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The importance of social behavior in the tourism - a case study from Karvina, Moravian-Silesian Region, Czechia

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Abstract

Today we can hear terms like sustainability in different connotations. It is a trend that manifests itself in all areas, not excluding social behavior. It is a topical issue that became interest of many scientists from different regions of the world. The aim of the research is to map students' attitudes towards social behavior. The material for the research was obtained from a questionnaire survey conducted during 2022 among full-time students of the Silesian University in Opava School of Business Administration in Karvina (SU SBA), Moravian-Silesian region, Czechia. Primary data were analyzed using SPSS software. The research investigation highlighted some alarming aspects of the development of young generation with regard to social behavior such as the importance of education in social behavior especially in higher education programs, lack of knowledge of social protocol and the skills to use it adequately in a given situation, or to be able to evaluate social behavior correctly in a communication partner, should be a matter of course for university students. The results are helpful for academics, the general public, managers, and other staff members who interact with customers in a variety of enterprises, not only those in the tourist sector. Ethics as a set of standards is important in all spheres of business. But if we are talking about services, the compliance must be much stricter.

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1. Introduction

Ethics are important especially in the service sector including tourism. It's important to uphold sustainability, avoid aggravating locals too much, ensure that actors act fairly in all situations, take environmental concerns into account, and adhere to particular standards. Of course, ethics also apply to tourist employees, their workplace, and other factors.

The importance of social behavior is socially important. Appropriate social behavior influences the life of the individual, and society as a whole. At the same time, it is no accident that we have decided to focus on the topic of young people's views towards social behavior because entire regions and continents depend on appropriate social behavior. They are basically youth who will enter in businesses after completing their degrees, and millions of people will depend on their responsible decisions.

Hence, it is crucial to structure the study programmes educational activities in a way that they reflect the demands and needs of practice.

The topic of courtesy in communication is not a new. It has been appearing in the scientific literature for decades and seems to have been a regular topic of scholarly debate since the early 1960s. Nevertheless, it is a topical issue because its enormous potential allows it to be examined from different perspectives. It crosses over a number of academic fields with its eclectic content, including linguistics, sociology, communication, cultural anthropology, ethics, etc.

The importance of this ethical area has also increased in recent years, for instance as part of hotel or travel agency strategies. In order to demonstrate their reliability and provide their workers with favorable working and living circumstances, these organizations should make an effort. This is related to the ideas of social responsibility and corporate social responsibility. This is why certain basic rules have begun to be formulated, among other things, into ethical codes (often issued by professional associations, etc.).

The article summarizes the results of research on social behavior and attitudes of young people. It serves as a foundation for more study, which the authors want to do at other universities in the Czech Republic and to contrast with studies done elsewhere.

2. Review of the literature

Activities that do not comply with ethical standards have a major impact on society. These negative phenomena can, in extreme cases, destroy the values and culture of the selected organizations [1]. Social behavior is also synonymous with social etiquette or social code. Similar to the author, one might think of the idea of social behaviour Gullová [2], who defines this concept as a set of rules in society that can change over time [2].

As Sergeevna [3] states, etiquette is one of the basic building blocks of any culture. It is important to pay attention on this concept also in cultural and social conditions not only within Europe, but also in other regions of the world. Although etiquette is difficult to describe, it is obvious that it serves a vital purpose and is extremely important for society. According to the authors, Fomina, et al. [4] etiquette can be defined as a set of rules of behavior associated with the outward manifestation of attitudes towards people. According to Xion [5] with the continuous development of international economies, companies and institutions are now paying more attention to etiquette education. Unfortunately, etiquette instruction is currently undervalued and neglects its fundamental etiquette education outside of colleges. Zhang [6] emphasizes the importance of etiquette, and also believes that etiquette plays an important role in the whole tourism industry, where the customer meets the seller, in various tourism enterprises (restaurants, hotels, travel agencies, etc.).

According to Kajzar [7], the service is influenced by a variety of elements, including employee empathy, professional conduct, and understanding of the offer. These are the factors that have the greatest influence on repeat visits to selected tourism establishments in the Czech Republic. Another research was conducted by Kajzar, et al. [8], who examined selected tourism companies in the Moravian-Silesian region in the context of tourism trends affecting their operations. As the researchers of the research found, among the significant factors influencing the purchase of a tour with a travel operators and travel agency, you can include, for example, the offer and knowledge of the product, the ability to provide the widest possible range of information.

"Soft" skills are considered as skills that are important for the successful running of any business, not excluding the tourism industry. Among such skills, we can just include etiquette and communication. Since many firms now undervalue the value of these talents, greater focus needs to be placed on the number of secondary school and college courses—including public courses—that may assist anybody in breaking into the employment market.

According to Hendarman and Cantner [9] employees who pay greater attention to innovation also influence individual innovation activities at their workplace. Marandi, et al. [10] in their researches have focused on the area of soft skills, including communication and teamwork which bring success in the workplace. In spite of all this, a lack of these soft skills can be seen especially in the youngest generation.

According to Kong [11] it is the education of etiquette that should become the main point of education for university students and should be one of the main pillars of the important content of the selected courses (social and diplomatic protocol, intercultural communication, crisis communication, etc.) of higher education. Teaching intercultural communication is equally important. Intercultural communication skills are becoming more important as more overseas organizations build worldwide teams made up of individuals from many nations. Focusing on both verbal and nonverbal communication, as well as cultural competency in the nations where the negotiations take place, is vital to guarantee that each employee possesses the appropriate intercultural communication skills [12].

The authors of Balcar, et al. [13] show that Czech higher education does not put enough emphasis on soft skills and their development. This requires not only changes in teaching itself but it gives emphasis on the development of pedagogical knowledge of academic staff. According to the authors Kostikova, et al. [14] there are a number of synonyms that can be expressed as soft skills, such as 'key skills' and '21st century skills'.

According to findings from study done in Nigeria by the authors. Ayodele, et al. [15], employers place a high value on soft skills including responsibility, administration, listening, and communication.

According to Tanković, et al. [16] tourism service companies stress the importance of soft skills, especially communication skills. In their research, the authors focus on soft skills or communication skills of tourism employees and compare them in terms of knowledge and skills. The future tourism industry experts and the visitors, on the other hand, provide two distinct viewpoints, according to the study's researchers. Based on the results of the research, both groups attached great importance to communication skills.

According to Pepe [17], intercultural communication is a very broad area that has not yet been explored in great detail, although research on it has been continuing since the 1950s. The issue of intercultural communication does not appear in research as the main topic of research, but as a cross-cutting theme along with other research topics, including leadership and teamwork.

With the increase in global communication, people need to acquire greater knowledge about the world in order to deal with different situations. The purpose of teaching etiquette, including communication, is not only to cultivate people's competence related to this area, but also to develop intercultural communication competence in international space [18].

In the Czech environment, the issue of etiquette is also becoming an important topic. One of the most important publications are Gullová [2] International Business and Diplomatic Protocol.

It comprehensively discusses the issue of social ethics and at the same time comprehensively presents the importance of business and diplomatic protocol. The importance of the publication lies mainly in the intercultural approach to the whole issue with an emphasis on Czech culture. Another contribution is the fact that in this publication the author connects social etiquette with other social science disciplines such as business and diplomatic protocol, international trade, international relations, and international law. The aforementioned illustrates, among other things, why expert understanding of this area is vitally necessary. Teaching social behavior in universities should be part of every degree program. Because only in this way we can improve our behavior not only at work but also in our personal lives.

Several publications are about social behavior. Publications of a more practical orientations are included, for example, Hlaváček [19] and Špaček [20] among foreign authors we mention, and Von Prussia [21]; Wrede-Grischkat [22]; Kuhlmann and Zelms [23] and Bredemeier [24]. Etiquette at work has been addressed by Wolff [25]. From works of dictionary type, we mentioned Smejkal and Bachrachová [26] and Smejkal [27].

Social behavior must become part of Sustainable Development, a type of development that also seeks to eliminate or mitigate the negative effects of the way human society has developed to date. Past and present development, based primarily on economic growth, has had an irreversible impact on the shape and functioning of our planet.

The need for sustainable development and sustainable tourism is emerging, for example, in the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism or the Code of Ethics of The Czech Association of Hotels and Restaurants z.s. In order to promote sustainable tourism, codes of ethics may also try to influence the industry's employees.

3. Methodology

The aim of the research is to map student attitudes towards social behavior. In line with Bedrnová and Nový [28], we define attitudes as the collection of positive and negative assessments, emotional states, and behavioural inclinations.

The data for this research was obtained from a questionnaire survey conducted in 2022. In 2021, domestic and foreign literature on the topic was examined and a questionnaire survey was prepared and subsequently distributed among full-time students of the SU SBA in the summer and winter semester of 2022. At the end of September 2022, a total of 661 full-time students were studying at SU SBA in Karvina. All full-time students in the teaching staff were given the questionnaire, and we received a total of 252 replies from those who received one. Thus, the return rate of the questionnaires was around 38%.

We decided a questionnaire survey based on the semantic differential approach for our research. The semantic difference, in our opinion, is a method of gathering information for school self-evaluation in order to ascertain attitudes towards social behaviour. [29]. As the authors state, self-evaluation represents a means of initiating and manage change in the school [29].

We have chosen this method of semantic differential because It enables us to better understand the full spectrum of attitudes, including those that are conative and take into consideration behavioural tendencies, as well as cognitive attitudes with an evaluative component.

The data collected was subjected to a more in-depth investigation in which analysis and synthesis methods were used. Primary data were analyzed using SPSS software. In this study, the frequency analysis of the responses and the frequency distribution of the data were also used. The questionnaire included 3 identification questions and 16 closed and open-ended questions with multiple choice questions. Due to the large number of questions, the article contains only the most interesting questions with answers. The data were also analyzed by analyzing responses at the level of the individual items under study.

This research also included the determination of the research question:

- Any behavior is acceptable in social interactions.
- Subsequently, hypotheses were also formulated.
- The importance of social education varies by gender.
 - Older students attach more importance to social education.

First, we have to calculate the expected value of the two nominal variables, and therefore authors use this formula:

$$e_{ij} = \frac{n_{i.} \cdot n_{.j}}{n} \quad (1)$$

$$n_{i.} = \sum_{j=1}^s n_{ij} \quad n_{.j} = \sum_{i=1}^r n_{ij} \quad (2)$$

Equation 1 presents the mathematical relation between the expected value of observation e_{ij} and the sum of the individual observations $n_{.j}$ and $n_{i.}$, which is shown as Equation 2.

The chi-square test makes it possible to determine whether the observed phenomenon actually has a previously known data distribution. This method is based on the comparison of the actual distribution with the theoretically selected distribution, which was determined on the basis of consideration, previous experience or with the help of graphic visualization [30]. The chi-square Equation 3 is as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E} \tag{3}$$

Where "O" is the observed frequency;
 "E" is the expected frequency.

4. Research Results and Discussion

Basic identifying questions were asked about the pupils' age, gender, and city of residence. The study had 252 responses in total, with 75 respondents aged 25 and older making up the biggest group. The youngest group was the group of respondents under 18 years of age, which participated in the research in a number of 42. The respondents aged 21 and 24 were each 35 years. Table 1 illustrates the age of the respondents in this research.

Table 1.
Age of the respondents

Age	Number of respondents
Up to 18 years	42
19	25
20	10
21	35
22	22
23	8
24	35
25 Years and more	75

More women than men participated in the survey, in a ratio of 155 to 97. Figure 1 shows the number of respondents according to gender.

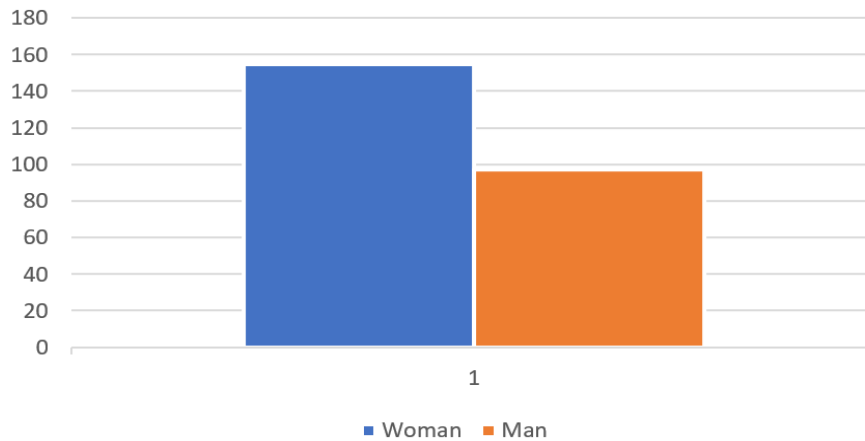


Figure 1.
Gender of respondents.

The respondents also indicated that they live most often in Český Těšín with 83 respondents, followed by Olomouc with 60 respondents and Třinec with 40 respondents. Table 2 illustrates the details of the respondents in this research.

Table 2.
Number of respondents in selected cities.

City	Number of respondents
Karviná	38
Třinec	40
Olomouc	60
Ostrava	15
Český Těšín	83
Another city	16

When it was asked if any behavior is acceptable in social behavior, 93% of respondents answered yes, 65 others answered rather yes, 32 respondents answered rather no, and only 62 respondents answered correctly.

41 respondents consider the subject of Social and Diplomatic Protocol within the field of Tourism and Travel to be beneficial, 55 respondents answered rather yes, 81 respondents are inclined to answer rather no, and 75 respondents do not consider the subject of Social and Diplomatic Protocol to be beneficial.

39 respondents think that the subject Social and Diplomatic Protocol should be taught in disciplines other than Tourism and Travel such as Marketing and International Business, 53 respondents are inclined to say rather yes. 81 respondents do not think that the subject Social and Diplomatic Protocol should be taught in disciplines other than Tourism and Travel such as Marketing and International Business.

According to the respondents, the rules that are most frequently violated include the following:

- Taking off a jacket without the permission of a woman (136 respondents).
- A woman or a more socially prominent person sits at the table and begins eating first (98 respondents).
- The couple's more well-known member of society offers a hand (92 respondents).
- It is improper for a guy to release his neck button and let his tie hang free in public (82).
- The first man enters the restaurant. He checks that there is no danger in the establishment. The first woman leaves the restaurant (79 respondents).

Table 3 summarized the most frequently violated rule of social behavior according to the respondents.

Table 3.

The most frequently violated rules of social behavior.

Selected rules of social behavior	Number of respondents
It is rude for a man to take off his jacket without a woman's permission.	136
It is indecent for a man to loosen his tie and undo his neck button in public.	82
Men do not show their calves.	48
The more socially prominent of the pair shakes hands.	92
When shaking hands, the woman may sit. A man never does!	86
The first man enters the restaurant. He checks to see if there is any danger in the establishment. On the other hand, the first woman leaves the restaurant.	79
A woman or an elderly man first goes up the stairs, and a woman goes down the stairs after the man.	81
The more socially prominent person should have a more comfortable position from which he or she has the best view of the room.	56
The woman or the more socially prominent person sits at the table and starts eating first.	98
When we are finished eating, we put both cutlery items on the plate in the ten-minute half-past five position.	55

According to Špaček [20] if you want to make the best impression, even the best and most expensive clothes are unlikely to save you if you do not know the rules of decorum. The rules of etiquette allow much more freedom than it may seem at first glance. Etiquette allows us to relax completely because we know what is appropriate in a situation, we know how to behave, and what is inappropriate. Decorum and etiquette are intrinsically linked to consideration, which is one of their cornerstones, if not the most important. If you are considerate, you can empathize with others and also respond appropriately.

Another 72 respondents think rather yes, 60 respondents chose rather no, and 48 respondents did not think that different rules govern the behaviour and behaviour of people from different cultures.

The low social level is perceived by 58 respondents when introducing themselves, 51 believe it when dressing, 39 believe it when dining, 33 believe it when addressing, 33 believe it when phoning, and 13 believe it when greeting, more shows Table 4.

Table 4.

The respondents see the most common responses to low levels of social behavior.

Answers	Number of respondents
In greeting	13
When introducing yourself	58
When addressing	33
When dressing	51
When making a phone call	33
When dining	39
Other	25

People who do not frequently patronize social enterprises frequently are unaware of important restrictions that they should know about. This concerns introductions, sometimes handling tableware or dressing.

Etiquette and communication are an integral part of everyone's life. Since the prehistoric time, we have had to learn how to coexist. First with gestures and then with words. Today's need for communication and social interaction is all around us.

Whether you are among friends or coworkers, it is at the very least polite to introduce yourself and any guests you may be bringing. Especially if you are the only person who knows your friend in the group.

Greeting is the most common form of social interaction. We greet friends, acquaintances, family, and even strangers. The rules of etiquette in these cases are quite simple, but it is always necessary to correctly assess the specific situation.

We must be careful, however, that if we know the basics of social behavior in Czechia, we must respect the taboos, traditions, and etiquette of the country if we travel to distant countries. Therefore, it is necessary to study the basics of travel etiquette before traveling. Because it is travelling etiquette that teaches us how to respond to the cultural and traditional differences that each country has.

4.1. Statistical Processing of the Hypotheses

The research results were processed through SPSS using the Chi-square test. The first hypothesis addressed the importance of social studies education from a gender perspective.

H0: The responses of the respondents according to gender on the importance of education in social education do not differ.

H1: The responses of the respondents according to gender on the importance of education in social education differ.

Table 5 shows the results of the Chi-square tests.

The Pearson chi-square is 5,926 and $p = 0.115$

$p = 0.115 > \alpha = 0.05$

Fail to reject the H0, it means that the responses of the respondents according to gender on the importance of education in social education do not differ.

Table 5.
Chi-square tests.

Variables	Value	Df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	5.926 ^a	3	0.115
Likelihood ratio	6.186	3	0.103
Linear-by-linear association	1.804	1	0.179
N of valid cases	252	-	-

Note: a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 15.01.

The second hypothesis focused on the importance of social education in terms of the age of the respondents.

H0: The responses of the respondents by age on the importance of education in social education do not differ.

H1: Respondents' responses by age on the importance of education in social education differ.

Table 6 shows the results of the Chi-square tests.

The Pearson chi-square is 9,340 and $p = 0.229$

$p = 0.229 > \alpha = 0.05$

Fail to reject the H0, it means that the responses of the respondents by age on the importance of education in social education do not differ.

Table 6.
Chi-square tests.

Variables	Value	Df	Asymptotic significance (2-sided)
Pearson chi-square	9.340 ^a	7	0.229
Likelihood ratio	9.450	7	0.222
Linear-by-linear association	3.445	1	0.063
N of valid cases	252	-	-

Note: a. 3 cells (18.8%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.08.

The research question also asked students to believe that any behavior is acceptable in social interactions. There was a confirmation of this research question where out of 252 respondents, 93 respondents said that any behavior in socializing is acceptable and 65 respondents said that such behavior is rather acceptable. This means that almost 63% of the respondents do not address social-intercourse behavior. This may be due, on the one hand, to the fact that this is Generation Z (or also called the Internet Generation) born in the 1990s; more recent breakdowns indicate a post-2000 Generation Z period. This generation can use social networks and mobile devices to stay online constantly. This is why they are more concerned with IT communication than face-to-face communication, and this may be the source of their view on social behavior, which is not emphasized especially by Generation Z in the online environment. This may then also be reflected in interpersonal relationships and consequently in social interaction behavior. On the other side, society's general behavior can also be an issue, since Generation Z watches how particular groups act and, in essence, takes after those who are vulgar. They are viewed as role models more often the more social manners they violate.

Many people consider respecting the rules of etiquette to be unnecessary, even ridiculous. They view those of us who care about manners as excessive aesthetes who are disconnected from reality. In reality, the basic rules of etiquette are very

simple. They are mainly in the following areas: speech culture, social politeness, clean appearance, and control of our emotions.

Today, etiquette is a prerequisite for success not only in the workplace, but also in social and personal life. It is up to us to decide how and in what ways we apply these rules of behavior in practice.

5. Conclusion

Ethics as a set of norms is important in all spheres of business. But if we are talking about services, compliance must be much stricter. In the hotel, catering, and tourism in general, ethical compliance changes over time. The basic rules and standards, however, remain the same.

The research investigation highlighted some alarming aspects of the development of young generations in terms of social behavior. First and foremost, it highlighted the importance of education in social behavior especially in higher education programs. For those with a university education, a lack of understanding of social etiquette and the abilities to apply it effectively in a particular scenario or to accurately assess social behavior in a communication partner may be expected.

Of course, we are aware of the fact that we have conducted research within our faculty on a limited sample of respondents, so it would be desirable to repeat research of a similar type and to conduct it on a wider research sample, to observe the dependence of knowledge of social protocol on the social environment in the family, etc.

We believe that research of this type is important and justified, especially nowadays. The motivation of college students to enhance their social skills through their authority, in their courses, or in the study of Social Protocol is a very difficult task. It is not merely a challenge; it is their duty.

In the tourism industry, compliance with the Global Code of Ethics for Tourism is particularly important. Tourism is now becoming a rapidly growing part of the national economy. It has positive and, in many cases, negative consequences. Therefore, to minimize these negative impacts, it is important to respect certain ethical principles and rules. The Code is a set of these rules for workers in travel industry and tourists around the world. It seeks, above all, to promote sustainable and responsible tourism. And social norms education should make it simpler for everyone to behave, not only in the tourism industry.

However, it would surely not be detrimental if additional people than only employees attended at least brief lectures on the most recent European standards for professional social conduct with partners, coworkers, and guests.

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