly believe that this educational project will mean a step forward in improving the leisure and tourism experience of people on the autism spectrum disorder and their families.

We look forward to your confirmation and we take the opportunity to greet you sincerely.

Appendix V. Information letter and permission form

Permission form students

Research project "Wings for autism"

The School of Tourism and Hospitality Management Sant Ignasi (Ramon Llull University), leads a research Project "Wings for autism" about accessibility in tourism for families travelling with children on ASD. The objective is to create and adapt hotel services for this specific segment.

A phase of the project is linked to the subject Tourism for All from the Bachelor Degree in Tourism and Hospitality management. Your participation implies completing surveys, participating at a final interview, and submitting Learning Journals. The data will be included in a database supervised by Fundació Xavier. You can access the data anytime as established in the Protection of Personal Data Law 15/1999. The data will be confidential and will be used at publications in an anonymous format.

For any queries, please contact Daniela Freund / email: daniela.freund@htsi.url.edu Thank you for participating!

☐ I have read and understood the information related to the Project "Wings for autism" and was given the opportunity to solve doubts.

☐ I am aware that I can access my data at any time.

☐ I accept to participate at the interview and the surveys.

☐ I accept to deliver the learning journals.

☐ I accept to be filmed and recorded.

☐ I accept the use of my comments, in an anonymous format, in research publication and promotional material.

Student's name:…………………………………………………………..

Date:……………………………………………………………………….

Signature:………………………………………………………………….

Appendix VI. Permission form for image rights

<u>Spanish version</u>

Estimado Sr/Sra,

Mediante la presente, la informamos que de conformidad con la Ley Orgánica 15/99 de Protección de datos, sus datos pasan a formar de los ficheros titularidad de Fundació Privada Xavier, debidamente registrados ante la Agencia Española de Protección de datos, siendo tratados, únicamente, con la finalidad de gestionar la presente colaboración. En el desarrollo de dicha colaboración su imagen podrá ser incluida en el material audivisual Fundació Privada Xavier, que podrá publicarlo en su web o por cualquier otro medio público habitual, a lo que Ud. consiente expresamente mediante la firma del presente documento.

Asimismo, se le informa que, en cualquier momento, podrá ejercitar sus derechos de acceso, rectificación, oposición y cancelación, comunicándolo por escrito dirigido a C. Marqués de Mulhacén, 40-42, 08034, de Barcelona.

Y para que así conste firma la presente en Barcelona a …. de ……… de 201X

Nombre y apellidos:

Firma:

<u>English translation</u>

Dear Mr / Mrs,

We hereby inform you that in accordance with Organic Law 15/99 on Data Protection, your data wil be managed by Fundació Privada Xavier, duly registered with the Spanish Agency for Data Protection, being treated only, to manage this collaboration. In the development of the mentioned collaboration, your image may be included in the audiovisual material Fundació Privada Xavier, which may be published on its website or by any other usual public means, to which you expressly consent by signing this document.

Likewise, you are informed that, at any time, you may exercise your rights of access, rectification, opposition, and cancellation, communicating it in writing to C. Marqués de Mulhacén, 40-42, 08034, Barcelona.

And for the record, sign this in Barcelona on…...of……… of 201X

Name and first name:

Signature:

RESEARCH ARTICLE

WILEY

Enhancing the hospitality customer experience of families with children on the autism spectrum disorder

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine intention to travel to accessible accommodations by families of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the influence of travel constraints (intrinsic, interactive, and environmental), the severity of disorder, and the families' strategies for coping with such constraints. A structured survey targeted at Spanish families ($N = 117$) indicated that the intrinsic dimension and the severity of disorder positively influence their intention to travel. The study contributes to extend knowledge about travel constraints related to accessible tourism and provides insights to accommodation providers on how to better enhance the customer experience of families travelling with a child diagnosed with ASD.

KEYWORDS

accessible tourism, autism spectrum disorder, family tourism, disability studies, customer experience, constraints, hospitality

1 | INTRODUCTION

Accessible tourism encloses people with mobility, vision, hearing, cognitive, and developmental disabilities (Darcy, 2010). It is a significant emerging market that yet remains an issue for the tourism industry. By 2020, Europe is expected to have 120 million people with disabilities, with an internal demand for European Union's accessible tourism up to 862 million trips per year and an inbound market of 21 million trips per year (European Commission, 2013). Worldwide public and private organisations are fostering inclusive tourism from the demand and supply side (European Commission, 2016; Hausemer, Ambrose, Ito, & Auzinger, 2012; World Tourism Organization, 2015). Yet accessibility remains a significant challenge for the travel and tourism sector.

This study responds to the call for further research on understanding the distinct needs faced by different segments of the accessibility market (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011; McKercher & Darcy, 2018). Despite this growing interest both from practitioners and researchers

in accessible tourism, research has particularly focused on physical disabilities or a mixture of disabilities with scarce research investigating specifically developmental disorders. The purpose of this study is to examine intention to travel to accessible accommodations by families of children diagnosed with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), in particular, the influence of travel constraints (intrinsic, interactive, and environmental), the degree of disorder, and the families' strategies for coping with such constraints.

According to Perry and Kozub (2011), there is considerable research on travel-related issues for people with physical disabilities (Burnett & Baker, 2001, Darcy 2002, Yau, McKercher, & Packer, 2004), but little is known about the travel experiences of families where one member has a developmental disorder (Sedgley, Pritchard, Morgan, & Hanna, 2017; Woodside & Etzel 1980). The World Health Organization (WHO, 2014) urged its Member States to identify and address disparities in access to services for persons diagnosed with ASD. About 1% of the world population is diagnosed with ASD (CDC, 2014) being the fastest growing developmental disorder (CDC,

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2018). Its prevalence is one child out of 59 and has increased by 6–15% each year from 2002 to 2010, based on biennial numbers from the CDC, which indicates an increased trend over the past 30 years (America's Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2018). At the present time, persons on ASD represent an underacknowledged segment of travellers with unique travel needs, and this type of families is one of the segments underresearched by academia (Schänzel, Yeoman, & Backer, E. (Eds,)., 2012; Hamed, 2013; Stuhl & Porter, 2015).

This is a nascent area of tourism research, and this target group represents a segment of the travelling population that is likely to grow significantly in the years to come. Improved understanding of the needs of families with children diagnosed with ASD when staying at hotels or similar accommodation and their intention to travel to accessible accommodation could lead to improvement in access to services, safety, and customer satisfaction. The purpose of this study is to provide a starting point to better understand this neglected traveller population and their constraints when travelling to accommodation facilities. On one hand, it will hopefully encourage more and more specialised publications. On the other hand, there is a lack of international standards regarding developmental disorders to guide tourism and hospitality professionals, so this study will contribute in this respect.

This study is structured in four sections. First, it explains the context of accessible tourism, and earlier research on the ASD and tourism behaviour. Second, it describes the hypothesis and methods used. Third, it presents the findings and discussion. Finally, the study presents its contribution to literature and management practices and suggests further research.

2 | LITERATURE REVIEW

People diagnosed with ASD are characterised "by some degree of impaired social behaviour, communication, and language, accompanied by a narrow range of interests and activities that are both unique to the individual and carried out repetitively" (WHO, 2014). The autism condition is a "life-long neurodevelopment condition interfering with the person's ability to communicate and relate to others" (Elsabbagh et al., 2012:160). Hamed (2013) defines autism as a complex developmental condition that results from a neurological disorder that affects the normal functioning of the brain. It impacts communicative, social, and behavioural development, often accompanied by difficulties in cognitive functioning, learning, attention, and sensory processing. The symptoms typically appear during the first 3 years of life. People affected by this disorder usually have poor eye contact and language delay and exhibit stereotyped or repetitive behaviour. In some case, they ignore others, as they are unable to successfully communicate and interact with them, and often seem to be self-absorbed in their own private world (Autism Speaks, 2010; Early Intervention Consulting, 2011; Kopetz & Endowed, 2012; National Institute on Deafness and Other Communication Disorders NIDCD, 2010). These characteristics were understood as a range of diagnoses under the umbrella term of "pervasive developmental disorders." Nowadays, the American Psychiatric Association (2013) categorises all such mental health issues, in the broader diagnosis of ASD (including Asperger's disorder). Rett disorder is the only one remaining independent.

Being a spectrum disorder, the symptoms and characteristics of autism can reveal themselves in a wide variety of combinations and ranges from mild to severe. At one end of the spectrum of autism, individuals tend to have many challenging behaviours. Mainly, they confront social, communication, and behavioural challenges (Hamed, 2013). At the other end, individuals have full cognitive abilities and can communicate well with spoken language. Thus, symptoms will present in each individual differently. Two individuals both with a diagnosis of ASD can act very differently from one another. It is said that "if you know one person with autism; you know one person with autism." So, although there is neither one definitive definition nor two individuals on the ASD are alike, it is agreed that the diagnosis does have an impact on the life of the individual diagnosed and their families. Although each individual presents heterogeneity of symptoms and capabilities within the spectrum, researchers distinguish three main groups, given their severity of symptoms and characteristics: high functioning (0–33%), middle functioning (34–65%), or low functioning (+65%; Dawson, 1996; Hamed, 2013).

The academics and tourism providers' understanding of disabilities and its integration with the community influence the tourism sector. Existing disability models take different approaches that parallel an inclusion process (Darcy, Cameron, & Pegg, 2010; Figueiredo, Eusébio, & Kastenholz, 2012; Kim & Lehto, 2013; Zajadacz, 2015): from social exclusion (medical approach), integration (social approach), and inclusion (bio-psychological and geographical). The medical model understands disability as a personal tragedy that needs to be alleviated, and therefore, the individual is responsible for his/her adaptation to the environment (Zajadacz, 2015). The medical model leads to the creation of separated offer, for example, health tourism. Instead, at the social model, disability is seen as a potential pool of demand that service providers can explore developing targeted products that adapt the environment to the needs of the market segment (Zajadacz, 2015). The social model results in products creating the conditions for making the travel as accessible as possible. Alternatively, the bio-psychological and geographical models appear as a synthesis of the previous, where disability is seen as individual characteristics that both require medical assistance and include people with disabilities in society as a social responsibility. These last models focus on social inclusion through a universal design approach that facilitates the resources to preserve a quality standard of living.

This study positions the research within inclusive models, closely related to the principle *Design for all*, aligned with the tourism for all concept (Michopoulou, Darcy, Ambrose, & Buhalis, 2015; Portales, 2015). The universal design encompasses the needs of all society members, seeing people with disabilities as one of many different profiles in society. Tourism for all fosters travel and leisure without barriers for every disability community. The positioning within an inclusive model permeates the specific language use and nomenclatures of this paper because "language provides a unique capability to

resist, strengthen and reframe identities of individuals and groups, yet can also reinforce, weaken and perpetuate dominant worldviews of disability" (Gillovic et al., 2018:1). In this respect, we have opted to use "children diagnosed with ASD," "children on ASD," "condition or disorder" when referring to the ASD, and "person with disabilities" aligned with a social model approach.

As mentioned in Section 1, accessible tourism research has primarily focused on physical disabilities or a mixture of disabilities. From the demand side, research has focused on attitudinal barriers (Bi, Card, & Cole, 2007) and experiences in travel (Daniels, Rodgers, & Wiggins, 2005) and hospitality services (Lugosi, Robinson, Golubovskaya, Foley, & Harwell, 2016). From the supply side, research has studied the provision of (a) accessible tourist attraction and sites (Israeli, 2002), (b) accessible accommodation information (Buhalis & Michopoulou, 2011; Darcy, 2010), and (c) hotel experiences (Darcy & Pegg, 2011; O'Neill & Ali Knight, 2000). Yet research on families with children with developmental difficulties has received less attention in tourism research, which has focused on analysing the leisure constraints (Emira & Thompson, 2011), travel (Perry & Kozub, 2011) and vacation experiences (Amet, 2013), and the effectiveness of travel agents (Hamed, 2013; McKercher, Packer, Yau, & Lam, 2003). Thus, research on tourism and developmental disorders is anecdotal (Hamed, 2013), as is research on accessibility in hotels and family tourism (Schänzel et al., 2012).

Families play a major role when travelling together with a child with developmental disorders, though the hospitality consumption experiences of parents and carers with children remains underexamined (Lugosi et al., 2016; Sedgley et al., 2017). Although research usually focuses on the person with disability, families' opinions also should be taken into account (Emira & Thompson, 2011). For instance, travelling can be overwhelming for a child diagnosed with ASD and its family, as it "involves changes in routine, anxiety and dealing with sensory issues" (Hamed, 2013:1). The lack of recreational time added to the pressure of constant dealing with a person with dependence is considered an extra source of stress (Kim & Lehto, 2013), which travel may contribute to reduce. Research evidences the positive impact leisure has on both the child's life (Kim & Lehto, 2013; Lee, Agarwal, & Kim, 2012) and family members (Lugosi et al., 2016). Tourism- and leisure-related experiences provide benefits such as improvement in happiness levels, health conditions, self-esteem, freedom from stress, levels of satisfaction, and social inclusion (Darcy & Dickson, 2009; Hamed, 2013; Stuhl & Porter, 2015).

Despite benefits derived from travel, earlier research, not including developmental disorders, identified that the disability level impacts on the travel experience (Bi et al., 2007; Burnett & Baker, 2001; McKercher & Darcy, 2018). Dwyer and Darcy (2008) demonstrated, using the Australian Bureau of Statistics Disability (2004), that while travelling, those having a disability can have different levels of independence and support needs ranging from none, mild, moderate, severe, to profound (24-hr assistance).

Travel intention is "an outcome of a mental process that leads to an action and transforms motivation into behaviour" (Jang, Bai, Hu, & Wu, 2009, p. 57). As noted by several authors, it is important to

qualify that it does not always translate into actual travel behaviour (Decrop, 2006; Kah, Lee, & Lee, 2016; March & Woodside, 2005). Intention to travel has been used to predict travel behaviour (Jang et al., 2009; Kah et al., 2016) because it emphasises commitment to travel. Therefore, it is important to measure intention to travel to accurately examine what travellers are likely to do (Jang et al., 2009). Intention to travel is "in part, formed by overcoming various constraints which may be present at various stages of the decision-making process" (Lee et al., 2012, p. 570). In their view, people with disabilities give up travel opportunities despite sufficient mobility and accessibility, due to varied constraints.

Several researchers have identified travel-related and multidimensional constraints confronted by people with disabilities (e.g., Bi et al., 2007; Daniels et al., 2005; Israeli, 2002; Lee et al., 2012; McKercher et al., 2003; Poria, Reichel, & Brandt, 2011; Shaw & Coles, 2004; Turco, Stumbo, & Garncarz, 1998; Yau et al., 2004). The main constraints are typically classified into intrinsic (intrapersonal), interactional (interpersonal), or environmental (structural; Crawford & Godbey, 1987; Crawford, Jackson, & Godbey, 1991). Intrinsic constraints relate to an individual's psychological condition and include personality factors, attitudes, religious beliefs, and moods (Crawford et al., 1991; Crawford & Godbey, 1987). Interactional constraints arise from social interaction with others, including skills, challenges, and communication barriers (Allan, 2015; Smith, 1987). Environmental constraints, which have been extensively identified, come mainly from the lack of adequate destination facilities (McKercher et al., 2003; Poria et al., 2011). The lack of qualified staff and their attitude (Emira & Thompson, 2011), availability of accessibility-related information (Darcy, 2010; Lee et al., 2012; Shaw & Coles, 2004; Yau et al., 2004), and own environment perception (Amet, 2013) may aggravate the barriers. The above constraints are prominent in accessible tourism accommodation, which is a prerequisite for the destination choice (Market and Communication Research, 2002). Also coping strategies of caregivers are starting to be researched; first results include looking in advance for accommodation that could provide for the child's needs (Sedgley et al., 2017). Thus, intrinsic, interactional, and environmental constraints are expected to influence the travel intention to accessible accommodations.

Still, there is a need for understanding the uniqueness of the challenges faced by each disability community (McKercher & Darcy, 2018) as both the nature of disability and the degree of impairment, support needs, and level of independence significantly influence the perceived constraints (Emira & Thompson, 2011), the intention to travel (Lee et al., 2012), and the final accommodation choices (Burnett & Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2010). Most research on constraints on accommodation focuses on physical disability (Darcy, 2010; Poria et al., 2011), whereas accommodation managers and owners often do not recognise disability as a market (Darcy, 2010; O'Neill & Ali Knight, 2000) and only inform on whether the establishments have a "disabled room" (Tantawy, Kim, & Pyo, 2005). To sum up, this study specifically focuses on the intention to travel of families with children diagnosed with ASD to accessible accommodation, this type of families being one of the segments underresearched by academia (Hamed, 2013; Stuhl &

Porter, 2015). This research is part of a larger project that explores the families with a child on ASD as a market segment, examines their intention to travel, understands their emotional experience, provides insights for further academic research and recommendations to engage more autism-friendly accommodation providers. The research project was approved by the ethics committee of the Universitat Ramon Llull (Reference Number 2504/16). Four hypotheses were researched that act as the framework of the study:

> **Hypothesis 1.** *The travel constraints of intrinsic nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD.*

> **Hypothesis 2.** *The travel constraints of interactive nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD.*

> **Hypothesis 3.** *The travel constraints of environmental nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD.*

> **Hypothesis 4.** *The higher the degree of disorder of the child on ASD, the higher the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of their families.*

3 | METHODS

An exploratory approach with a cross-sectional design was adopted, testing the above hypothesis. Because the study aimed to measure the intention to travel against the established dimension of the target population, a self-administered on-line survey was chosen. A convenience sampling technique was selected, being the target population 150 families with children on the autism spectrum living in Catalonia (Spain). Participants were parents with a child on ASD that were members of Autism Association Aprenem, the Institute of Diagnosis and Psychiatric and Psychological Support IDAPP, and the School of Special Education Paidea, which are leading institutions in Catalonia that cater to children on the ASD. As previous literature on these issues highlight, these types of collaborations between academics and specific organizations enable both to benefit from academic research skills and credibility and to ensure the priorities of families with children diagnosed with ASD are considered in the research (Sedgley et al., 2017).

The data collection was carried out in December 2016 (150), and 117 usable online surveys were collected, filled by parents. Online surveys allowed families to respond openly and take the time necessary to answer. Families had the support of the researchers throughout the data collection process to solve doubts and clarify questions. The survey consisted of two themes: accommodation-related constraints and socio-demographic profile, organised in seven variables informed by previous studies. Socio-demographic questions collected included gender, number of members in the family, marital status, education, and monthly household income of the respondent. Furthermore, demographic data related to the child were requested such as,

age, gender, and severity of disorder. Travel-related characteristics of the sample were also collected: overnight travel experience, number of trips, and average length of stay. The survey used 5-point Likert scale, as previous literature that studied attitudes and constraints in the hospitality sector (Allan, 2015; Kim & Lehto, 2013). Open-ended questions, based on the ecological approach and social model of disability of Poria et al. (2012), were included in the survey and analysed. Questions were (a) related to critical incidents or difficulties encountered by the families at the accommodation facility, (b) families' coping strategies, and (c) suggestions to accommodation providers.

The survey was designed in English and later translated into Spanish by two researchers who had bilingual backgrounds and who were familiar with the questions being asked, as well as the nature of the research. The survey was validated by an ASD expert from IDAPP and pilot tested with three families with children diagnosed with ASD, which were not included in the final sample. Accordingly, minor revisions were made.

Being an explanatory study, an analytical tool with explanatory power such as logistic regression was chosen (Ayçaguer & Utra, 2004). Pallant (2013, p. 178) suggests that "logistic regression allows you to assess how well your set of predictors variables explains your categorical dependent variable." In this study, the dependent variable was "intention to travel to accessible accommodation." For this study, intention to travel is formed by overcoming intrinsic, interactive, and environmental constraints, as the willingness of the family to travel to accessible accommodation. The dependent categorical variable was measured as follows: "willingness to travel to accessible accommodation: yes/no." Open-ended questions were categorised using content analysis to identify participants' critical incidents when travelling and suggestions to accommodation providers.

To analyse the results, missing values analysis was conducted before proceeding with a multivariate analysis that was performed using a logistic regression model. A logistic regression model was developed using SPSS software in order to understand intention to travel according to the factors of influence: intrinsic, interactional, and environmental constraints. The entry method was applied: explanatory variables were entered into the formula at the same time. The intrinsic dimension was measured towards five items adopted from Lee et al. (2012): fear of not getting along with other people, travel imposes requirements beyond our capabilities, fear of causing others' discomfort or inconvenience, being in a situation where we need others' help to do something, and fear of needing medical assistance. The interactional dimension was measured towards three items adopted from Lee et al. (2012; fear to receive others' burdensome glances, fear to being ignored by others, and fear of being object of others' interest) and one item related to the specificity of the study (fear of social exclusion of the child). The environmental dimension was measured towards eight items: express check-in and check-out, accessible rooms to people on the ASD, silent rooms, express access to restaurant services, adapted menus to allergies and special dietary requirements, trained staff, personalised service adapted to the needs of the collective, and leisure activities adapted to children on ASD, adopted from Figuereido et al. (2012), Lee et al. (2012), and Darcy

(2010). For all three dimensions, each item was measured with a 5-point scale. A factorial analysis was conducted in order to group items in a single quantitative variable.

4 | FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Descriptive statistics were used to obtain the demographic variables of the respondents and profiles of the children (Table 1). A higher female percentage (76.27%) answered the questionnaire. The majority of the sample had family parties of four members (52.54%), were married (80.51%), attained university level (45.76%), and had a monthly household income between 1,000 and 2,999 Euros (72.63%). As for the children on ASD, 77.96% were males and 45.76% aged 6 to 10 years old. The severity of disorder varied; 60.17% reported between 34% and 65%. As for travel-related characteristics of the sample, the majority (93.22%) had overnight travel experiences over the last 3 years, and 57.63% had undertaken one to five family trips in the same period; moreover, 44.97% had an average length of stay from four to seven nights.

For this study, an exploratory (EFA with SPSS) and confirmatory (CFA; EQS) analyses were conducted to check the validity and reliability of the scale. When exploratory factor analysis is conducted in SPSS, measures of sampling adequacy are requested by checking the boxes for Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's test of sphericity.

TABLE 1 General characteristics of the sample (n = 117)

Variables	Categories	%
Gender	Male	23.72
	Female	76.27
Number of family members	2	4.24
	3	38.13
	4	52.54
	5	6.78
Marital status	Single	7.63
	Married	80.51
	Divorced/separated	11.86
	Widowed	0
Education	High school	16.95
	Vocational studies	27.96
	University	45.76
	Postgraduate	9.32
Monthly household income	Less than 1,000 Euros	5.26
	1,000–2,999 Euros	72.63
	More than 3,000 Euros	22.10
Gender (child)	Male	77.96
	Female	22.03
Age (child)	0–5 years	16.95
	6–10 years	45.76
	11–15 years	27.97
	16–18 years	9.32
Severity of disorder	Less than 33%	12.71
	34% to 65%	60.17
	More than 65%	27.12

KMO's values greater than 0.8 lead to a good factor analysis. Added to this, Bartlett's test should be less than 0.05 (Pallant, 2013). Then the most common extraction technique to identify the number of underlying dimensions was applied, called the principal component analysis. Finally, Cronbach's α measures the reliability of the measurement scale. Usually, indexes are considered to be satisfactory when they are higher than 0.6 (Malhorta, 1993, in Halkos & Matsiori, 2012) or 0.7 (Nunnally, 1978, in Halkos & Matsiori, 2012).

The goodness of fit of the model was ascertained using a Hosmer and Lemeshow goodness-of-fit test, producing a Chi-square (χ^2) value of 12.234 (significance equal to 0.141; see Table 2). The nonsignificance of this value at the 0.05 level meant that the fit was appropriate, as the observed and predicted classification lacked significant discrepancy. The Ómnibus test of the model's overall Chi-square value produced a significance of χ^2 = 0.015, meaning overall fitness was significant as well. The results demonstrated the efficacy of the model to differentiate those who intended to travel more if accommodation is accessible and those who do not with an assurance of statistical significance. In addition, the model correctly classified 36.8% of those who were willing to travel and 90% of those who are not. The model had a general explanatory power of 71.3% (see Table 2).

Earlier research focused on generic disabilities, whereas this study is aligned with research against a one-size-fits all solution (Burnett & Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2010; Darcy et al., 2010; Figuereido et al., 2012; Michopoulou et al., 2015). Thus, it included constraints specific to the ASD condition (see Hypotheses 1, 2, and 3). Regarding Hypothesis 1, reliability analysis of "intrinsic constraints" factor was displayed. It revealed a Cronbach α of 0.805. The value showed an acceptable internal consistency. The factor analysis revealed that the KMO criterion for sampling adequacy was equal to 0.803 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was equal to 187.703 (with a p value of .000 and 10 degrees of freedom). This shows that the procedure was appropriate in this case. The factor intrinsic constraints explained the 56.83% of the total variation in the data. The results proved to be significant in the case of Hypothesis 1: The travel constraints of intrinsic nature influence the intention to travel to accessible

TABLE 2 Logistic regression model

Variable	β	Wald
Constant	−2.557	8,733***
Intrinsic constraints	.489	4.688**
Interactional constraints	−4.11	3.467*
Environmental constraints	−0.72	.104
Disability Degree	.862	5.309**
Ómnibus test	χ^2 = 0.015	
Nagelkerke's R square	.149	
Cox and Snell	.108	
−2Log likelihood	127.746	
Hosmer and Lemeshow	χ^2 = 12.234	
	df 8	
	Sig., .141	
Overall percentage correctly classified	71.3	

*p < .1. **p < .05. ***p < .01.

accommodation of families with children on ASD. The positive coefficient for intrinsic constraints indicated that customers with more intrinsic constraints are more likely to travel if accommodation is accessible (β: .489), consistent with priory found direct relationship between travel constraints and intention to travel (Burnett & Baker, 2001; Daniels et al., 2005; Israeli, 2002; Shaw & Coles, 2004; Turco et al., 1998; Yau et al., 2004). As for the open-ended questions, a high number of mentions of critical incidents were related to other guests complaining about the child's behaviour, as "fear of causing others discomfort or inconvenience." This goes in line with reported lack of support in dealing with the behaviour of the child diagnosed with ASD and a great public lack of understanding and empathy for children with autism, especially regarding the nature of their condition (Amet, 2013). As for suggestions to accommodation providers, there was an overwhelming high response to request training of the accommodation's staff, as increasing "sensitivity." In this line, autism-friendly staff proposals were one of the key findings at Amet's (2013) study also consistent with Baker et al. (2012) and Poria et al. (2011) demonstrating that the staff attitude affects the experience.

Concerning Hypothesis 2, reliability analysis of the scale to measure "interactive constraints" revealed that Cronbach was 0.902. The value showed an acceptable internal consistency. The factor analysis revealed the KMO criterion for sampling adequacy was equal to 0.831 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was equal to 301.753 (with a p value of .000 and six degrees of freedom). This showed the procedure was appropriate in this case. The factor interactive constraints explained the 77.35% of the total variation in the data. Results indicated that the travel constraints of interactive nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD; it was not confirmed. Families with more interactive constraints were less likely to travel to accessible accommodation. The dimensions analysed were burdensome glances, fear to being ignored by others, fear of being object of others' interest, and fear of social exclusion of the child. These constraints are related to the interaction of staff and other guests towards the family and the child. As Lee et al. (2012) pointed out, it may not always be the case that there is a direct relation between travel constraints and intention to travel. Several authors addressed overt or subtle discrimination, social exclusion, and ignorance (Shaw & Coles, 2004; Yau et al., 2004) as a source of stress to travellers with disabilities. However, in this specific case, families rejected the hypothesis, arguably because the interaction of staff or other guests will not be different or beneficial at accessible accommodation. In-depth interviews would be necessary to further explore these findings, which are different from those initially expected.

As for Hypothesis 3, reliability analysis of the scale to measure "environmental constraints" revealed that Cronbach was 0.952. The value showed an acceptable internal consistency. The factor analysis revealed the KMO criterion for sampling adequacy was equal to 0.931 and Bartlett's test of sphericity was equal to 845.393 (with a p value of .000 and 28 degrees of freedom). This showed the procedure was appropriate in this case. The factor environmental constraints explained the 75.21% of the total variation in the data. In

view of the results, that the travel constraints of environmental nature influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation of families with children on ASD was not significant. Although the results were not significant as for the logistic regression model applied, the open-ended answers referred extensively to dimensions included in this constraint. The critical incidents mostly stated were related to dietary needs (limited offer, not adapted menus) in line with the dimension "adapted menus to allergies and special dietary requirements," followed by problems at waiting times at check-in (dimension "express check-in and check-out") and at the restaurants (dimension "express access to restaurant services"). A high number of mentions had to do with the nonadapted leisure offer (dimension "leisure activities adapted to children on the ASD"). Few comments referred to the restaurant personnel service (dimension "express access to restaurant services") or to the level of noise in the room (dimension "silent rooms"). Some families mentioned incidents with rooms that could not be locked. When asked about coping strategies, the families found no solution was provided by the accommodation company to their special requests; thus, some families formally complained or, in a specific case, decided to leave the hotel. In few cases, they were offered apologies. As for issues related to "express access to restaurant services," families reported that they visited the restaurant very early or very late to avoid queues. In line with the dimension "personalized service adapted to the need of the collective," families mentioned to have asked to be seated at a silent table. To reheat food was also mentioned as a dietary need. As for suggestions to accommodation providers, a high number of respondents mentioned specific training aimed at staff dedicated to the kid's leisure activities. At a great extent, requests related to adapted rooms were mentioned (i.e., away from elevators and locks) and to facilitating waiting times (express check-in and check-out and restaurant). Reducing queuing time is in line with Amet's (2013) findings. Mentions linked to the restaurant offerings (adapted menus, quiet areas, and visuals) should also be noted. Most of the information provided is related to the dimensions of environmental nature, arguably because those are tangible, visible, dependent on others (the hotel's management), and observable at first glance and do not require such a self-knowledge or personal connection, as in the case of the intrinsic or interactive constraints.

For improving the tourist experience of families travelling with a child diagnosed with ASD, it is better to regard the disorder as one of the features that characterises a certain customers' segment rather than as an impairment. Universal service supply guarantees a greater independence for these families considering that their specific needs, such as special menus, express check-in or access, and silent rooms, have been already taken into account. Michopoulou et al. (2015) rightly point out that for providing inclusive models of accessible tourism, stakeholder collaboration is crucial. Accommodating for individual disabilities requires a higher level of service provision (McKercher & Darcy, 2018). The adaptations needed are simple so a social inclusive model where the needs are not treated as special but, instead, are considered in the universal design of the space and the service are plausible (Zajadacz, 2015), given that customising the service provision is something the hospitality providers are used to do (McKercher &

Darcy, 2018). In this line, accessible tourism becomes more than support to a specific community, it may translate into specific new codes of practice to develop hospitality offers in an inclusive way, in line with the views of Michopoulou et al. (2015). From this perspective, accessible tourism is a business opportunity as much as it becomes a chance to promote social inclusion (Figueiredo et al., 2012).

Concerning Hypothesis 4, it proved to be significant. The severity of the disorder increases the intention to travel to accessible accommodation (β: .862). Consequently, the higher the disorder degree of the child, the higher the probability of customers to travel if accommodation were accessible. Despite the fact that at first, a high degree of disorder might be associated with less intention of travel due to the lack of facilities and services, the findings in this study showed that families are longing for accessible accommodation. There is here a clear market opportunity for accommodation providers in terms of making their offer more accessible. As mentioned before, the adaptations are simple and is mostly linked to adapting the service, to training the staff and implementing specific codes of practice. These findings follow the results from Darcy (2010) on the support needs of people with a higher degree of disability, and it is consistent with Bi et al.'s (2012) findings that participants with low functioning encountered more accessibility and attitudinal barriers in the accommodation business (applied to physical disability). Findings are aligned with Burnett and Baker (2001) where environment-related, accessibility, and activities decision criteria were valued more as disability severity increased.

As McKercher and Darcy (2018) and Lee et al. (2012) pointed out, there is not a linear relationship; participation by people with disabilities in tourism activities is a complex issue, and the constraints are at different levels and operate in an interconnected manner. This might explain the findings. Applying the four-tiered framework proposed by Mc Kercher & Darcy (2018), it is clear that, as for Tier 2, issues faced by all people with people with disabilities were very present, specifically ignorance and attitude. Furthermore, as for Tier 3, issues unique to specific disabilities (intellectually or physically disabled children) were in line with their findings such as suitable leisure kid's activities, behavioural problems, and standing in line difficulties. As for Tier 4, moderating factors of impairment effects, in this case, the severity of the child's disorder, showed that it increases the family's intention to travel to accessible accommodation.

5 | CONCLUSIONS

Results indicated that the intrinsic constraints and the severity of the condition influence the intention to travel to accessible accommodation and confirmed that families with a child diagnosed with ASD are a heterogeneous market, with families who are more willing to travel if accommodations are accessible and families who are not. As mentioned throughout the study, the ASD is a disorder that has its own specific characteristics such as communicative and social difficulties, and learning and information-processing limitations. Families with children diagnosed with ASD do not just aspire to stay in a hotel but fully live their tourism experience with minimum constraints. For this to be possible, researchers and accommodation providers need to fully understand the ASD, go in-depth in the experiences of the families while travelling, and are required to propose appropriate strategies and tools to help improve the tourism experiences of this group.

This study contributes to the literature on accessible tourism by responding to the need to gain greater understanding about the uniqueness of this specific market segment (families travelling with children diagnosed with ASD), consistent with research against one-size-fits-all solution (Burnett & Baker, 2001; Darcy, 2010; Darcy et al., 2010; Figueiredo et al., 2012; Michopoulou et al., 2015). Specifically, this research extends earlier knowledge on travel constraints that did not include developmental disorders (Lee et al., 2012; Figueiredo et al., 2012; Darcy, 2010), and it also advances knowledge on the constraints' influence to intentions to travel to accessible accommodation.

The research findings have several practical implications. The results may help accommodation providers in their attempt to provide improvements in access to services, safety, and customer satisfaction. For the accommodation providers, better training on the ASD condition and their unique needs (McKercher & Darcy, 2018), as well as greater exposure to members of the community, is highly recommended. In particular, the ASD is still unknown by a significant part of the Spanish society, and it continues to be stigmatised. Being as it is a "hidden disorder," in the sense that it is not easily identified at a first sight, the challenges are greater. Besides that, behavioural issues associated with the ASD may also impact attitudes of professionals in the field. These attitudes will be harder to change, if the condition is not understood properly. There is immense potential for partnerships between health professionals, associations, and companies to address leisure opportunities for families with a child diagnosed with ASD (Sedgley et al., 2017). Similarly, the study could also be of interest to other industry stakeholders that are participant to the tourism experience of families with a child diagnosed with ASD, as for providing inclusive models of accessible tourism stakeholder collaboration is crucial (Michopoulou et al., 2015). The uptake of recent legislative requirements on making tourism accessible for all transcend the earlier physical and sensory disabilities to include developmental disorders (Connell & Page, 2019) offers a positive outlook.

Regarding the limitations of this study, this exploratory study has depended on convenience sampling, and thus, the sample might not be representative of the whole population of families travelling with a child diagnosed with ASD. Therefore, it is necessary to be cautious when it comes to the results generalisation. Furthermore, this study treated families as a homogenous group. Mainly, participating families had children with a moderate or severe condition; thus, high-functioning children and their families are not represented, and their situation might be very different than the one portrayed in the study. Particular cases with their specificities were not examined highlighting the crucial need for further in-depth research of this issue. "Since tourism experiences are journeys of mixed emotions" for families with children diagnosed with ASD (Sedgley et al., 2017, p. 22), it would be advisable to explore in more details the dimensions of this study by

means of mobile ethnography and in-depth interviews. In addition, all families participating were from Catalonia (Spain); thus, further cross-cultural research would be advisable (Poria et al., 2011). Finally, intention to travel was measured through a single item: willingness to travel to accessible accommodation (yes/no). It can be argued the need to measure intention to travel applying a more nuanced construct, which can be an issue to consider for future fieldworks. Further research may also expand upon the development of enabling practices (Michopoulou et al., 2015; Sedgley et al., 2017) to monitor the families' travelling patterns and understand their emotional engagement. It is also recommendable to explore replicating this study to other forms of mental, cognitive, or developmental disorders as well as addressing other subsectors of the tourism industry (i.e., airlines, airports, recreation parks, and museums).

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Appendix VIII. Publication Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world

Women managers in tourism: Associations for building a sustainable world

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ABSTRACT

Women are strongly represented in the tourism workforce, albeit mainly in low-level, precarious positions. In management or on board of directors, on the other hand, women are seriously underrepresented. Interviews with female leaders from management associations in Catalonia (Spain) allowed us to identify the associations' goals and roles, the barriers women have encountered in their pursuit of high-level corporate positions, and the challenges to female leadership that lie ahead. Female associations support the UN's Sustainable Development Goal 5, creating awareness of gender barriers, enhancing social conscience on gender equality in decision-making bodies, and expanding professional networks and access to resources. Our findings show that these associations empower women by means of different strategies acting as active agents of change that help transform both their members and society.

1. Introduction

The tourism industry is a large, rapidly growing service sector that accounts for a significant part of the global economy: in 2017, it was responsible for 1 in 5 new jobs (WTTC, 2018). According to UNWTO (2019), tourism is an important source of employment for women. For instance, women make up over 60% of the labor force in the hotel industry (WTTC, 2018). This is also true in Spain, where most employees in the hospitality sector are women. Tourism offers a wide range of income generating opportunities for women in both formal and informal work. Tourism jobs are usually flexible and can be carried out in various places, such as at work, in the community or at home. It is widely accepted that the inclusion of women in the workplace is one of the positive impacts of tourism development.

However, profoundly negative consequences also emerge when analyzing women's role in the tourism sector. Gender inequality is a worldwide issue in all sectors, and the tourism industry is no exception. Due to the scale and deep entrenchment of gender inequality, addressing it is not an easy task (Guimarães & Silva, 2016). As existing literature shows, there is also evidence that women face wage disparity and vertical segregation, two critical issues that have not been resolved (Huete, Brotons, & Sigüenza, 2016; Kogovsek & Kogovsek, 2015). Women in the tourism industry often hold low level, low paying, precarious jobs (UNWTO, 2019; Hutchings, Moyle, Chai, Garofano, & Moore, 2020). Moreover, the numerical superiority of women in tourism positions is

not reflected in the sector's technical leadership or management (Baum, 2013). In Spain, women employed in accommodation, travel agencies, tour operators and air transport account for 57% of the total number of workers in these three industries. However, only a third of high-ranking positions are held by women with only 3% becoming CEOs of tourism companies (Canalis, 2019).

The low representativeness of women in decision-making positions is a global phenomenon that impacts negatively on equality and social justice (Chambers, Munar, Khoo-Lattimore, & Biran, 2017). The existence of barriers to women's access to leadership roles has been demonstrated in prior studies (Villamil & Alonso, 2013). Globally, women face barriers such as family responsibilities, gender stereotypes and male-centric corporate cultures that make it difficult for them to be selected for top positions (ILO, 2016). In recent years, the business community has made significant progress in ensuring female representation in the highest spheres. The percentage of companies with at least one woman in top management has grown significantly, from 66% to 75%; this means that more companies have reached some level of gender balance (Grant Thornton, 2018). In the tourism industry the number of women on board of directors has also risen significantly. However, a growing number of women in top management positions does not ensure real gender equality. A global strategy based on diversity must determine the resources and actions plans needed to guarantee equality in tourism (Equality in Tourism, 2018). When women are underrepresented on corporate boards, companies cannot draw from a full range of

talent. Boards are more effective in making decisions when women are included in mixed teams (Davies, 2011) as this means a wider variety of skills, knowledge and experiences are considered (Hoogendoorn, Oosterbeek, & Van Praag, 2013).

Existing literature suggests that there is an urgent need to translate the long-standing awareness of gender inequality in the hospitality industry into practical solutions and change in organizations (Chambers et al., 2017; Khoo-Lattimore, Chiao Ling Yang, & Je, 2019; Munar et al., 2015; Munar, Khoo-Lattimore, Chambers, & Biran, 2017). Prior studies have examined gender inequality on boards of directors and its characteristics. However, hospitality and gender studies barely converge in any constant or valid engagement (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019; Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). According to Figueroa-Domecq, Pritchard, Segovia-Perez, Morgan, and Villace-Molinero (2015), journals of feminist studies include less than 10% on hospitality and gender. Gender itself remains of minimal interest to scholars researching hospitality. In the Spanish tourism sector, little attention has been paid to the field of gender studies, despite its impact on the Spanish economy and the importance of women in tourism as entrepreneurs and employees (Segovia-Pérez & Figueroa-Domecq, 2014). If success in the tourism industry is tied to efficient and committed employees who ensure high-quality service, labor policies should promote greater equality in opportunities, pay and working conditions. Moreover, COVID-19 has dramatically impacted the industry, destroying jobs, and exacerbating gender inequality and the lack of female empowerment (Moreno Alarcón, 2020). As women are the majority in the tourism workforce, the current situation of this vulnerable sector is very worrying.

Women's associations are a clear strategy for facing gender issues. They help women reach their professional objectives, providing support on a local, national, and international level. Support networks are crucial for female professional development (ESADE, 2019). However, there is limited research on women's associations and their role in ensuring gender equality and female empowerment. This paper analyzed how women's associations in Catalonia (Spain) help eradicate barriers to gender equality, in line with Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) from the United Nations' 2030 Agenda. SDG 5 strives to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, fighting any form of discrimination they face (United Nations, 2020). Our objectives were to identify the goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia, the barriers women face when accessing corporate positions and the challenges that lie ahead for women in leadership. We sought in-depth knowledge of how the leading women's management associations in Catalonia help minimize gender inequality, provided practical recommendations for different stakeholders and a better understanding of to what degree the tourism industry is respectful of the SDGs (Saarinen, 2019). In these difficult post-COVID19 times, studies like these, which seek tools and initiatives to solve collective problems are more than necessary.

2. Theoretical framework

2.1. Women in the worldwide workforce

Gender inequality is a phenomenon that persists throughout the world stagnating social progress. Women's equality is not just an ideology; rather it can be considered one of the main paths towards social improvement (Berkovitch, 1999). In fact, such is the importance of gender equality to ensure and hasten sustainable development, that it is one of the crucial SDGs. SDG 5 strives to achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, fighting against any form of discrimination they face (United Nations, 2020). Although gender equality is specifically addressed in SDG 5, it must be a priority across all SDGs (Moreno Alarcón & Cole, 2019). All signatory governments have declared that the achievement of SDG 5 will contribute decisively to the other objectives. To achieve this goal and to implement the 2030 Agenda, governments request the support of both companies and civil

society. Nevertheless, contradictions emerge when studying gender issues under the sustainable development paradigm. On one hand, sustainable development can be associated with change, progress, and improvement, as in the effort to achieve gender equality and to promote women's empowerment. On the other, sustainability can also be related to continuity and the preservation of certain conditions, customs, and traditions. As a result, the debate on how women's issues are handled within sustainability in tourism is complex. For instance, cultural and contextual differences should be considered when analyzing women's empowerment and sustainable development to avoid inconsistencies (Tucker, 2020).

The status of SDG 5 varies widely across the globe. Even though many countries have reached parity between boys and girls in primary education, the cost of education seriously affects girls in developing countries (United Nations, 2020). While the number of children not being schooled has dropped since 2005, girls still make up a higher proportion of unschooled children than boys. Many low-income families choose to invest in sons rather than daughters. Often, sending girls off to school would mean lost labor. In contrast, in developed countries, girls and women have wider access to education. For example, recent research shows that in both the United States and several European countries, women's employment tends to be higher among those with a higher educational level (England, Gornick, & Fitzgibbons Shafer, 2012). Some studies also claim that girls and women obtain less encouragement, experience, and opportunities in some areas because teachers and school management consider education a "male" subject, for which women lack skills, understanding or aptitude. For instance, girls are discouraged from pursuing subjects such as science, engineering, technology, or math. Sometimes, teachers' attitudes, classroom atmosphere and approaches to learning help perpetuate gender stereotypes which are repeated by both teachers and students (Schulze, 2016). Thus, as ILO (2016) states, the definition of "gender equality" not only refers to the workplace: what takes place at the professional level is often a reflection of wider issues on a social level. Gender equality means that women and men have the same conditions and same rights when contributing to, and benefiting from, economic, social, cultural, and political development.

As a result of the growth in women's participation in the workforce from the 1960s to the 1990s and the number of women from the baby-boom generation entering the job market, the contribution of women to the labor pool has increased progressively. In 1950, 18.4 million women were present in the labor force, which accounted for about one-third of the total. In 2000, 66.3 million women in the labor force made up 46.5% of the total. Not only has this contribution been increasing, but it also continues to grow at a higher rate than the male labor force (Toossi & Morisi, 2017).

Nevertheless, while women represent two-thirds of the worldwide workforce, they still earn less than men (ILO, 2016). Although the number of female graduates in Europe rises year after year, once in the labor market women receive lower wages than their male colleagues with the same level of education, resulting in the so-called "gender wage gap" (Haasler, 2014; Triventi, 2013). Even if the gender wage gap has decreased, it is a continuing worldwide reality with complex causes (Brynin, 2017). The wage gap refers primarily to two things: women earn less money than men for performing a similar job or earn less because a job they do is not that valued (Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018). If we focus on Europe, the gender pay gap remains high. Across the economy, women in the EU, earn on average 16% less per hour than men. Considerable differences exist among EU member states: the gender pay gap ranges from 5.2% in Romania to 25.3% in Estonia. In Spain, women also earn less than men: up to 76.1% of the male salary (Huete et al., 2016). Thus, even when women do participate in the labor market, they tend to work in lower-paying sectors, work fewer hours, and occupy lower-ranking positions than men; all this leads to considerable pay and earnings gaps (European Commission, 2016). Women are generously contributing to building the world's economies, but are

denied countless basic legal, political, economic, social, and educational rights in many countries and cultures around the world (UN Women, 2018).

In addition, women's careers tend to be interrupted, with women often driven to part- time work. They are successful at university and in their early careers, but as they rise through the ranks of an organization attrition rates increase (Davies, 2011). Women tend to be secondary wage earners within the family. Their careers usually slow down after some years of participation in the labor market, and once they have children, pauses in their professional career disadvantage them in future promotions (Haasler, 2014). It has traditionally been thought that the limitations women face in the development of their professional career are caused by internal psychological characteristics such as low self-esteem or fear of success (Tharenou, Latimer, & Conroy, 1994). However, findings obtained in recent years reveal that both the capacity and the motivation are similar in men and women (Sarrió, Barberá Heredia, Ramos, & Candela, 2002).

2.2. Women in the worldwide tourism workforce

In recent years, tourism has become one of the fastest-growing economic sectors in the world. In the last 5 years, one in five of all jobs generated worldwide were tied to the travel and tourism industry (WTTC, 2019). In many countries, tourism acts as an engine for sustainable development, contributing to the creation of both direct and indirect employment. As Saarinen (2019) suggests, the tourism industry has the potential to promote, drive and enforce the SDGs. If managed properly, tourism leads to the positive society. Tourism offers greater possibilities for women's participation in the workforce, entrepreneurship, and leadership, than any other sector. Nowadays, women make up a large percentage of the labor force in the formal tourism sector. UNWTO (2019) reports that 54% of people employed in tourism are women. Women's high participation in tourism was also confirmed by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC, 2014), making up 66% of the total tourism workforce in Australia, France, Germany, South Africa, and Turkey. Tourism is the third-largest sector in terms of female participation worldwide, after education, and health and social work. As Purcell (1996) states, tourism jobs are feminized; in other words, it is an economic sector that is largely sustained by women's work.

The above-mentioned context seems ideal, with great potential to generate the socio- economic empowerment of women and achieve gender equality. However, UNWTO issued a tourism-specific report in 2019 where opportunities were identified alongside challenges and barriers. Women in this industry receive less compensation than men (14.7% less) and do not reach the same levels of education (UNWTO, 2019). Different factors such as cultural values, training, labor environment and established policies impact on women's participation in the field (Almathami, Khoo-Lattimore, & Chiao Ling Yang, 2020). Their numerical predominance is not reflected in the roles they occupy in the industry (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015). They tend to occupy precarious, low-level, low-paying positions. In addition, stereotypes, and gender discrimination cause women to hold positions related to cooking, cleaning, and lodging (UNWTO & UN Women, 2010). Thus, studies have proven that gender plays a major role in employment in the tourism sector. For example, hotel staff, waiters and cooks are mostly female, while most tour guides, taxi drivers and maritime officers are men (Obadić & Marić, 2009). When domestic work is transferred to the market it is often assumed that it is an easy job to do and it is therefore undervalued (Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018).

For years, academic and sector-specific literature has extensively explored these issues in the tourism industry. In recent years, interest in gender issues has grown rapidly in tourism literature (Figueroa-Domecq, Palomo, Flecha, Segovia-Perez, & Vico, 2017; Munar et al., 2017). Nevertheless, women in tourism still face the same difficulties, challenges, and oppression as their female counterparts in other sectors (Hutchings et al., 2020). When analyzing scientific and industry

research on gender issues, dissonances and contradictions emerge between theory and reality, such as "femwashing" (Je, Khoo-Lattimore, & Chiao Ling Yang, 2020). Although organizations often transmit positive discourses and images promoting gender equality, the reality demonstrates that they still perpetuate the gender gap (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019). Consistent and collaborative policies and strategies on gender issues should be defined collectively by all stakeholders and from a global perspective. to mainstream gender equality. The tourism industry, the public and private sector, academics, and practitioners must be seriously committed to achieving SDG 5 as a basis for contributing to the rest of the SDGs (Moreno Alarcón & Cole, 2019).

2.3. Women in top management positions

Gender inequalities have also been detected among global top management. As SDG 5 states, supporting female leadership will help to reinforce gender equality policies (United Nations, 2020). Companies from around the world have taken one step forward and one step back in terms of gender diversity in leadership. In 2017, although the number of companies with at least one woman in senior management increased, the proportion of senior positions held by women decreased marginally (Thornton, 2018). Indeed, the 2018 Global Gender Gap Report, released by the World Economic Forum (WEF, 2018), estimates that it will take 202 years to achieve gender balance in boardrooms. In general, men still dominate most company boards worldwide. However, women's participation in boards of directors varies from country to country.

According to Thornton (2018), the percentage of companies with at least one woman in senior management and the percentage of companies where senior positions are held by women, Africa tops the list of regions in terms of gender diversity. Eastern Europe is in second place when it comes to female participation in leadership. Poland and Russia follow their tradition of strong female participation, with 93% and 91% of companies having at least one woman in top management, respectively. In the third position in the ranking, we find North America. The United States experienced significant growth in the percentage of companies with at least one woman in senior management, increasing from 69% in 2017 to 81% in 2018. Meanwhile, in Canada, this figure climbed from 23% to 25%. However, North America is at the bottom of the ranking of companies in terms of companies with senior positions held by women. In the European Union, the United Kingdom reached a historic record, with 75% of companies with at least one woman in senior management. It also achieved a slight increase in the proportion of senior positions held by women, which rose from 19% to 22%. Likewise, France registered the highest figure not only in the percentage of companies with at least one woman in senior management (79%), but also in the proportion of senior positions held by women (33%). Finally, at the bottom of the ranking are Asia Pacific and Latin America.

The situation in the tourism industry mirrors the situation worldwide. Vertically, the gender pyramid is changeless: there is significant gender segregation in the labor market. Lower positions with fewer career development opportunities were occupied by women, while managerial positions were dominated by men (Hemmati, 1999). Even though it seems that discrimination in access to management positions has decreased in the tourism industry, different situations of inequality still occur (Sigüenza, Brotons, & Huete, 2013). Women are underrepresented in top management positions in the tourism industry (Do Le, 2017; Equality in Tourism, 2018; Nyaruwata & Nyaruwata, 2013) for example in executive roles at cruise and tour operators in the UK (Glover & O'Reilly, 2016). In the Spanish hotel industry, only 5% of women manage hotel chains, while only 15% become hotel managers (Canalis, 2019).

Several studies show positive relationships between gender and financial performance (Lückerath-Rovers, 2013; Terjesen, Sealy, & Singh, 2009), with companies with strong female representation on boards in top management positions performing better than those without women (Turban, Wu, & Zhang, 2019). Diversity in management

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teams enriches daily decision-making processes and provides a competitive advantage. Women contribute to decision-making as more diverse insights are considered. In other words, boards make better decisions when a range of voices can be heard, and when this mix of voices includes women (Davies, 2011). This does not mean that women's leadership abilities are needed to improve financial results, or that services demanded by clients are better developed by men; rather, it means that corporate boards perform better when a range of different skills, knowledge and experiences from both men and women are considered (Hoogendoorn et al., 2013). Companies with senior management teams made up only of men are encouraged to act quickly if they want to remain competitive. The current COVID-19 pandemic, the volatility of the world's economy, ongoing technological innovations and the disruptive effects of these innovations make this issue even more important (Grant Thornton, 2018). The main objective should be that top management positions be occupied by the most talented, with gender being neither a barrier nor a limitation.

2.4. Barriers women face when reaching top management positions

The lack of gender equality in management positions is a global phenomenon and the barriers women face when accessing leadership positions are proven by research (Villamil & Alonso, 2013). According to ILO (2016) in Asia, for example, 30% of business leaders surveyed mentioned that most of the mid-career or senior women who left their jobs voluntarily did so due to family commitments. If we focus on Japan, despite anti-discrimination legislation, only 43% of women who tried to rejoin the workforce after childbirth found jobs, suggesting this is a major cause for the leaky talent pipeline. The study also shows that two-thirds of senior women from companies and professional firms across Europe have highlighted the stereotypes and preconceptions of women's roles and skills as the most important barrier to their career progression. Usually, a segregating organizational culture also determines imbalances and limitations (Huete et al., 2016) when it comes to being promoted to high positions (Figueroa-Domecq, Segovia-Perez, Flecha Barrio, & Palomo, 2018). According to the theory of human capital, smaller investment in human capital is one of the factors that complicates women's job promotion. This theory claims that individuals succeed in increasing their production capacity by investing in themselves, and that the main sources of investment are education, training, and work experience (Barberá Heredia, Ramos, Sarrió, & Candela, 2002). This approach suggests that many women, lack time outside working hours to invest in training, and as a result are excluded from promotion opportunities.

Huete et al. (2016) described several invisible barriers encountered by women such as the "glass ceiling", "diamond ceiling", "cement ceiling" and "sticky floor". Firstly, "glass ceiling", a term made popular by an article published in the Wall Street Journal on female executives in 1986, describes barriers that prevent women with high qualifications and personal and professional capacity from accessing the highest management positions and being promoted in the same conditions as men (Segerman-Peck, 1991). According to this concept, women face a set of invisible, impenetrable barriers as they approach the top positions in the corporate hierarchy (U.S. Glass Ceiling Commission, 1995). Secondly, "diamond ceiling" is related to the prejudice that prevents women from being evaluated according to strictly professional criteria (Valcárcel, 1997). In the third place, "cement ceiling" refers to women's own prejudices, which prevent them from growing in any public sphere because of gender roles and a lack of role models. This barrier is due to much higher pressure on women in managerial positions than on men, which sometimes even drives women to leave their positions (Chinchilla, Poelmans, & León, 2005). Finally, "sticky floor" refers to tasks from the private sphere that patriarchal culture assigns to women and that hinder a balance between work and family life (Tandrayen-Ragoobur, 2014). Specifically, the task of looking after dependent family members is largely borne by women and is still not equally shared (De

Luis Carnicer, Martinez, Perez, & Vela, 2007). Far more women than men choose to take parental leave. This fact, together with the lack of facilities for childcare and elder care, means that women usually interrupt their careers or work part-time to care for their families, which means that they get fewer years of work experience and face more interruptions, which slows their professional progress (Baum, 2013; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Hoyt, 2010; Keith & McWilliams, 1999; Pons Peregort, Calvet Puig, Tura Solvas, & Muñoz Illescas, 2013). This unequal division of labor due to household work also causes the wage gap (Polachek, Zhang, & Zhou, 2015). Along the same lines, Sánchez Sellero and Sánchez Sellero (2013) confirm that the increase in the number of family members reduces the likelihood of women being employed, while men's likelihood for employment remains unchanged.

Thus, it can be affirmed that the differences in working behavior stem from the maintenance of stereotypical gender roles and functions (Barberá Heredia et al., 2002). As a result, perceptions of who is more capable of successful leadership can also be difficult to change (Grant Thornton, 2018). Stereotypes reinforce the view that women take care of people and help them, while men take control and focus on the task (Heilman, 1997; Hoyt, 2012). Generally, for leadership positions, the traits associated with men are more highly valued. Nonetheless, many authors indicate that adequate leadership requires a combination of characteristics associated with men and women, such as emotional intelligence, risk-taking, empathy, integrity, or the ability to persuade, motivate and inspire (Eagly & Carli, 2007; Eagly & Karau, 2002; Fernández Palacin, López Fernández, Maeztu, Martín Prius, & A., 2010; Hoyt, 2010; Powell, 1990; Vecchio, 2002). Several authors claim that women and men demonstrate the same degree of commitment to their jobs and the same motivation to seek leadership positions (Bielby & Bielby, 1988; Eagly & Carli, 2007; Hoyt, 2010; Thoits, 1992). However, unfortunately, people in business, in the workplace, in the family sphere and among friends still strengthen stereotypes. These patriarchal notions permeate many of our ways of acting and thinking and should be challenged and transformed (Chambers et al., 2017).

Inclusion is key to eradicating these invisible barriers. Inclusion incorporates all forms of diversity, recognizing that in addition to aspects such as gender, age, or ethnic origin, it is also important to build on people with different backgrounds, experiences, behavioral styles and skills to increase the effectiveness of a team (Thornton, 2018). Some measures companies implement include ensuring top level commitment, driving gender intelligent actions such as analyzing specific gender barriers within the company and removing them through targeted action or promoting flexible working arrangements. Flexible work-life practices are key to retaining women leaders. Finally, companies should create an enabling environment by creating programs to identify, nurture and value talented female employees (ILO, 2016).

2.5. The contribution of female managers' associations to eradicating barriers

An association can be defined as a group of people with common interests and motivations that deal with different shared issues (Puñal, 2001). Associations and networks in the tourism industry, are a complex phenomenon as the sector is composed of many different businesses and different types of relationships are established between its multiple stakeholders. Existing literature suggests that networks in tourism might not only benefit destinations or companies, but also participants. Some initiatives promote innovation, competitiveness, and development for their members. Most of them increase the flow of information, knowledge, and resources, promoting the creation of alliances to enhance competitiveness and resilience (Van der Zee & Vanneste, 2015).

Associations and networks play a significant role in legitimating change, endorsing innovations, and encouraging their spread, managing debate within the sector, redefining practices, and representing members in the field (Greenwood, Suddaby, & Hinings, 2002).

For example in Spain, we find networks and associations in the

tourism sector that operate at an international, national or local level, representing different stakeholders such as EXCELTUR (non-profit group formed by managers of Spanish tourism sub-sectors: airlines, hotels, transportation, etc.), CEHAT (independent hotels and chain hotels, apartments and resorts in Spain), ACAVE (specialized travel agencies), APARTUR (tourism apartments association in Barcelona), NECSTouR (network of European regions for sustainable tourism), KELLY's (national hotel housekeepers' association), or TRINET (academic network in tourism and hospitality), to mention a few.

Ever since the 19th century, women's associations have defended collective ideas and promoted them in society, raising awareness and sensitivity on gender-based concerns and encouraging a fair society. Women's associations were considered a channel for making demands on complex issues such as gender equality and women's emancipation (Puñal, 2001). Many historical, international initiatives fighting for the rights of women came from associated, organized, groups of women representing a global mobilizing force (Berkovitch, 1999). Thus, female collective initiatives have played an essential role in the economic, social, and political transformation of societies (Guérin & Nobre, 2014). From their origins until today, women's associations have multiplied and diversified to find answers to specific issues. Many of these associations attempt to solve problems neglected by the private or public sectors, alleviating women of daily concerns and improving their lives. However, associations also have a societal role that cannot be left in the background. They should reflect and rethink the role of women in the community and the job market, promoting social welfare and women's rights in all sectors (Guérin & Nobre, 2014; Puñal, 2001). These women's initiatives, through their ability to challenge barriers, have a huge reforming potential (Guérin & Nobre, 2014).

Women's associations and networks help specifically women reach their collective and individual objectives. They contribute to the process of empowerment, understood as the process of gender awareness and capacity building (Madaha, 2011), where both elements contribute to participation in decision-making and the potential to transform reality (Pini, Brown, & Ryan, 2004). They are a vehicle for shaping opinions and raising awareness of the need to implement gender equality at all levels of society. Women's networks and associations help overcome difficulties and encourage women to express their goals and motivations for professional development (ESADE, 2019). According to ESADE's gender monitoring report (2019), 75.35% of Spanish female managers consulted stated that informal support networks are important for the development of their professional and personal careers. A large percentage of respondents (58.62%) were members of at least one women's association, although 60.19% recognized that they were not able to spend as much time as they would like as members of these associations. 20% of the rest was interested in joining one in the future.

Existing literature explains that one of the barriers women face in their careers is the exclusion from organizational networks (O'Neil, Hopkins, & Sullivan, 2011). Thus, networking not only helps women meet other women with the same interests and problems, but also helps them in their professional growth (Segovia-Pérez, Figueroa-Domecq, Fuentes-Moraleda, & Munoz-Mazon, 2019). Deeper studies within the field of tourism on women's associations and networks are needed to achieve a greater understanding of the sector on this issue. There is a lack of studies on the role of associations and how they can help women eradicate barriers in their access to executive positions in tourism. Women play a key role in the tourism industry at all levels and specific associations that address their needs can be relevant for their individual and collective progress.

3. Methodology

In Catalonia (Spain), there are approximately 40 registered women's associations. Of these, 12 are managers' associations with two associations specifically focused on the tourism and hospitality sector. It is important to note though that generic associations include members that

are active leaders at tourism companies. To explore how women's associations in Catalonia (Spain) helped women by eradicating barriers to gender equality (SDG 5), we chose a qualitative approach with an essentialist focus, reporting the experiences of participants. As the literature suggests, qualitative methodologies provide flexibility and facilitate a rich and detailed account of data (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This approach supports researchers that warn of a decrease in these types of studies on gender and tourism (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2017) and that suggest that qualitative studies help create a robust and stable base for research on gender in tourism (Pritchard, 2018). The qualitative methodology chosen highlights the knowledge derived from women's experiences, although it by no means reflects a single voice or vision for women. In depth semi-structured interviews, in which participants are given the floor to talk about their experiences, views, and perceptions, were considered an appropriate research tool for this study.

As women researchers and practitioners in tourism we believe that there is an urgent need to promote gender equality and empowerment in the industry. Our beliefs, values and interpretations on gender and tourism are socially constructed and may have influenced the research design, data collection and analysis we decided to apply. It is important to note that we share similar experiences and backgrounds as the participants that could have impacted the research. To minimize potential bias and ensure credibility and accuracy in the research process two strategies were implemented. On the one hand, we ensured that the participants were selected independently of their point of view towards the topic. On the other hand, to secure that the data analysis was a trustworthy representation of the themes in the narratives rather than reflection of our biases, the co-researchers constantly consulted one another to consider the accuracy of the analysis.

All associations were contacted directly by the researchers via e-mail or telephone. We conducted a total of 15 face-to-face interviews with leaders of women's associations between March and June 2019, with each lasting approximately 60–80 min. The interviews were conducted in Catalan or Spanish - the interviewees' native language - and were recorded and transcribed in full. Participants signed consent forms, gave permission to be identified and were informed of the objectives of the study. The ethical procedures established by Universitat Ramon Llull were followed and it was approved by the ethics committee of the School of tourism and hospitality Management Sant Ignasi. The participants' names will not be disclosed to ensure confidentiality.

Decision-makers of the following associations (in alphabetical order) were interviewed: Associació de Dones Directives, Empresàries i Professionals (ADE Vallès), Agima, ASODAME Dones Emprenedores/BPW Barcelona (ASODAME/BPW Barcelona), Círculo de Mujeres de Negocio (CMN), Asociación Española de Ejecutiv@s y Consejer@s (EJE&CON), Fundació Internacional de la Dona Emprenedora (Fidem), Lean In Barcelona, Professional Women's Network/Barcelona (PWN/Barcelona), Women in eTravel (WieT), Women in Hospitality & Travel Tech (WHTT) and 50a50. The scope of the associations varied, with some local, some national, and others as chapters of international associations. We ensured that interviewees were decision-makers at their respective associations as it was important to gain insights from leading individuals. In four specific cases (WieT, WHTT, EJE&CON and 50a50), we interviewed two decision-makers from each association. In the case of WieT and WHTT, as our focus was on the tourism industry, we deemed it convenient to obtain more detailed insights from these tourism-related associations. Eje&Con is the leading association supporting top managers, while 50a50 is the leading association for the public administration, so further interviews with these two institutions were arranged. The description of the sample's profile is summarized in Table 1.

The script of the interview (see Appendix 1 for the original version and Appendix 2 for a version translated into English) was composed of three parts: the first contained a personal profile and the individual's trajectory in women's associations. The second focused on the goals, the role of the association, its contribution to associates and barriers encountered by women pursuing executive positions. The final part

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Table 1
Description of the sample's profile (own elaboration).

Association	Start Year	Scope	Members	Profile of interviewee	Interview date
ASODAME BPW Barcelona	1994	Chapter	80	President	27.03.2019
EJE&CON	2015	Chapter	200	Vice-president	28.03.2019
				Board member	29.03.2019
ADE Vallès	2012	Local	60	President	03.04.2019
Fidem	1996	Local	100	President	12.04.2019
50a50	2017	Local	111	Vice-president	15.04.2019
				Board member	16.04.2019
WieT	2018	Chapter	200	Co-founder	18.04.2019
				Co-founder	19.04.2019
CMN	2005	Chapter	4500	President	27.04.2019
PWN/ Barcelona	2007	Chapter	150	Executive team	27.05.2019
WHIT	2019	Chapter	200	Founder	30.05.2019
				Chapter leader	03.06.2019
Lean In Barcelona	2016	Chapter	1000	Co-leader	04.06.2019
Agima	2008	Local		President	14.06.2019

addressed the current situation of women and future challenges and strategies for ensuring female leadership. The quotations were translated from Spanish or Catalan into English by the researchers to their best of knowledge, so some inaccuracies might be expected from translation or interpretation. Data analysis was conducted using thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006) with the support of Nvivo software. We identified, analyzed, and reported themes across the data collected to find repeated patterns or meaning. Firstly, we familiarized ourselves with the data by generating initial codes. During a second phase, we reviewed the themes, refining and analyzing them.

4. Findings and discussion

To analyze how women's associations in Catalonia (Spain) contributed to eradicating barriers to gender equality, we first identified the goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia. Second, we discussed the barriers to women pursuing corporate-level positions that these associations encountered. Finally, future challenges to women in leadership were presented.

4.1. Goals and roles of women's associations in Catalonia

The women's associations consulted differed in sizes, focused on a range of action areas, and had diverse objectives. For a description of those objectives and the activities offered by the associations, see Table 2. However, although each association consulted was different, they all shared the common goal of achieving gender equality in the workplace. All participants, whether from consolidated or recently created associations, mentioned that they are somehow involved in the fight against gender inequality and the barriers women face when pursuing top management positions.

Associations clearly play a relevant role in society. They are a vehicle for generating opinions and awareness on issues like gender equality at all levels of society (Diez Herrero, 2016). As participant 6 stated: "I don't want to be favored, I'm not asking for favors. I'm asking to be treated as an equal." Some participants agreed that women mostly join associations to realize that what is true for them is also for many other women, and that it does not happen to them alone. Rather, they share concerns with an entire collective. Participant 3 explained that she was aware of gender discrimination and that she looked for an association to help

Table 2
Objectives and activities offered by associations (own elaboration based on official websites and information from interviews).

Association	Objectives	Activities
ASODAME BPW Barcelona	Publish studies that contribute to consolidating companies founded by women. Identify the initiatives of freelancers and startups. Collaborate with public and private institutions to promote economic development. Enhance and exchange knowledge and experiences related to business creation. Participate in local, regional, and international conferences, symposiums, or meetings. Promote activities organized by the association. Organize conferences that help members gain effectiveness in their professional endeavors. Promote social and economic activities in developing countries with a special focus on training.	Consultancy Mentoring Discounts Excellence groups Entrepreneur mothers' program Networking
EJE&CON	Promote the access of female managers to senior management positions and boards of directors of both public and private entities, proactively enhancing their visibility with the aim of becoming a think-tank. Generate social awareness that prioritizes talent and diversity in its broadest sense, promoting the competitiveness and sustainability of organizations.	Conferences Managers in transition Genderless talent award Code of best practices Board of directors' program Leadership Mentoring Engagemen Networking Reports
ADE Vallès	Act as a point of reference and meeting point to promote talent and female leadership. Create of knowledge and professional opportunities Generate opportunities and best practices to share and influence the business and social world.	Training program Visits Networking ADE Vallès Awards
Fidem	Serve as a tool to enhance the influence and visibility of women in the main decision-making spaces in society, ensuring the equitable presence of women and men in all institutions. Share personal and professional knowledge to achieve economic independence for women and effective equality.	Fidem Awards Internationalization advice Networking Entrepreneurship mentoring Legal observatory Communication Discounts
50a50	Advance in the fulfillment of SDG 5 of the UN's 2030 Agenda, both personally and professionally. Influence our environment to raise awareness of the importance and benefits of living in a fairer, more equal, more ethical, and more transparent world. Promote lobbying actions with women from all areas of society to achieve 50 to 50 female representation in Catalan public institutions and public and private organizations.	Promote female candidacies in election processes. Promote women in technology. Improve the professional conditions of freelance women. Advocate for women in decision-making positions.
WieT	Encourage a more balanced female presence in the online	

Table 2 (continued)

Association	Objectives	Activities
	travel sector. Encourage female participation in events, tradeshows, and meetings. Create a community to support and inspire women.	Networking Calendar of industry events Visibility of members
CMN	Promote systematic and effective cooperation between women's businesses. Increase visibility and recognition of women, as business creators and economy producers. Facilitate the search, identification, analysis, and execution of projects that improve their competitive capacity. Collaborate with the competent public bodies, in promoting the image of professional and businesswomen. Mentor professional and businesswomen. Encourage studies that promote the stability and promotion of companies led by women. Improve training, communication, competitiveness, and international projection of its associates. Maintain contact with other related organizations from any territorial scope. Represent and promote the interests of women.	Networking Mentoring E-learning Sharing of best practices for the reconciliation of work and personal life Promote a network of private investors Marketplace environment CMN Awards
PWN/ Barcelona	Create a movement of people who aspire to accelerate the current pace of change towards gender-balanced leadership. Connect people with a global network, inspiring the leaders of today to create exemplary leaders of tomorrow. Create an environment where members support one another, embrace new skills, learn to speak out on important issues and create sustainable action plans. Strategic partnerships with other networks and events.	Networking Learning events and webinars Mentorship programs Building alliances Interactive forums Content generation Access to research Network of male allies Volunteer program
WHTT	Advocate for a more diverse culture in hospitality and travel-tech organizations. Enable the professional growth of women and underrepresented groups throguh education, mentorship, and career development.	Training Mentorship Career upgrade Networking
Lean In Barcelona	Inspire and support female professionals in Barcelona. Assist women in their professional development. Create the largest community of connected women in the city.	Monographic sessions Panel of experts Women's circles Mentoring
Agima	Promote the visibility of women in complicity with men and in co-responsibility with the environment. Contribute to a society where people can choose their own ideal life within a framework of universal values. Promote all spheres of	Networking Panel of experts Cultural and well-being events Learning activities Public forum

Table 2 (continued)

Association	Objectives	Activities
	members' lives with complicity between men and women.	

change this situation. Meanwhile, Participant 2 stated that she used to think there were no structural problems related to gender, but after attending courses organized by the associations, she realized that discrimination did indeed exist. This example shows how these organizations can help women increase their awareness of gender discrimination.

As respondents explained, associations also serve as a "place to share". Within the group, women share their experiences, frustrations, opinions, and fears, as well as means of overcoming difficulties and of developing their careers. For example, Participant 5 explained that thanks to her women's associations she realized that a small number of women were giving speeches about technology and tourism: "I asked myself: aren't there any women capable of speaking publicly about technology and tourism? I doubt it. If there are, who are they and why aren't they present in public spheres today?". According to this participant, most women are not willing to speak publicly because they fear the exposure, because it is not their area of expertise or because they believe that they are not knowledgeable enough about the topic. This is closely related with what Chinchilla et al. (2005) introduced about the "cement roof": women's own prejudices prevent them from growing in public spheres because of gender roles and the lack of role models. Therefore, when women have spaces where they can share their experiences and doubts with others, a more critical perception of reality emerges.

Moreover, associations give visibility to female leaders, entrepreneurs, and professionals, helping to create alliances among them. Associations promote the exchange of information, experiences, and resources, while encouraging professional and business collaboration. As the president of one of the organizations expressed "associates benefit from the support they five one another and the friendship and professional ties they eventually develop..." Participant 12 explained that she helps support business cooperation among members. She stated that "women aren't expected to be granted benefits just for being women, but also aren't willing to have opportunities taken away from them because of their gender." Associations help women establish collaborative alliances and enhance their visibility in society so that other women can see themselves in leadership positions and roles. That way, future generations will look up to them, and become empowered by following their example.

4.2. Barriers to women accessing corporate-level positions encountered by associations

As our analysis showed, one of the key roles of some of the associations consulted is to help women challenge the barriers they face when pursuing corporate-level positions. Why some women fail to reach leadership and executive positions is a complex issue influenced by several barriers that can determine or limit their career progress. Participants 5 and 3 agreed that in addition to networking opportunities, associations provided them with greater self-knowledge: "what happens to me, happens to us all. You can network, but at the same time you can learn new skills and content with things like the training sessions or talks that associations organize." Thus, we can see how these initiatives helped women challenge barriers such as a lack of motivation, training, or contacts.

Women's associations have also helped women challenge barriers related to a lack of support when aiming for top management positions. According to Participant 1, the biggest challenge was believing in her value as a woman: "we need to position ourselves, reinforce our desires and simply achieve what corresponds to us." Shared professional and

personal spaces, and trust based on mutual support, allowed members to move forward more rapidly in their careers (Hicks, 2020). Participants 13 and 15 mentioned that belonging to a women's association helped them reflect on social stereotypes and discriminatory organizational cultures. As Segovia-Pérez et al. (2019) explain, policies that ensure gender equality in senior management positions are key to social development. When women participate in conferences, symposiums or meetings, awareness of certain issues increased, but ideas and initiatives for promoting social change also emerged. For example, Participant 4 pointed out that one of the issues that worries her most is technology. Her concern is that if women are not present where artificial intelligence is manufactured, this will create a new gender bias. She explained that society should be preparing young girls for technological careers. Associations have helped promote this view. However, being part of a women's association also has its drawbacks. Several participants agreed that one disadvantage being part of an association is how time consuming it can be. As participant 10 mentioned "when you're in a top position in a company, time is scarce". However, all interviewees saw that the results of participation are rewarding and enriching, so their commitment and sacrifice were deemed worthwhile.

Even the leaders of women's association faced barriers of their own, although their answers regarding these barriers differed. Some of the challenges mentioned were enrolling more associates, seeking the welfare of members, and getting women to achieve professional promotion in a much more equal way. Along these lines, Participant 8 stated that the greatest challenge was taking care of her associates and working on projects that go beyond networking. According to ESADE's Gender Monitor study (2019), 49.11% of women indicated that associations provide no benefits beyond networking. Participant 7 disagreed with this view: "this is not just networking; this is a community. Some women within the association have offered each other job opportunities, have supported each other. Somehow, they have created a family, an environment of trust that can give them ideas on how to face constraints." Participant 12 explained that her personal challenge was working hand-in-hand with other associations in a collaborative way. Women's associations need to weave many alliances to change society (San José, 2002). The respondent supported the idea that cooperation and mutual benefits are the way to accelerate progress. As Guérin and Nobre (2014) explain, these women's initiatives can go through different phases of trial and error in trying to achieve their goals and accomplish their mission. Time, resources, and individual and collective commitment are key to achieving significant results.

4.3. Future challenges for ensuring female leadership

As for the situation of female managers in Spain, Participant 5 found it worrying: "we estimate that only 15% of women have a presence on executive boards in Spain. The main challenge is to change this situation as soon as possible". In the Spanish tourism sector, several studies also indicated that the number of women in corporate management positions is disproportionately low if we consider the total representation of women in the labor force, even when women and men have proven to be equally efficient when it comes to taking on management responsibilities. They have also noted, as mentioned before, that women's wages are lower (Marco-Lajara & Úbeda-García, 2013; Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Obadić & Marić, 2009). Associations have raised awareness of how society is losing economic resources when subjecting women to invisible barriers. Participant 6 stated: "if companies are not convinced by ethical or moral arguments, they should implement changes based on business profitability, they should look at the numbers." Associations help raise awareness of the benefits of including women in managerial positions not just for social purposes, but also for economic progress. It is not only companies that need to improve in this sense so, should the public administration. Participant 11 supported the idea that extra pressure on the public administration is required to promote diversity and a balanced presence of women and men.

As the existing literature explains, the hospitality sector faces the same situation as other industries: women are under-represented on boards of directors, and the sector further perpetuates the problem (Do Le, 2017; Equality in Tourism, 2018; Nyaruwata & Nyaruwata, 2013). Some respondents believed that every industry has peculiarities regarding gender issues that are difficult to cover with a general approach. For example, they mentioned that a widespread issue such as the "glass ceiling" is common to all sectors, but that each sector then has its own characteristics. Participants agreed that inclusion is key to eradicating invisible barriers. Inclusion incorporates all forms of diversity, recognizing that in addition to aspects such as gender, age, or ethnic origin, it is also important to include people with different backgrounds, experiences, behavior styles and skills to increase the effectiveness of a team (Grant Thornton, 2018).

According to the ESADE Gender Monitor Report (2019), in Spain the number of female managers who perceive gender barriers in their companies has increased. Mainly they mentioned difficulty reconciling work and family life, wage inequality and a lack of recognition for their tasks. The number of women who suffered mobbing from colleagues or bosses has also increased. Furthermore, 63.41% of female managers believed that gender balance was not seen as a priority in their companies. The future is not promising, but respondents agreed that working together helps in many ways. Along the same line, Participant 1 believes it is essential to work together with men if the goal is to break barriers such as the invisible "glass ceiling". These barriers prevent many women with high qualifications and personal and professional capacity from accessing the highest levels of management and responsibility in the same conditions as men (Segerman-Peck, 1991). Participant 7 also agreed that the commitment of men in this fight for equality is key to achieving strategic objectives in organizations and the political sphere. As existing literature explains, men are crucial agents of change and ought to be involved in gender equality issues (Connell, 2003). Finally, Participant 3 felt that to have a real impact, we need to educate society in general on these issues: "when you educate children, nephews or friends, please educate them on equality." Women's associations accomplish a relevant role in the transmission of these values within society. Women must remain firm on gender issues in different contexts and organizations while demanding women's rights from their collectives and associations (Puñal, 2001).

5. Conclusions

Women still have a long way to go to achieve gender equality in executive-level positions, with many barriers to overcome and many constraints to face. Despite companies making efforts to achieve gender balance, the situation on boards of directors is still not equitable. Achieving equal rights for men and women is still a big challenge for many organizations. However, solidarity, cooperation and commitment among equals do make the journey easier. Existing women's associations seem to be capable of impacting the future of gender. They play the key role of providing visibility for collective problems, reflecting on them, and seeking solutions. Women's associations serve as essential elements that encourage women to participate actively while also developing initiatives on what institutions and companies do. They are the driving force behind women's progress, allowing them to join forces and make themselves heard (San José, 2002). Women associations have the potential to transform both their members and society. As a recommendation, it would be advisable for associations in Catalonia (Spain) to join forces and support one another more than they currently do. The information collected in interviews made clear that when women work together, they achieve outstanding results. In this sense, there is room for improvement. In Catalonia, efforts are scattered even though joint strategies would be beneficial to associations, their members, and women in general.

This paper has reviewed gender issues and has discussed the importance of women's associations in facing gender inequality,

especially when pursuing leadership positions. This study contributes to the growing body of research on tourism and gender and has especially increased knowledge of how women's associations empower women and help them progress professionally. The findings of this research provide remarkable knowledge on how women's associations help accomplish SDG 5 of the UN's 2030 Agenda, which defends gender equality as a critical objective on the path to sustainability. In addition to playing many other roles, the women's associations in this sample, empower women using a range of strategies. They enhance social conscience on gender equality in the workplace, support women with training, courses, and meetings, give visibility to gender issues and actions, and expand professional networks and access to resources. According to respondents, women's associations helped them overcome constraints in their lives and contributed to their personal and professional growth.

Each of the consulted associations has its own way of supporting women based on their size, objectives, the profiles of associates and their areas of action. Most help members be aware of the barriers they face when pursuing management positions. Participants explained that their level of awareness and self-reflection increased when members shared insights and experiences with other women or attended courses and training on these issues. Also, associations provided their members with constant support which allowed them to develop both professional and personal connections with others. However, associations contributed to both individual and group welfare. They inspired women to reach their goals and offered role models. Associations contributed to a cultural change, regarding issues like equal access to top management positions. Therefore, associations pursued a shared goal achieving gender equality in the workplace and contributing to progress in women's professional development. These collective initiatives find into innovative ways of overcoming barriers and turning them into advantages. They are vital to improving women's current professional circumstances and achieving gender parity in corporate management in Spain, an area that has moved at a very slow pace so far.

In fact, at present it is developing much too slowly in most countries. With the current rate of change, most governmental bodies agree that more than 200 years are needed to achieve parity in top management positions. This is a major issue for the tourism industry. The percentage of women working in tourism is very high, but women are still not equitably represented on decision-making bodies. Associations help speed up this process. The training these associations provide, the studies published, support from other women, role models and mentors are valuable aids on the path to management (Freund, 2019). Although a range of different associations were interviewed, the female leaders consulted agreed that gender equality ought to be a priority for companies, although this is rarely the case for companies in Spain. In recent months, with the increase of telecommuting caused by COVID-19, although three out of four women acknowledge that their employer has adapted to their family situation, 19.4% indicate that they have had a harder time balancing work and family than their male colleagues, with 28.4%, having a harder time than their partners (ESADE, 2020). Therefore, this is a current, pressing issue.

The findings of this study open several courses of action for stakeholders in the tourism sector. In Catalonia, private businesses, the public administration, educational institutions, and civil society should collaborate in adopting gender equality measures to drive a noticeable change in both their own parity indicators and in gender equality across the sector. If agents work together and network, promote these objectives and defend them without reservation, all the accumulated knowledge on gender and sustainability can be implemented exponentially in the post-COVID19 period. In our view, tourism universities should work closely with women's associations to increase the visibility of women as role models. At least in Catalonia, there is a pool of women willing to collaborate that would be of added value as guest professionals, for example. Most students of tourism and hospitality in Catalonia are women, yet female role models are scarce. The

protagonists of most case studies, guest speakers or relevant tourism authorities are men. Furthermore, educational institutions need to support companies, destinations, and public bodies by offering training, research and debate on gender and sustainability in tourism. Another stakeholder, tourism businesses, might also contribute to female empowerment and equal opportunities by working with associations. For example, they could provide internal training sessions, sponsor initiatives launched by associations, share reports and material, ensure fair promotion systems, and minimize gender bias in their selection and salary processes. Tourism is a people's sector, and people are diverse. An inclusive business culture that fosters diversity will strengthen companies. We need inclusive values, promoted by a corporate culture, that enhance equal opportunities and does not discriminate by either gender, culture, age, religion, or special needs. Companies with diverse and inclusive DNA are not only more sustainable, but also more attractive and profitable. Diversity increases the creativity of teams and the profitability of companies. While social justice and legal compliance are often the initial triggers, many successful companies understand diversity as the source of a competitive advantage, and specifically as a key facilitator of growth. The public sector should also actively promote equality and support and broaden the impact of their strategies and campaigns with the help of women's associations. A close relationship and representation of women's associations in the corresponding public committees is therefore highly advisable.

This study was limited by using qualitative data, which increases the probability of the information obtained being biased. Additionally, the fact that the interviews were not conducted in English may have led to misunderstandings or translation inaccuracies. Furthermore, the associations consulted were diverse and not strictly focused on tourism. This research has shown that more precise data is needed to evaluate and understand the situation of women's associations in Catalonia (Spain). An additional study should assess which barriers prevent associations from working together using shared strategies. Further work is needed to fully understand the situation of other associations in other locations, so replicating the study elsewhere in Spain or abroad to consider cultural differences is advisable. Further research could explore the views of female associates. This would add their view and perceptions to the analysis. Moreover, as Boluk, Cavaliere, and Higgins-Desbiolles (2017) suggest, to ensure effective sustainable development, critical thinking and multiple points of view should be fostered on how to achieve the SDGs in different communities and realities. In this sense, a more holistic view of the SDGs and tourism is needed that also analyses the role of associations, the views of female associates and the dynamics of power. Lastly, barriers to female entrepreneurs in the tourism industry were scarcely analyzed in this study; it seems advisable to encourage further research on the role of women's associations in supporting female entrepreneurs.

To conclude, if we were only to count the number of men and women, we might be satisfied, as the tourism industry currently employs more women. However, our objective is more ambitious: to pursue inclusive and co-responsible models (Freund, 2018). Only then we will achieve a greater presence of women in leadership positions. This is not about counting women and men, but about the men and women leading responsible tourism initiatives and contributing to a better world. Laura Liswood, the general secretary of the Council of Women World Leaders, affirmed: "women are like snowflakes; one alone may melt, but together we can stop traffic." Gender diversity generates greater gender diversity. The more snowflakes, the more things change. Associations' contributions to female managers are crucial. To put it one way, they serve as valuable "snow machines."

CRediT authorship contribution statement

Daniela Freund: Conceptualization, Data curation, Formal analysis, Investigation, Methodology, Project administration, Software, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing - original draft, Writing - review

& editing. Gilda Hernandez-Maskivker: Conceptualization, Formal analysis, Investigation, Supervision, Validation, Visualization, Writing - original draft, Writing - review & editing.

Appendix A. Appendix 1. Interview script (Spanish version)

A.1. Parte 1: Personal

Para comenzar, nos interesaría conocer su recorrido/trayectoria en asociaciones de mujeres.

1. ¿Desde cuándo forma parte de la asociación(es) de mujeres?
2. ¿Cuál fue su motivación para incorporarse? ¿Qué beneficios le ha aportado y le aporta ser parte de una asociación de mujeres?
3. ¿Se ha encontrado con desventajas en las asociaciones?
4. ¿Cuál es su mayor reto en la asociación que lidera?

A.2. Parte 2: Objetivos, rol de la asociación y aportaciones a las asociadas

1. ¿Cuáles son los ámbitos de actuación en los que son más activos desde la asociación?
2. ¿Cuáles son los mayores logros, cambios o aportaciones que habéis conseguido, tanto para las asociadas como para la sociedad en los últimos años?
3. ¿Qué objetivos os planteáis a corto, medio y largo plazo?
4. ¿Qué acciones estratégicas estáis contemplando en vuestra asociación a futuro?

A.3. Parte 3: Retos de futuro para potencial el liderazgo femenino

1. En uno de los estudios analizados (ESADE Gender monitor), mujeres que están en asociaciones indican que éstas no les benefician más allá del networking.

¿Está de acuerdo con esta afirmación? ¿Cree usted que a las asociaciones les falta estrategia? En caso de respuesta afirmativa: ¿Cómo podría hacerse mejor? En caso de respuesta negativa: ¿Por qué no está de acuerdo?

2. Desde su perspectiva, ¿cómo valoraría la situación de la mujer directiva en España?
3. ¿Cuáles creen que son los mayores retos en los que habría que trabajar actualmente?
4. ¿Cómo creen que podemos crear acciones estratégicas de impacto entre todas las mujeres para que haya cambios en positivo?

Appendix B. Appendix 2. Interview script (English translation)

B.1. Section 1.: Personal profile

To begin, we would like to hear about your trajectory in women's associations.

1. How long have you been part of your women's association(s)?
2. What was your motivation for joining? What benefits have the women's association brought you?
3. Have you encountered disadvantages in associations?
4. What is your biggest challenge at the association you lead?

B.2. Section 2: Goals and roles of the association and contributions to members

1. What are the areas of action in which you are most active?
2. What have your greatest achievements, changes, or contributions been in recent years, both for members and society in general?

3. What objectives do you have in the short, medium, and long term?
4. What strategic actions is your association considering for the future?

B.3. Section 3: Future challenges to ensuring female leadership

1. In one of the studies analyzed (ESADE Gender monitor), women who are in associations indicate that these do not benefit them beyond networking. Do you agree with this statement? Do you think that associations lack a strategy? If the answer is yes: how could this be improved? If the answer is no: why do you disagree?
2. From your perspective, how would you assess the situation of female managers in Spain?
3. What do you think are the biggest challenges to focus on today?
4. How do you think women can work together to create strategic actions that drive positive change?

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Spanish version

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2. Desde su perspectiva, ¿cómo valoraría la situación de la mujer directiva en España?
3. ¿Cuáles creen que son los mayores retos en los que habría que trabajar actualmente?
4. ¿Cómo creen que podemos crear acciones estratégicas de impacto entre todas las mujeres para que haya cambios en positivo?

Section 1: Personal profile

1. To begin, we would like to hear about your trajectory in women's associations.
1. How long have you been part of your women's association(s)?
2. What was your motvation for joining? What benefits have the women's association brought you?
3. Have you encountered disadvantages in associations?
4. What is your biggest challenge at the association you lead?

Section 2: Goals and roles of the association and contributions to members

1. What are the areas of action in which you are most active?
2. What have your greatest achievements, changes, or contributions been in recent years, both for members and society in general?
3. What objectives do you have in the short, medium, and long term?
4. What strategic actions is your association considering for the future?

Section 3: Future challenges to ensuring female leadership

1. In one of the studies analyzed (ESADE Gender monitor), women who are in associations indicate that these do not benefit them beyond networking. Do you agree with this statement? Do you think that associations lack a strategy? If the answer is yes: how could this be improved? If the answer is no: why do you disagree?
2. From your perspective, how would you assess the situation of female managers in Spain?
3. What do you think are the biggest challenges to focus on today?
4. How do you think women can work together to create strategic actions that drive positive change?

Appendix X. Workbook Tourism for all

The action-based challenge is presented through a workbook containing:

1. Roadmap of the module (visual tool)
2. Hotel visit tools:
   a. Empathy map hotel management
   b. Empathy map families
   c. Site analysis map
3. Solution storyboard (prototyping session)
4. Learning journals
   a. LJ 1 to 5
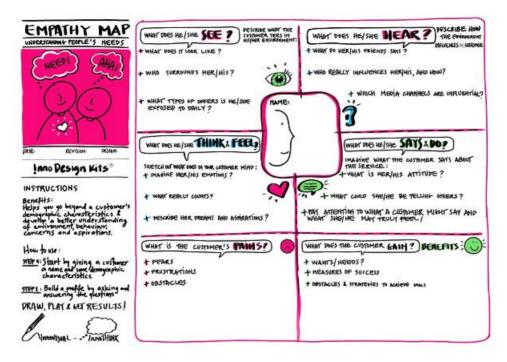   b. LJ Final

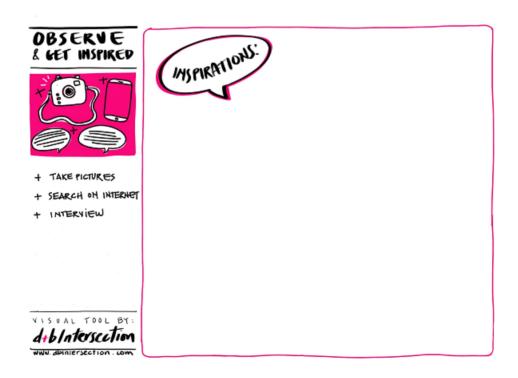**1.** Roadmap of the module

2. Hotel visit tools:
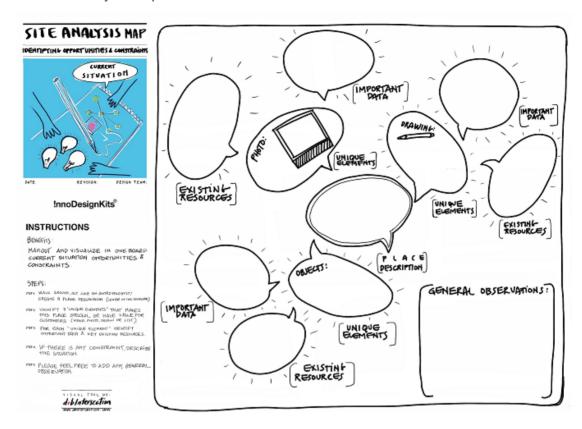
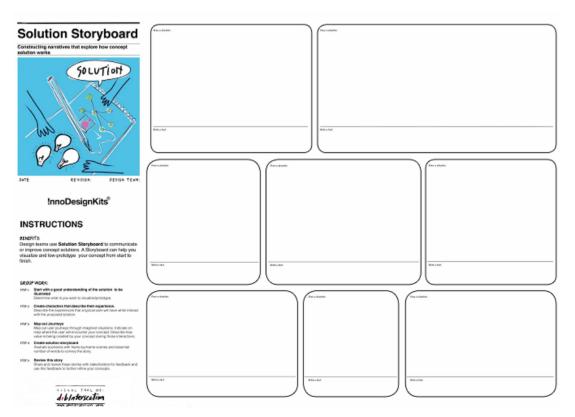   a. Empathy map hotel management

    b. Empathy map families

c. Site analysis map

3. Solution Storyboard

4. Learning journals

    a. LJ1 - Visit to the hotel
    b. LJ2 - Ideation session (same questions as LJ1)
    c. LJ3 – Feedback from the hotel (same questions as LJ1)
    d. LJ4 – Prototyping session (same questions as LJ1)
    e. LJ5 – Oral presentations (same questions as LJ1)
    f. LJ Final

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LJ1 – VISIT to tHE HOTEL

1. What would you highlight from the session? Is there anything that surprised you, interested you specially, resonated with you?

2. Did you face any challenges during the session or while working on the assignment related with that session? If so, which would you say are the sources of those challenges? (Example: lack of knowledge of the topic, incorrect pre-conceptions of ASD clients, etc.?)

3. Were you able to solve the challenges? If so, which strategies did you apply? If not, what would you have needed to solve them?

4. With what you have learned from solving the challenges, do you think you have the tools to confront them if they appear in the future?

5. Share any comments about your learning experience so far:

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LJ - F I N A L

What would you highlight from your learning process?

thank you!

Appendix XI. Interview questions

1. What is the purpose of the initiative?
2. What is your role? How long have you been in that role?
3. In what year and how did the initiative start?
4. How has it evolved during this time?
5. What is the impact achieved?
6. How do you measure that impact?
7. Have you received any awards or recognitions?
8. Are the processes documented so that it can be replicated?
9. In which format are they documented?
10. What is the revenue model?
11. What are the problems or challenges that the initiative has faced?
12. What is the economic and resource effort required to carry out the project?
13. Is external investment required?
14. Does its implementation depend on other key actors, such as governments, NGOs, or other companies?
15. Did you collaborate with other key actors before this initiative?
16. How do you share the learning of the practice execution?
17. In what other contexts could this practice work?
18. Do you need a certain context or rules to make it feasible?
19. Do you have an interest in replicating it? Why?
20. Have you tried replicating it before?

Appendix XII. List of initiatives

Name and website of the initiatives
100% Mamas Focus on Women. https://focusonwomen.es/proyectos/100-mamas-marruecos/
Afrikable. https://www.afrikable.org/vacaciones-solidarias/
AirCanada. https://www.aircanada.com/
Bar Centro Maldá. https://www.facebook.com/centromalda
Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. https://www.gatesfoundation.org
Care Cambodia. https://www.careinternational.org.uk/who-we-are
Creaw. https://home.creaw.org/
Dressember. https://www.dressember.org/
Equality in Tourism. http://equalityintourism.org/farmforthefuture/
Fiji Women's Fund. https://fijiwomensfund.org/project/talanoa-treks/
Flavours of Malaga. https://www.tuicarefoundation.com/en/media/news/TUI-Care-Foundation-flavours-of-Malaga-2
Flores de Kiskeya. http://floresdekiskeya.org/
Fundació Ared. fundacioared.org/
Fundación Codespa (Rutas). https://www.caf.com/en/currently/news/2016/05/rural-tourism-an-effective-way-to-empower-women/
Fundación Montblanc – Kimlea. https://www.fundaciomontblanc.org/ca-es/
Fundación Vicente Ferrer. https://fundacionvicenteferrer.org/es/
Girls in tech. https://girlsintech.org
Girls Learning Code. https://www.canadalearningcode.ca/national-girls-learning-code-day/
Girls Trip Tours. https://girlstrip.tours/packages
IRISE International. http://www.irise.org.uk/
Joinsister. https://joinsister.com/en/
Med Gaims. http://www.enicbcmed.eu/projects/med-gaims
Mujeres mirando mujeres. https://mujeresmirandomujeres.com/
Mujeres y música. http://mujeresymusica.com
Onegirlcan. https://onegirlcan.com
Pata Foundation. https://www.patafoundation.org
RestaurantHER. https://restauranther.com/
Raizup. https://weraizup.com/

Rise Up. https://riseuptogether.org/
Sheroeshangout. https://www.sheroeshangout.com
SODEXO. https://www.sodexo.com/all-inspired-thinking/sheworks-500-people-engaged-in-2.html
Surt. https://www.surt.org
TechWomen. https://www.techwomen.org/
TripWoman. https://tripwoman.es/
TUI Care Foundation. https://www.tuicarefoundation.com/en
USAID. http://bestprojectjo.org/content/tourism-initiatives-empower-rural-women-jordan
WeRock Capital. https://www.linkedin.com/company/werockcapital/about/
Women in e-Travel. https://womeninetravel.com/
Women Leadership. https://womanleader.org/web/es/
Wonder Foundation. https://wonderfoundation.org.uk/project/fpti/
Yo Jefa. https://www.yojefa.com

Table 1. Initiatives submitted at the written reports (sorted in alphabetical order)

Appendix XIII. Public outreach projects

An array of accessibility-related higher education, research projects and public outreach activities, was undertaken by the researcher from 2015 to 2020. Table 1. shows a detailed compilation, sorted by year.

Higher education and research projects	
2016	Poster presentation. Educational Innovation Workshop URL
2017	Invited lecturer. The Hong Polythechnics University, school of hotel & tourism management. Workshop presenting Wings for autism to doctoral lecturers and students
	Invited lecturer. University of San Francisco school of management. Workshop presenting Wings for autism to undergraduate students
	Ph.D. research stay. Oxford School of Hospitality Management at Oxford Brookes University
2018	Web-based resource center. Qualitative research project Wings for autism
Open Days	
2016	Open Day Barcelona Airport
	Open Day Liceu Theater
Conferences, roundtables, and workshops	
2015	Conference speaker. Ocitur conference, Girona
2016	Conference organizer. Soluciones innovadoras para un turismo para todos (*Innovative solutions for tourism for all*). HTSI. Presentation of the Chair in Responsible tourism and hospitality.
	Conference organizer. Diversity, key talent management in tourism and hotel companies. HTSI in collaboration with ESADE Business & ESADE Law Schools
	Workshop. Delegation of the Japanese Ministry of Land, Infrastructure, Transport and Tourism (MLIT)
2017	Conference speaker. III Mediterranean Tourism meeting, Tarragona
	Conference organizer. Annual Conference *Turismo, ¿para qué?* (Tourism, what for?). HTSI Chair in Responsible Tourism and Hospitality
	Conference speaker. 2nd Mediterranean Hospitality Forum, Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders
2018	Roundtable speaker. 3rd Mediterranean Hospitality Forum, Mediterranean Week of Economic Leaders
2019	Conference speaker. *Turismo sostenible: retos, oportunidades y* perspectivas (Sustainable tourism: challenges, opportunities and perspectives). Centre EuroAfrica
2020	Conference organizer and moderator. La economía circular como eje innovador en el turismo responsable y sostenible. Centre EuroAfrica
	Roundtable moderator. Travelers with special needs, challenges, and opportunities. HTSI

Table 1. Public outreach accessibility-related activities

Moreover, an array of gender equality-related higher education, research projects and public outreach activities, was undertaken by the researcher from 2017 to 2021. Table 2. shows a detailed compilation, sorted by year.

Higher Education and research projects	
2019	Lecturer. *Liderazgo WO + MEN en el mundo laboral, talento sin género* (WO + MEN leadership in the world of work, talent without gender). HTSI 2nd Year Bachelor Degree
	Lecturer. *Liderazgo WO + MEN en el mundo laboral, talento sin género* (WO + MEN leadership in the world of work, talent without gender). HTSI 4th Year Bachelor Degree
2020	Invited Lecturer. Oxford School of hospitality management, Oxford Brookes University. 3rd and 4th Year BSc in International Hospitality and Tourism Management students
	Bachelor Thesis supervision. "Do women entrepreneurs face gender-based barriers when starting their own business in Barcelona's tourism sector?" awarded a Distinction from Cáritas Diocesana Barcelona as best undergraduate thesis with social impact
2021	Co-editor. Special Issue Re-purposing tourism: Engaging our radical in tourism education for the Journal of Teaching in Travel and Tourism
	Lecturer. INS Escola d'Hostaleria i Turisme Girona. Vocational tourism students
	Lecturer. CFGS Jesuïtes Sarrià-Sant Ignasi Barcelona. Vocational hospitality students
Conferences, roundtables, and workshops	
2017	Conference organizer. *Liderazgo inclusivo: estrategias de gestión de diversidad generacional y de género en el sector turístico y hotelero* (Inclusive leadership: generational and gender diversity management strategies in the tourism and hotel sector), HTSI with support of Cátedra Unesco URL and Santander
	Conference speaker. Institut Catalá de les Dones
2018	Roundtable speaker. Tiempo de mujeres
	Roundtable speaker. *Talento femenino en comercio y turismo* (Female talent in retail and tourism). Barcelona Activa
2019	Roundtable speaker. *Women Leadership: abanderando el futuro Horeca* (Women Leadership: leading the future of hotels, restaurants, and coffee shops). Horeca HIP Madrid
	Roundtable moderator. Women up in travel: entrepreneurs. New Destinations Summit Airbnb
	Conference speaker. Applying tourism trends on data, talent and resources management in European Islands and regions. Necstour and Canary Islands Government
	Roundtable speaker. *Liderazgo femenino en empresas tecnológicas* (Female leadership in technology companies). Women Evolution Congress
	Conference speaker. *Liderazgo WO + MEN en el mundo laboral, talento sin género* (WO + MEN leadership in the world of work, talent without gender). Attico coworking
	Workshop facilitator. Women: from networking to netliving, Barcelona International Community Day. Barcelona's City Council
	Workshop speaker. *Juntes Fem Camí* (Together we make way). Barcelona Football Club-Group Edelmira Calvetó
	Conference speaker. *Mujeres líderes* (Women leaders). #steMatEsElla
	Workshop facilitator. Women and tourism at Conference "Tourism: Generating Job for Youth in the MENA Region", Union for the Mediterranean

2020	Roundtable speaker. Women & Tech, TraveltechSpirit Barcelona
	Roundtable speaker. *Salud y Liderazgo Femenino* (Women's Health and Leadership), Women Evolution and Hospital Quirón Salud Barcelona
	Roundtable moderator. We Entrepreneur, Women Evolution Congress
	Workshop facilitator. *Trabajo y Sororidad: las redes profesionales de mujeres* (Work and Sorority: the professional networks of women), Barcelona Expat Week, Barcelona's City council
	Workshop facilitator. *Buenas prácticas en políticas de género en turismo* (Good practices in gender policies in tourism), Barcelona Activa
	Workshop facilitator. *Conéctate con el talento* (Connect with talent), Argentinian Consulate
2021	Conference speaker. *La brecha de la pandemia* (The pandemic gap), Ibiza's Council
	Roundtable speaker. *Sombras y luces sobre la igualdad de género en el sector turístico* (Shadows and lights on gender equality in the tourism sector), Turijobs & Raizup
Press articles	
2017	*Turismo e igualdad de género, viajemos juntos* (Tourism and gender equality, let's travel together). Women 360 congress blog
2018	*Claves de éxito de mujeres directivas en el sector turístico* (Keys to success for women leaders in the tourism sector). Si a la pyme blog
	Contar con mujeres y hombres para liderar el turismo (Count on women and men to lead tourism). Diari Ara
2019	*Copos de nieve y mujeres directivas* (Snowflakes and female managers). La Vanguardia
	Mujeres que lideran experiencias de viaje con impacto positivo (Women who lead positive impact travel experiences). Tecnohotel news online publication
	Lluvia fina y talento femenino (Fine rain and feminine talent.) La Vanguardia
	Talento en paz (Talent at peace). Via Empresa online publication
2020	*Vivir viajando* (Live traveling). Via Empresa online publication
	Barreras emprendedoras (Entrepreneurial barriers). La Vanguardia
	Una nova vida (A new life). Diari Ara
2021	*De sombras y luces* (Of shadows and lights). Turijobs and Raizup digital report
Radio and television	
2018	TV speaker. Bàsics BTV television
2019	Radio speaker. Preferències RNE4
	Radio speaker. Plusvàlua Dones Ràdio Estel & Plusvàlua Ràdio Estel
2020	Radio speaker. Plusvàlua Dones Ràdio Estel
	Interview. Metropolitan
2021	Radio speaker. Lideratges Onda Cero
	Podcast speaker. Turismo de primera
	Radio speaker. Santos Pecadores RCR Barcelona

Table 2. Public outreach gender equality-related activities

Appendix XIV. Open Days explanation

Open Day El Prat Airport

The public outreach project aimed to reduce barriers to tourism and leisure air travel and to improve the overall tourism experience for families with children on ASD. This was achieved through anticipation of the arrival at the airport, the check-in process, security checks, boarding and stay on the plane (without take off). Access to leisure by people with ASD focuses on standardization and inclusion. The experience of performing a mock trip helps them better manage the travel experience. When HTSI launched air travel Open Days in 2016 it was a pioneer experience in Spain. It had been implemented in the past in United States, and only once in the United Kingdom.

At Open Days, families with children on the autism spectrum disorder (ASD) participated in a simulation or an adapted leisure-related experience. As outlined at Study 1 (presented at Chapter 2), families with children on ASD, encounter that the experience of travel is stressful because of the characteristics of the condition: sensory overload, poor ability to process stimuli and external information and communication difficulties. For children diagnosed with ASD, anticipation is key.

In collaboration with AENA, a state-owned company managing the main airports in Spain, and Vueling, a leading airline in Spain, HTSI organized an Open Day at Barcelona's airport (Spain) on Saturday April 2, 2016, coinciding with World Autism Awareness Day. At the Open Day, 25 families of children with ASD were able to experience a simulation of flying in an aircraft. It was carried out with the support of three local autism-related associations: Paideia Foundation, the Aprenem Association, and IDAPP Institute. The Open Day was an open activity to the HTSI community, attended by over 25 volunteers, including students, faculty, research, and administrative staff. A video[11] and pictures[12] of the experience are available.

For the families, the Open Days were an excellent opportunity to bring their children closer to a real travel experience or attend an adapted event, thus the possibility to get closer to the travelling or to a cultural event within a "safe" environment was highly valued. In addition, Open Days raised awareness among staff as training was provided to AENA's and Vueling's personnel to facilitate the families' transit and boarding. Furthermore, observations from the air travel Open Day were used by HTSI's research group for the elaboration of a guidance manual for families, through the researcher did not participate herself in the elaboration of this specific manual.

Open Day Liceu Theatre

Not only an air travel Open Day was organized but a second Open Day with a different focus was arranged on November 12th, 2016. In collaboration with Gran Teatro Liceu, with the support anew of the Paideia Foundation, the Aprenem Association and the IDAPP Institute, 120 families of children with ASD attended a rehearsal of a family and school production entitled "The Superbarber of Seville" at Gran Teatro Liceu. This theater is a renowned opera house in

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[11] https://youtu.be/ykQPdmO5v2g

[12] https://www.facebook.com/media/set/?set=a.10156766259110346.1073741899.125936995345&type=3

Barcelona, Spain that supports the view that the right to culture is a right for everyone. It was a pioneering experience organized for the first time for this collective.

Adaptations at the theater were introduced. For example, the theater room's capacity was reduced by 50%. Furthermore, to facilitate the mobility of children, the lights were kept at 50% of their power to avoid darkness, and the theater provided two relaxation rooms. A dozen volunteers from HTSI gave their support to the families. A video[13] is available that portrays the Open Day experience in visual format.

At Open Days, there was a slight risk that stressful situations might have arose affecting the children, such as sensorial overload. To avoid that threat, thorough information was provided beforehand and specialized staff was onsite. Fortunately, no incidences were reported on neither occasion.

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[13] https://youtu.be/M-m5eAFpvKo