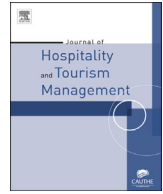




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Gender on the agenda? The position of gender in tourism's high ranking journals

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1. Introduction

Gender, as a research focus, was not strong in tourism studies prior to the 1990s (Small, 2015). Norris and Wall (1994), from their examination of literature emanating from the academic field of tourism studies, concluded:

where differences in participation between women and men are identified, they tend to be noted rather than explained. Such research is seldom undertaken from a feminist perspective and indirectly may promote the status quo in that it usually ignores the different constraints and opportunities to which women and men are exposed (p. 58).

Tourism had traditionally been viewed as a gender-neutral social process. It was only in the 1990s that scholars highlighted the masculinity of the travel and tourism literature. To emphasise the biased perspective of the literature, Jokinen and Veijola (1997) 're-metaphorised' the postmodern tourist in ways which are 'not based on implicitly sexed bodily and imaginary morphologies' (p. 23). Now we saw 'gender' move from being one of many demographic variables on a questionnaire (that is, differences between men and women) to gender being the foregrounded matter of study. In tourism studies, a number of seminal published collections

attracted critical feminist contributors who recognised the marginalisation of women in tourism whether they be tourists, hosts or industry personnel: for example, the edited collection by Kinnaird and Hall (1994) *Tourism: A Gender Analysis*, the Special Issue of *Annals of Tourism Research* edited by Swain in 1995, and the edited collection by Swain and Momsen, *Gender/Tourism/Fun (?)* in 2002 which emerged from the conference of the same name held at Davis, California in 1997. These contributions emphasised a move beyond the 'invisible' and 'add women and stir' phases of traditional tourism scholarship to an understanding and problematising of gender as a social construct. Much of this work could be considered as fitting with critical studies and feminism where the underlying concerns were social justice, equity issues and power relations: giving voice to those who previously had been unheard – both researchers and 'the researched' and understanding and calling for change 'by locating the phenomenon in its wider political, economic, cultural and social contexts' (Critical Tourism Studies, 2016).

However, since this emergence of interest in gender from a Critical Tourism Studies standpoint twenty years ago, the social, economic and academic landscape has changed significantly with Neoliberalism now underpinning contemporary managerial philosophy with the emphasis on individualism and competitiveness within the state and university sector (Waitere, Wright, Tremaine, Brown, & Pause, 2011). To study the *state of play* of gender and tourism research from its hopeful beginnings, Figueroa-Domecq, Pritchard, Segovia-Pérez, Morgan, and Villacé-Molinero (2015) employed Scopus and ISI Web of Knowledge (WoK) to undertake a bibliometric analysis of journal articles containing relevant keywords to look for trends over the period, 1985 to 2012. Their findings indicated a relatively upward trajectory of publications over the last three decades. Nonetheless, they conclude that 'tourism gender research remains marginal to tourism enquiry, disarticulated from wider feminist and gender-aware initiatives' (p. 87).

Changes in the academic landscape have resulted in publication ranking systems in many countries, with tourism and hospitality management academics in countries such as Australia, New Zealand, the UK, France and beyond subject to the pressures of

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publishing in high ranked academic journals. While we recognise debates and criticisms inherent in academic journal rankings (Gursoy & Sandstrom, 2016; Hall, 2005), such systems indeed persist, and are considered influential. Our study, a bibliometric analysis on the prevalence of gender-focussed/related journal articles adds to the research of Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2015) by focussing specifically on tourism and hospitality journals, and targeting only those 'top tier'/'top ranked' journals considered to be the highest quality (Gursoy & Sandstrom, 2016). Of particular interest was whether gender research was undertaken from a critical studies stance or not.

2. Method

Techniques like bibliometric analyses can reflect what is – or is not – discussed, debated and published in journals, and can be powerful tools in examining whether topics such as gender and, specifically, 'gender-aware initiatives' are evident in these influential publications. Elsevier's database, Scopus, was used to conduct a bibliometric analysis of all articles and research notes focused on gender and tourism, from 2005 to 2014. Five top tier tourism and hospitality journals were selected for their A or A* star ranking in the Australian Business Deans' Council Journal Quality List (2013), aligning with similar ranking exercises and analyses elsewhere (Gursoy & Sandstrom, 2016). The journals were *Annals of Tourism Research*, *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, *Journal of Travel Research* and *Tourism Management*. Articles published in these journals reflect what is considered to be important and current subject matter, methodologies and paradigms. These journals are influential in the neoliberal, business schools in Australasia and elsewhere as the arbiter of quality journal measurement and, consequently, an author's academic research performance.

We identified articles/research notes that had, in the Title, Abstract and/or Keywords, one or more in the range of gender-related words (including plural form): Gender, Female, Male, Woman, Man, Girl, Boy, Mother, Father, Femin (femininity, feminine, feminism, feminist), and Masculin (masculinity, masculine, masculinism masculinist). Here, we differed from the research of Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2015) by expanding the 'gender' terms. Our analysis revealed the frequency of journal articles/research notes with one or more of these keywords in each of the journals relative to the number of published articles in these journals over the ten-year period.

Extending this analysis, we also read Abstracts and Papers to determine whether or not the papers espoused a Critical approach. By 'critical', we drew upon those values undergirding critical theory and Critical Tourism Studies; namely, inclusiveness, diversity,

equity, social justice, feminism, power (Wilson, Harris, & Small, 2008). We drew on our own and others' work about what Critical Tourism Studies is and what it means:

... those employing a critical approach would generally be concerned with resisting positivist modes of enquiry, unmasking power relations, seeking emancipation, addressing inequalities, or calling for change or action within the field they are exploring (Wilson et al., 2008, p. 16).

As Tribe (2007) says of Critical Tourism Studies '... power is a key issue to be researched and a critical approach to tourism would seek to expose whose interests are served and the exercise of power and the influence of ideology in the researched situation and the research itself' (p. 30). We then further analysed the critical tourism articles according to authorship (institutional location), methodological approach and subject matter (the gendered tourist, host, or worker). The time period selected for analysis coincided with the establishment of the international Critical Tourism Studies (CTS) conference and community 'an international network of scholars who share a vision of producing and promoting social change in and through tourism practice, research and education ...' (Critical Tourism Studies, 2016). Since the establishment of this group we might have expected the journals under study to reflect this interest.

3. Findings

The journal with the highest number of gender-related words was *International Journal of Hospitality Management* followed by *Tourism Management*, *Annals of Tourism Research*, *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* and *Journal of Travel Research*. When examining each journal and comparing the number of articles/research notes with the search words to the total number of articles/research notes published in that journal over the examined period, the percentage was no more than 5.5% for any journal. Considering that gender relations underlie men's and women's tourist, host and industry personnel experiences, and the representations of such, we made the judgement that 'gender' and associated search words were not strongly represented in journal publications over the past ten years; only 3.9% of all published articles/research notes across all journals included one or more of the gender-related search words (see Table 1).

A closer analysis found that across all five journals with articles/research notes with one or more search words, only 38 of the 146 (26%) were judged to be working from a critical tourism approach (see Table 2). The majority of the 146 articles/research notes were descriptive, treating gender solely as a demographic variable and

Table 1
Numbers of Articles/Research Notes with one or more search word in Title, Abstract and/or Keyword (2005–2014).

Journal	Total no. articles/notes published 2005–2014 (a)	No. articles/notes with one or more search words (b)	% of articles/notes with search word by total no. of articles/notes (by Individual Journal) (a)	% of articles/notes with search word by total no. articles/notes published (n = 3748) (b/c)
Annals of Tourism Research	702	24	3.4%	0.6%
Tourism Management	1206	37	3.1	1.0
Journal of Travel Research	460	14	3.0	0.4
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	439	19	4.3	0.5
International Journal of Hospitality Management	941	52	5.5	1.4
Total (All 5 Journals)	3748 (c)	146	3.9%	3.9%

Table 2
Numbers of Articles/Research Notes with one or more Search Word in Title, Abstract and/or Keyword which took a Critical Tourism Approach (2005–2014).

Journal	No. articles/notes with one or more search words taking a critical tourism approach (a)	No. articles/notes with one or more search words (b)	% of articles/notes with critical approach by articles/notes with one or more search word (by Individual Journal) (a/b)	% of articles/notes with critical approach by total number of articles/notes with one or more search word (n = 146) (a/c)
Annals of Tourism Research	18	24	75%	12.3%
Tourism Management	6	37	16.2	4.1
Journal of Travel Research	2	14	14.3	1.4
Journal of Sustainable Tourism	5	19	26.3	3.4
International Journal of Hospitality Management	7	52	13.5	4.8
Total (All 5 Journals)	38	146 (c)	26.0%	26.0%

focussing predominantly on 'sex' (i.e., male/female) differences.

While the *International Journal of Hospitality Management* had the greatest number of articles/research notes featuring one or more of the search words, it had the fewest with a critical tourism approach (13.5%). On the other hand, *Annals of Tourism Research*, which had only 24 articles with a search word, had 75% taking a decidedly critical tourism stance. When relating back to the total number of articles/research notes published in these five journals from 2005 to 2014 (n = 3748) the percentage of articles/research notes featuring one or more search word from a critical tourism perspective is just 1.0%.

Seventy-one authors contributed to the 38 articles/research notes taking a critical tourism perspective. Of these authors, 28% were from institutions in Australia/New Zealand, 28% in North America, 19.7% in the UK/Western Europe and 12.7% in Asia. Six were from Israeli institutions, and two from South African. The focus of study was, for the most part, evenly distributed between the tourist, tourism/hospitality industry employees (in general) and the host (including those working in the industry). Four articles examined media representations. The methodology employed tended to be qualitative with textual analysis employed in representational studies.

4. Discussion

Critical Tourism Studies has sought to legitimise the critical school of thought in tourism studies and to provide an inclusive environment for new and alternative voices in the academy. Gender has been central to the critical tourism project, with many critical scholars having built their careers on gendered tourism research. However, there is a real tension when gender and critical tourism scholarship is not being published to any great degree in what are seen as the most reputable, influential ('A*') journals in tourism, as our results show. This raises questions about the production, legitimisation and reproduction of knowledge, the codification of knowledge (Aitchison, 2001; Spender, 1981) in relation to gender and tourism and, specifically, knowledge from a Critical Tourism Studies approach.

Whether the low number of gender-related (and, especially, critically-focussed) articles in the selected journals is due to a lack of submission or editorial rejection is unknown. Perhaps such voices are heard in journals elsewhere, such as leisure studies. For many tourism and hospitality academics now absorbed into Business Schools there is pressure to publish in Business journals which undoubtedly influences, shapes and impacts upon knowledge

production. It is relevant to consider the contemporary neoliberal, academic context, which can affect the choices academics make around their research platform including topics investigated, methodologies employed and publication decisions. As Ball (2012) elucidates 'neoliberalism gets into our minds and our souls, into the ways in which we think about what we do ... and our "knowledge production" ... Knowledge has its price' (p. 18).

Despite our different bibliometric analyses, our findings reinforce those of Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2015) that 'tourism gender research remains marginal to tourism enquiry, disarticulated from wider feminist and gender-aware initiatives ...' (p. 87). Our findings support the call of Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2015) to move away from 'gender-stagnation' towards an agenda of 'gender-ignition', whereby feminist, gender-aware approaches, collaborations and studies are embraced and encouraged. Based on our findings we question whether a paltry showing of gender (especially from a critical tourism approach) in top ranking, quality journals reflects an undermining of gendered social justice research as 'serious' scholarship. There is also the concerning possibility that, in this apparently post-feminist, post-structural, Third Wave research era, gender is simply no longer perceived as requiring scholarship. This is not our contention; we maintain that gender remains relevant as a focus of study. We have raised questions here and invite our readers to consider the factors influencing, and consequences of, the lack of publication of critical gender scholarship in top tourism journals.

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