

## **THEORIES AND METHODS IN RESEARCH ON TOURISM GENDER AND WOMEN IN IBERO- AMERICA: A BIBLIOGRAPHIC ANALYSIS**

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This article conducts an integrative review of the literature on tourism, gender and women, published in 11 major tourism refereed journals in Spanish and Portuguese from the first year of publication of each journal. The review established that at least one of the authors had to be ascribed to an Ibero-American institution. We followed the methodological proposal of Henderson and Gibson (2013) in order to focus the analysis on gender relations and women's experiences in tourism. Thirty one complete papers were selected for content analysis. The review is part of a larger research entitled «Tourism and the empowerment processes of women artisans in Metepec, Mexico», within the Doctoral program on Tourism Studies at the Autonomous University of the State of Mexico.

For decades, tourism research prioritized the analysis of the economic and administrative aspects of tourism, in detriment of the political and social dimensions, where gender plays a primary role by articulating – among other stratifying categories like class and ethnic origin – questions of power, control and equality in tourism processes and practices (Enloe, 1989; Kinnaird and Hall, 1994; Swain, 1995). By the mid-1990s, the so called «critical turn» in tourism studies has shown a greater interest in the analysis of the political and social dimensions of tourism, including the study of gender relations (Pritchard, Morgan and Ateljevic, 2011).

Henderson (1994) established five stages in the evolution of gender analysis in leisure studies, which were later adapted by Swain (1995) to characterize tourism studies: 1) invisible (without women); 2) compensatory («add women and stir»); 3) dichotomous differences (sexual differences); feminist perspective (focused on women); and 5) gender-

aware frameworks (analysis of gender relations, roles and stereotypes that situate women in a subordinate position with regards to men).

Gender analysis in tourism can focus in one or both sexes (Henderson, 1994). Its main objective is to theorize the way in which behaviors and roles respond to social constructions of gender and to analyze how social structures incorporate values and advantages through hierarchical gender relations as expressed in the sexual division of labor (Swain, 1995). Kinnaird and Hall (1996) proposed a «gender-aware framework» in order to examine the gender dimensions of tourism. The framework is based on the following conceptual premises: a) The activities and the processes related to tourism development are constructed in societies with gender relations; b) gender relations influence and are influenced by the political, economic, social and cultural practices where tourism is developed; and c) gender relations in tourism are related to issues of power, control and equality.

The international literature on tourism and gender reveals three large areas of study (Gibson, 2001) that were also identified in research produced in the Ibero-American region:

1. Research on gendered tourists, where gender differences are analyzed in tourism consumption and travel behavior, even though those differences are not always explained.
2. Research on gendered hosts, where gender differences are analyzed in tourism development and production. Topics include employment opportunities in the tourism sector for women and men; occupational segregation and employment discrimination; effects of tourism on gender roles and sex tourism. Studies often focus more on the role of women as employees rather than as employers in the tourism sector (Peeterson and Ateljevic, 2009).
3. Research on the gendered construction of tourism, where the gendered or sexualized objects and images employed in tourism marketing are analyzed from critical perspectives.

Research produced in English-speaking countries includes reviews of the literature on tourism, gender dimensions and women's participation in both leisure studies (Henderson 1996; Henderson and Hickerson, 2007; Henderson and Gibson, 2013) and tourism studies (Swain, 1995; Gibson, 2001). In contrast, there is a gap on the analysis of theories and methods that guide the research on tourism, gender and women in the Ibero-American region. This article contributes to fill the literature review gap and provides a first diagnosis of the state of the art of research on tourism, gender and women, with the aim to facilitate theoretical, conceptual and methodological debates that advance this line of research in the region of study. The integrative review was chosen as a strategy to analyze the literature and discover general relations between concepts, theories and methods in the studies (Cooper, 1982).

There is no consensus on the measurement of relevance for refereed journals in tourism (Zhao and Ritchie, 2007). Even though there is a degree of subjectivity in the selection of journals for this integrative review, we considered the recommendations of Zhao and Ritchie (2007) with regards to: a) the journals' impact factor; b) international recognition (in

this case, «regional» recognition); c) trajectory of publication in the region of study; and d) the possibility to include a wide range of perspectives on tourism studies. We selected 17 refereed journals in tourism from the Ibero-American region: 3 from Spanish-speaking countries in Latin America, 5 from Brazil, 7 from Spain and 2 from Portugal. The study sample included the publications that showed results from one or more of the search terms and that allowed for the full access of articles. Relevant articles were identified in 11 out of the 17 indexed journals published in Spanish (9) and Portuguese (2). The study period included the initial year of publication for each journal to the year when the review was conducted (2014). Relevant articles were found from 1998 to 2014.

Since the purpose of this integrative review was to broaden our knowledge on gender relations and women's experiences in tourism, we followed the proposal by Henderson and Gibson (2013) and examined the content of the articles employing the keywords: *woman, women, girl(s), gender, empowerment, feminism*; or related words like *family, families, gender perspective, feminist theory* that appeared in the title, summary or among the authors' keywords. The review did not include articles that focused on administrative issues, human resources or marketing, unless they incorporated a definition on gender or gender perspective frameworks. The review also excluded conference proceedings and book chapters. It focused solely on articles from indexed journals since they are easier to access from the electronic resources available (indexes like Google Scholar, Scopus or the journals' Web sites). We established that at least one of the authors of the articles had to be ascribed to an Ibero-American institution.

A total of 31 articles from 11 indexed journals matched the established criteria and we proceeded to their review, synthesis and analysis. We employed quantitative description methods to examine the characteristics of the studies and authors, as well as qualitative techniques of content analysis and comparison of the selected articles. We identified, analyzed and categorized all the studies from the sample according to the research characteristics. We then reviewed our preliminary notes and conducted a discussion of the patterns that emerged on the research topics, the specificity of gender concepts in the research questions and the main theories and methods employed in the studies. The content analysis allowed us to compare and contrast the purpose and the results of the articles.

According to the search criteria, one relevant article was published in 1998 and none appeared from 1999 to 2002. Relevant results showed again in 2003 at a rate of one article per year in the 11 indexed journals from 2003 to 2008. There is a growing tendency from 2009 with a maximum of 7 articles published in 2010 and 2011. The majority of the articles are in Spanish (28), followed by Portuguese (2) and English (1), since the sample concentrates a greater number of journals from Spain and Spanish-speaking Latin American countries.

With regards to authorship, from a total of 52 authors, 81% are women (41) and 19% are men (10). The latter usually appear as co-authors and not as unique authors, except for one case. This tendency is consistent with the literature reviews that have been conducted in the English-speaking world regarding gender dimensions and women in leisure (Henderson and Gibson, 2013) and in tourism (Swain, 2005), where the majority of the published articles have female authorship.

The authors from the sample work in 24 universities or research centers from 7 countries in the Ibero-American region (Argentina, Brazil, Mexico, Peru, Venezuela, Spain and Portugal). With regards to the academic department of adscription, a little over one third of the sample of researchers belongs to tourism faculties, schools or centers (32.7%); and one fourth corresponds to economic-administrative areas or departments (25%). The rest of the sample is distributed among the following areas: engineering, architecture or design (9.6%); interdisciplinary departments on sustainable development (9.6%), contemporary, human sciences and communications (7.8%); social sciences, sociology or anthropology (5.8%); areas specialized on gender studies (5.8%) and human geography departments (3.9%). This shows the diversity of perspectives from which to study the relations between tourism phenomena and the category of gender.

The results regarding methods and instruments of analysis are as follows: 42% of the studies in the sample employed qualitative methods and instruments of analysis (semi-structured or in-depth interviews, participant and nonparticipant observation); 23% used quantitative methods (database analysis, statistical analysis, surveys or ad-hoc questionnaires); another 23% employed mixed methods (combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews, blocs of open and closed questions); 6% used historical analysis and another 6%, conceptual analysis.

The prevalence of qualitative methods responds to the need of examining the ways in which women experience «their» participation in tourism: as tourists, employees, managers or as business owners or partners in private or community tourism ventures. Qualitative methods seem most appropriate in order to make women's work visible and to voice women's subjective experiences (see Díaz Carrión, 2010 and 2014). Most of the studies that employed economic or administrative approaches opted for quantitative methods. These latter have a great potential to reveal patterns and situate women's participation in tourism processes (e.g. inequalities in formal education, scientific research and employment). Researchers that applied mixed methods justified their choice due to the complementarity of quantitative and qualitative data and signaled the importance of constructing interpretative models that allow to contrast theory with empirical data.

The majority of the studies in the sample are empirical and only 12% respond to historical, theoretical or conceptual analysis. Among the latter, there were zero literature reviews. The lack of theoretical or conceptual articles would make sense in a context of maturity in the research on tourism and gender (i.e. in the literature produced in English-speaking countries); however, in the Ibero-American context this gap represents an area of opportunity.

The present review showed a growing interest in the region to study the gender inequalities that should have been overcome in the twenty-first century. These inequalities persist due to the strength of the socio-cultural constructions that assign the private spaces and non-remunerated reproductive work to women, while it is expected that men actively participate in public spaces and remunerated productive work (see Sparrer, 2003). In countries like Spain, where gender equality in education has been reached and women are over represented in tourism higher education programs (Iñiguez, Plumed and Latorre, 2013), research concludes that there is a long road to reach effective equality between women and men in the labor market (see Sarasa, 1998; Sigüenza, 2011; Sigüenza, Brotons

and Huete, 2013). In particular, women still face serious difficulties to move up the ladder in the public and private sectors, as well as in research and innovation. Sigüenza (2011: 108) points out that «The adoption of family responsibilities on the part of women is the main cause that keeps them away from executive positions» (authors' translation from original in Spanish).

In Latin American countries, besides the analysis of women's participation in the tourism labor market (Moreno and Lunar, 2006) and the differentiated impacts of tourism development on women and men (Díaz Carrión, 2010); we detected a growing interest in examining the strategies that women develop in order to conciliate their work in tourism (in both formal and informal sectors), with their family responsibilities (see Díaz Carrión, 2014; Tomio y Ullrich, 2011; Fernández y Martínez, 2010; Fuller, 2010). These studies have the purpose of making women's everyday experiences visible and in doing so, they contribute to the construction of categories of analysis that are renovating the research on tourism, gender and women (e.g. representations, lived experience, everyday life, family-work conciliation, among others). Finally, a concept that is being incorporated from the feminist theories and gender and development studies in the sample of articles in that of empowerment. Generally, the inclusion of empowerment aids in examining the question on whether tourism contributes (or not) to bettering the living conditions of women who participate in its production or consumption.

The integrative review conducted allows us to conclude that the research on tourism, gender and women in the Ibero-American region is in an initial phase of academic production. Nonetheless, this body of research has the potential to identify gender inequalities and differentiated impacts from tourism development, as well as making women's contributions, experiences and interests visible and show women as active agents in tourism consumption and production. An area of opportunity for this line of research would be to broaden the theoretical, conceptual and methodological debates that contribute to the incorporation of gender perspectives in tourism studies. There is also a need to establish interinstitutional collaborations to contrast gender constructions in different sociocultural contexts and to identify strategies that contribute to the objectives of equal opportunities and women's empowerment in tourism.

