



**Теорія і практика навчання**

УДК 373.5.015.31.011.2:504.61:355.01

DOI <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17110802>

**Сталий розвиток і соціокультурна універсалія гостинності:  
екологічна складова підготовки фахівців готельно-ресторанної справи**

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**Прийнято: 02.09.2025 | Опубліковано: 13.09.2025**

***Анотація:** У статті досліджується інтеграція екологічної складової в професійну підготовку майбутніх фахівців готельно-ресторанної справи в контексті сталого розвитку й соціокультурної універсалії гостинності. Актуальність теми зумовлена глобальними екологічними викликами, зростанням екологічного сліду індустрії гостинності та нагальною потребою у формуванні нового покоління фахівців, здатних упроваджувати принципи сталого розвитку на всіх рівнях обслуговування. Дослідження ґрунтується на теоретичних засадах сталого розвитку, екологічної освіти й етики гостинності, розглядає гостинність як галузь обслуговування та ціннісно навантажене соціокультурне явище. У статті виявлено суттєвий розрив між концептуальним усвідомленням екологічних проблем та їхньою практичною реалізацією в освітніх програмах, де екологічні питання часто мають фрагментарний, допоміжний характер і не інтегровані в систему професійних компетентностей. На основі порівняльного аналізу освітніх стандартів України та країн ЄС, а також емпіричних даних педагогічного*



*експерименту, обґрунтовано педагогічну модель інтеграції екологічного компоненту в підготовку фахівців готельно-ресторанної справи. Запропонована модель складається з трьох взаємопов'язаних компонентів: міждисциплінарної інтеграції екологічного змісту в навчальні дисципліни; застосування активних методів навчання (імітацій, проєктної діяльності, ділових екологічних ігор), що сприяють формуванню екоорієнтованого мислення й поведінки; трансформації освітнього середовища на засадах екологізації – через створення «зеленого кампусу» та співпрацю з екологічно відповідальними підприємствами. Результати дослідження підтвердили, що поєднання екологічної освіти із ціннісними засадами гостинності сприяє засвоєнню знань, глибокому внутрішньому прийняттю екологічної відповідальності як професійної норми. Проведений експеримент в українських закладах вищої освіти показав статистично значуще підвищення рівнів екологічної обізнаності, готовності до практичних дій і ціннісних орієнтацій студентів. У статті зроблено висновок, що інтеграція принципів сталого розвитку в освіту у сфері гостинності є як педагогічно виправданою, так і соціально необхідною. У подальших дослідженнях пропонується зосередити увагу на масштабуванні моделі, розробленні інструментів оцінювання екологічних компетентностей та посиленні взаємодії між академічною спільнотою й представниками індустрії.*

**Ключові слова:** *сталий розвиток, освіта в сфері гостинності, екологічна компетентність, соціокультурні універсалії, індустрія гостинності, педагогічна модель, професійна підготовка, майбутні фахівці готельно-ресторанної справи.*



## **Sustainable development and the sociocultural universality of hospitality: the environmental component in the training of hospitality and restaurant industry specialists**

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***Abstract:** This article explores the integration of the environmental component into the professional training of future specialists in the hospitality and restaurant industry within the framework of sustainable development and the sociocultural universality of hospitality. The relevance of the study is determined by global environmental challenges, the increased ecological footprint of the hospitality sector, and the urgent need to educate a new generation of professionals capable of implementing sustainable practices at all levels of service provision. The article is grounded in the theoretical foundations of sustainability, ecological education, and the ethics of hospitality, treating hospitality not only as a service industry but as a value-laden sociocultural phenomenon. The research identifies a fundamental gap in current educational models, where environmental issues are often addressed superficially and are not embedded as integral components of professional competencies. Based on a comparative analysis of educational standards in Ukraine and the EU, as well as empirical data gathered from an educational experiment, the study develops and substantiates a pedagogical model for integrating ecological content into hospitality training programs. The proposed model comprises three interrelated components: curricular integration of environmental topics across disciplines; application of active learning methods – such as simulations, project-based tasks, and ecological business games – that promote the formation of eco-oriented thinking and behavior; and transformation of the institutional environment into a living*



*laboratory of sustainability through green campus initiatives and partnerships with environmentally responsible businesses. The findings confirm that aligning ecological education with the sociocultural values of hospitality fosters not only knowledge acquisition but also internalization of ecological responsibility as a professional norm. The pedagogical experiment conducted within Ukrainian higher education institutions showed statistically significant improvement in students' environmental awareness, behavioral readiness, and value orientations. The article concludes that the integration of sustainability principles into hospitality education is both pedagogically effective and socially imperative, offering a roadmap for the holistic transformation of training programs in line with global sustainable development goals. Future research should address the scalability of the model, development of ecological competency assessment frameworks, and enhancement of collaboration between academia and industry.*

**Keywords:** *sustainable development, hospitality education, environmental competence, socio-cultural universals, hospitality industry, pedagogical model, professional training, future hotel and restaurant professionals.*

**Problem statement.** In the context of global environmental challenges, the concept of sustainable development has become a central paradigm shaping educational strategies across various professional fields. The hospitality and restaurant industry, as one of the most dynamic and resource-intensive sectors, plays a crucial role in the implementation of sustainable practices. However, despite the growing public awareness and institutional support for environmental responsibility, the integration of ecological principles into the professional training of hospitality and restaurant specialists remains insufficiently systematized and methodologically grounded.

At the same time, hospitality, as a sociocultural universality, reflects deep-rooted traditions of human interaction, respect, care, and ethical conduct. These values are inherently aligned with ecological thinking, as both promote harmonious coexistence, resource mindfulness, and long-term well-being. The challenge lies in transforming these



shared cultural codes into effective educational tools that will shape not only the competencies but also the value orientations of future professionals in the field.

The urgency of embedding the environmental component into the professional training system is driven by a number of critical scientific and practical tasks. These include: the development of ecologically-oriented educational content; the formation of sustainable behavioral models among students; the implementation of active, practice-based learning methods; and the cultivation of personal responsibility for environmental impacts in hospitality practices. Moreover, this transformation must be aligned with the global goals of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, particularly Goal 12 (Responsible Consumption and Production) and Goal 13 (Climate Action).

Thus, the problem is not merely about ecological awareness, but about the holistic restructuring of professional education in hospitality and restaurant services through the lens of sustainability and sociocultural ethics. Addressing this complex issue requires interdisciplinary research, innovative pedagogical approaches, and strong collaboration between academia, industry stakeholders, and policymakers.

**Analysis of the latest research and publications.** The issue of integrating environmental principles into the training of future specialists in the hospitality and restaurant industry has gained increasing scholarly attention in recent years. A number of Ukrainian and international researchers have emphasized the relevance of sustainable development as a conceptual and practical framework for transforming professional education in this field. In particular, the work by V. Burak highlights the necessity of developing ecological competence among students in hospitality-related educational programs, suggesting that such competence is essential for aligning professional practices with global sustainability goals [1]. The monograph by O. Holovnia and Yu. Stavska offers an overview of current transformations in the tourism and hospitality industries, identifying sustainability as one of the key vectors of their development [2]. From an institutional perspective, O. Dyshkantiuk underscores the importance of structural transformations in hospitality education to ensure ecological adaptability and resilience [3].



Other studies focus on the practical dimensions of environmentally responsible business practices. V. Kalenska and V. Liubchenko explore the concept of «green» hotel management, emphasizing ecological accountability as a strategic advantage [4], while O. Karolop et al. examine methods of reducing the environmental footprint in hospitality and tourism enterprises through strategic sustainability initiatives [5]. Similarly, O. Milinchuk presents a compelling argument for ecological certification of hotels in Ukraine as a mechanism for elevating environmental standards [6].

The integration of sustainability into national frameworks is further analyzed by N. Pankiv and V. Byk, who investigate the ecological transformation of the hospitality sector within the broader context of tourism development in Ukraine [7]. This is complemented by the work of I. Romaniuk and K. Deiko, who assess the influence of global trends on the expansion of ecological tourism enterprises [8].

At a deeper cultural level, S. Tolochko examines the formation of ecological consciousness as a vital element of a multicultural personality [9], supported by further collaborative studies on emotional intelligence [10], aesthetic education [11], and cross-cultural competence development [12], all of which serve as indirect but significant contributors to the formation of sustainability-oriented professionals.

On a strategic and policy-making level, the collective monograph “Strategy for Sustainable Development: European Horizons” provides comprehensive insights into the European vision of sustainability and its implications for educational reforms in Ukraine [13]. Internationally, E.S. Leyva and D.P. Parra discuss innovative environmental approaches in the hotel industry, positioning them as essential for navigating the paradigm shift toward sustainability [14]. Meanwhile, R.E. Popşa stresses the importance of integrating sustainability across all dimensions of hotel operations and training [15].

Despite the growing corpus of research, there remains a distinct gap in synthesizing environmental, cultural, and educational dimensions into a unified pedagogical framework. Therefore, further research is needed to systematize these approaches and to develop effective models for embedding environmental awareness into the professional identity of hospitality and restaurant industry specialists.



**Identification of previously unresolved parts of the overall problem.** Although the relevance of sustainability in the hospitality and restaurant industry is widely acknowledged, several aspects remain unresolved. In particular, the integration of the environmental component with the sociocultural universality of hospitality as a pedagogical foundation is still underdeveloped. There is a lack of holistic educational models that embed ecological awareness as a core professional value rather than a supplementary topic. The absence of clear competency frameworks, effective teaching strategies, and empirical validation of educational interventions limits the systematic formation of environmentally responsible behavior in future specialists. These gaps highlight the need for interdisciplinary approaches that unite ecological, cultural, and ethical dimensions in professional training.

**Formulation of the objectives of the article (task statement).** The purpose of this article is to substantiate the need for integrating the environmental component into the professional training of hospitality and restaurant industry specialists through the prism of sustainable development and the sociocultural universality of hospitality. The article aims to identify theoretical and methodological foundations for embedding ecological values into educational content, define key environmental competencies relevant to the industry, and propose pedagogical approaches that promote students' ecological awareness and responsible behavior. Additionally, the study seeks to outline strategies for aligning professional education with global sustainability goals and cultural ethics.

**Presentation of the main research material.** The professional training of future hospitality and restaurant industry specialists in the 21st century must respond to global challenges such as environmental degradation, climate change, and the need for sustainable resource management. This necessitates the integration of environmental education not as an auxiliary aspect, but as a core dimension of professional competency. The present research is grounded in the theoretical framework of sustainable development (Brundtland Commission, 1987), which underscores the interdependence of economic viability, environmental integrity, and sociocultural cohesion. Within this paradigm, hospitality is interpreted not only as a sector of economic activity but also as a



sociocultural phenomenon that embodies ethical interaction, care for others, and stewardship of shared resources.

A central thesis of this study is that hospitality, as a sociocultural universality, offers a unique pedagogical entry point for the development of environmental consciousness. It embodies principles of respect, reciprocity, inclusivity, and responsibility – values that align seamlessly with ecological ethics. However, empirical observations and literature analysis reveal a disconnection between the conceptual understanding of sustainability and its implementation in hospitality education programs. While environmental issues may be acknowledged in isolated modules or extracurricular activities, they are rarely embedded systematically into the curriculum, learning outcomes, or competency assessment systems.

To address this, we conducted a comparative analysis of current educational standards and professional profiles in Ukraine and selected EU countries (Germany, Netherlands, Sweden) to determine the extent to which environmental competencies are integrated. The analysis revealed that in most cases, Ukrainian programs refer to sustainability in general terms, without operationalizing its ecological dimension in a measurable way. In contrast, leading European institutions define clear ecological learning outcomes, such as knowledge of green certification systems, ability to evaluate environmental impacts of operational decisions, and implementation of waste reduction strategies. This gap underscores the urgent need to revise national standards and embed ecological competencies into the core of professional training.

Drawing on the findings of V. Burak (2021) [1] and O. Karolop et al. (2025) [5], the present study identifies a triadic structure of environmental competencies essential for hospitality professionals: cognitive – knowledge of sustainability principles, environmental legislation, and green technologies; behavioral – skills in energy efficiency, waste sorting, and eco-design implementation; and axiological – the internalization of ecological values and sustainable habits. These components must be systematically developed through curricula that integrate theory, practice, and reflection.

The proposed model of pedagogical integration consists of three interrelated components:



1) curricular Integration (environmental content must be embedded across theoretical and practical disciplines, including food safety, hotel operations, service management, and event planning. Interdisciplinary modules should address topics such as sustainable supply chains, climate-resilient infrastructure, and environmental impact assessments).

2) active Learning Strategies (to ensure the formation of not only knowledge but also eco-oriented behaviors, active methods such as project-based learning, ecological simulations, business games, and case studies are essential. For example, eco-audit role-plays, scenario analysis of carbon footprints, and digital gamification of sustainability goals encourage critical thinking and value formation);

3) institutional Ecosystem for Sustainability (the educational environment must itself embody ecological principles – through green campus initiatives, energy conservation policies, waste management systems, and collaboration with sustainable businesses. This real-life context reinforces theoretical knowledge and fosters student engagement).

In parallel, it is necessary to cultivate cross-cutting soft skills that support environmental thinking, such as emotional intelligence, intercultural competence, and systems thinking. As S. Tolochko and O. Vasliuk (2024) [10] and S. Tolochko and A. Zinoruk (2025) [12] argue, a multicultural and emotionally intelligent learner is more likely to adopt ecological values and demonstrate responsible behavior in hospitality settings characterized by diversity and ethical complexity.

To validate the proposed model, a pedagogical experiment was conducted over two academic years (2022–2024) in three Ukrainian higher education institutions offering bachelor's degrees in hotel and restaurant management. The control group followed the traditional curriculum, while the experimental group studied according to the integrated ecological model. Using pre- and post-testing, reflective journals, and expert evaluation, the experiment measured changes in environmental awareness, behavioral readiness, and value orientations. Results demonstrated statistically significant improvements in all indicators among the experimental group ( $p < 0.01$ ), confirming the efficacy of the model.



Furthermore, expert assessments from industry representatives confirmed that graduates of the experimental program displayed higher levels of ecological responsibility, critical thinking, and initiative in implementing green practices at their workplaces. These findings validate the central hypothesis: the sociocultural universality of hospitality, when used as a foundation for educational design, effectively fosters the environmental competence of future professionals.

**Conclusions and further prospects in this area.** In conclusion, the study confirms the urgent need to integrate the environmental component into the professional training of hospitality and restaurant industry specialists through a value-based and interdisciplinary approach grounded in the sociocultural essence of hospitality. The developed model, which combines curricular integration, active learning strategies, and institutional sustainability practices, has demonstrated its effectiveness in fostering ecological competencies and responsible professional behavior. Future research should focus on scaling this model across diverse educational contexts, developing standardized assessment tools for ecological competencies, and strengthening partnerships between academia and sustainable industry stakeholders to ensure continuous innovation in environmentally oriented hospitality education.

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