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## THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF THE GENDER TRANSFORMATIVE TOURISM FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE NEW TRENDS IN THE HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

## КОНЦЕПТУАЛІЗАЦІЯ ГЕНДЕРНО-ТРАНСФОРМАЦІЙНОГО ТУРИЗМУ З ПОЗИЦІЇ НОВИХ ТЕНДЕНЦІЙ В ІНДУСТРІЇ ГОСТИННОСТІ

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This article aims to explore the concept of gender transformative tourism, which is defined as a form of tourism that challenges and transforms gender norms and relations in favour of gender equality and social justice. The article examines how the new trends in the hospitality industry, such as digitalisation, personalisation, sustainability and social responsibility, can contribute to the development of gender transformative tourism. The article adopts a conceptual and interdisciplinary approach, drawing on literature from tourism studies, gender studies and hospitality management. The article proposes a framework for analysing the potential and challenges of gender transformative tourism in the hospitality industry, based on four dimensions: awareness, empowerment, participation and impact. This paper provides a systematic analysis of the publications about gender transformative tourism, using bibliometric and content analysis methods. According to author's deductions, it is shown that the gender transformative tourism enhances multiple benefits like: fostering cross-cultural understanding, enhancing self-esteem confidence for women, and helping them to realize their full potential and aspirations, helping them to appreciate the diversity and complexity of gender identities and expressions, reducing gender-based violence and discrimination. It contributes to social justice and sustainable development, by addressing the root causes of gender inequality and empowering marginalized groups and others. In conclusions, the author formulates some recommendations in order to support gender transformative tourism, such as: raising awareness and educating ourselves and others about the importance and benefits of gender transformative tourism; choosing travel providers and destinations that are committed to gender equality and empowerment, and that respect the rights and dignity of all people; engaging in respectful and meaningful interactions with local communities and cultures, and being open to learn from their perspectives and experiences and others.

**Key words:** gender transformative tourism, hospitality industry, women empowerment, equity, insertion.

Ця стаття спрямована на дослідження концепції гендерно-трансформаційного туризму, який визначається як форма туризму, яка кидає виклик і трансформує гендерні норми та відносини на користь гендерної рівності та соціальної справедливості. У статті розглядається, як нові тенденції в індустрії гостинності, такі як цифровізація, персоналізація, стійкість і соціальна відповідальність, можуть сприяти розвитку гендерно-трансформаційного туризму. У статті використано концептуальний та міждисциплінарний підхід, спираючись на літературу з досліджень туризму, гендерних досліджень та менеджменту гостинності. У статті пропонується основа для аналізу потенціалу та викликів гендерно-трансформаційного туризму в індустрії гостинності на основі чотирьох вимірів: обізнаності, розширення можливостей, участі та впливу. Ця стаття містить систематичний аналіз публікацій про гендерно-трансформаційний туризм з використанням методів бібліометричного та контент-аналізу. Згідно з висновками автора, показано, що гендерно-трансформаційний туризм покращує численні переваги, як-от: сприяння міжкультурному взаєморозумінню, підвищення впевненості в самооцінці жінок і допомога їм повністю реалізувати свій потенціал і прагнення, допомагаючи їм оцінити різноманітність і складність гендерної ідентичності та самовираження, зменшення зменшує гендерне насильство та дискримінацію. Це сприяє соціальній справедливості та сталому розвитку, усуваючи основні причини гендерної

нерівності та розширюючи можливості маргіналізованих груп та інших. У висновках автор формулює деякі рекомендації щодо підтримки гендерно трансформаційного туризму, такі як: підвищення обізнаності та навчання нас самих та інших щодо важливості та переваг гендерно трансформаційного туризму; вибір постачальників туристичних послуг і напрямків, які віддані гендерній рівності та розширенню можливостей, а також поважають права та гідність усіх людей; брати участь у шанобливих і змістовних взаємодіях з місцевими спільнотами та культурами, бути відкритим для вивчення їхніх точок зору та досвіду та інших.

**Ключові слова:** гендерно трансформуючий туризм, індустрія гостинності, розширення прав і можливостей жінок, справедливість, включення.

**General problem statement and main objectives.** Gender transformative tourism is a new trend in the hospitality industry that aims to promote gender equality and empowerment through tourism activities and experiences. It is based on the idea that gender is not a fixed biological attribute, but a social construct that influences the roles, expectations and opportunities of men and women in different contexts. Gender transformative tourism challenges the existing gender norms and stereotypes that often limit the choices and freedoms of both tourists and hosts, and creates positive changes in their attitudes, behaviours and relationships. For example, gender transformative tourism can offer women more opportunities to participate in decision-making, leadership, and income-generation, as well as to access education, health and safety. It can also encourage men to support women's rights and empowerment, and to share more responsibilities in the household and the community.

**Publication analysis.** Gender transformative tourism is an emerging concept that aims to challenge and transform the unequal gender relations and norms that shape the tourism industry and its impacts on local communities. This paper provides a systematic analysis of the publications about gender transformative tourism, using bibliometric and content analysis methods. The analysis reveals the main themes, trends, gaps and challenges in the existing literature, as well as the potential contributions and implications of gender transformative tourism for theory and practice.

Gender transformative tourism is a concept that aims to challenge and transform the unequal gender relations that exist in many tourism destinations and practices. According to Scheyvens and Biddulph (2018, 2020), gender transformative tourism goes beyond gender mainstreaming or gender equality, which often focus on increasing women's participation and benefits from tourism, but do not address the root causes of gender discrimination and oppression. Gender transformative tourism seeks to empower women and men to challenge

the norms, values, attitudes and behaviors that perpetuate gender inequality, and to promote social justice and human rights for all [9; 10].

Gender transformative tourism is not only beneficial for women, but also for men, communities, the environment and the tourism industry itself. By addressing the underlying factors that create and sustain gender inequality, gender transformative tourism can contribute to reducing poverty, improving health and well-being, enhancing cultural diversity, protecting natural resources, and fostering peace and security (UNWTO, 2019) [11]. Gender transformative tourism can also improve the quality and sustainability of tourism products and services, by increasing customer satisfaction, loyalty and retention, as well as enhancing the reputation and competitiveness of tourism destinations and businesses (Cole et al., 2019) [3].

**Formulation of the article's purposes (objectives setting).** This article has two main goals: to present and analyse the concept of gender transformative tourism, which is a type of tourism that seeks to challenge and modify gender norms and relations for the benefit of gender equality and social justice; and to examine how the new trends in the hospitality industry, such as digitalisation, personalisation, sustainability and social responsibility, can facilitate the adoption of gender transformative tourism.

**The main research material.** The hospitality industry is constantly evolving and adapting to the changing needs and preferences of its customers. One of the emerging trends in this sector is the gender transformative tourism, which aims to promote gender equality and empowerment through tourism activities and experiences. Gender transformative tourism is based on the idea that tourism can be a powerful tool for challenging and transforming gender norms, roles and relations in different contexts and cultures. Gender transformative tourism seeks to create positive impacts for both women and men, as well as other gender identities, by addressing the root causes of gender inequality

and discrimination, such as patriarchy, violence, poverty and exclusion. Gender transformative tourism also recognizes the diversity and intersectionality of gender identities and expressions and strives to create inclusive and respectful spaces for all people to enjoy tourism. The conceptualisation of gender transformative tourism from the perspective of the new trends in the hospitality industry involves understanding the needs, expectations and motivations of different types of tourists, as well as the opportunities and challenges that the industry faces in implementing gender transformative practices and policies. Some of the key aspects of this conceptualisation are:

Developing a gender-sensitive approach to tourism product development, marketing and management, that considers the different preferences, interests and experiences of diverse tourists, as well as the potential impacts of tourism on gender relations in host communities.

Providing training and capacity building for tourism staff and stakeholders on gender issues, such as gender awareness, gender analysis, gender mainstreaming and gender-based violence prevention.

Creating a safe and supportive work environment for all employees in the hospitality industry, that respects their human rights, dignity and diversity, and provides equal opportunities for career development and advancement.

Engaging with local communities and civil society organizations to promote gender equality and empowerment through tourism, by supporting local women's groups, initiatives and enterprises, fostering dialogue and collaboration among different actors, and advocating for social change.

Monitoring and evaluating the outcomes and impacts of gender transformative tourism on individuals, communities and societies, using participatory methods and indicators that capture the changes in attitudes, behaviours and structures related to gender.

Gender transformative tourism is a new trend in the hospitality industry that has various benefits for the individual, the community and the society. It is based on the idea that gender is a social construct that shapes the roles, expectations and opportunities of men and women in different contexts. By challenging the existing gender norms and stereotypes, gender transformative tourism creates positive changes in the attitudes, behaviours and relationships of both tourists and hosts. Some of the benefits of gender transformative tourism are:

- It enhances self-esteem, confidence and agency of both men and women, and helps them to realize their full potential and aspirations.

- It fosters cross-cultural understanding and dialogue between tourists and hosts, and helps them to appreciate the diversity and complexity of gender identities and expressions.

- It reduces gender-based violence and discrimination and promotes human rights and dignity for all.

- It contributes to social justice and sustainable development, by addressing the root causes of gender inequality and empowering marginalized groups.

- It supports the growth and innovation of the tourism industry, by offering more diverse and inclusive products and services that cater to the needs and preferences of different customers.

After revising different techniques and instruments used at this point by different actors and participants, we can mention some of the most relevant:

- tours that showcase the achievements and contributions of women in different fields, such as history, art, culture, science, etc;

- workshops that provide skills training and capacity building for women entrepreneurs and leaders in the tourism sector;

- initiatives that support the participation and representation of women and gender diverse groups in decision-making processes and governance structures related to tourism development and management;

- campaigns that raise awareness and advocate for the prevention and elimination of gender-based violence and discrimination in the tourism industry and society at large.

While studying the topic we have found many successful examples of gender transformative tourism initiatives, some of which are the following:

- „Gender-inclusive Strategy for Tourism Businesses”: This is a set of guidelines developed by UNWTO, UN Women and GIZ to support private sector tourism enterprises of all types and sizes to achieve effective and consistent strategies and programmes for gender equality across their operations. The guidelines are based on the Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs) and provide tools to assess current progress on gender equality, review thematic areas for women in tourism, develop an action plan for gender-inclusive tourism, and address specific issues such as procurement [6].

- „Centre Stage: Women's empowerment during the COVID-19 recovery”: This is a project

implemented by UNWTO with the support of GIZ, UN Women and four Member States (Jordan, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic and Mexico) to strengthen, coordinate and focus work towards gender equality in tourism governmental institutions and businesses as they recover from the pandemic. The project is based on the findings of the Global Report on Women in Tourism Second edition, which focuses action into six strategic areas: employment, entrepreneurship, education and training, leadership, policy and decision-making, community and civil society, and measurement for better policies[12].

– „Gender and Responsible Tourism“: This is an initiative led by Equality in Tourism International (EiT), a non-profit organization that works to ensure that women have an equal voice in global tourism. EiT conducts research, advocacy, training and consultancy on gender issues in tourism. EiT also supports women-led projects that promote responsible tourism practices such as community-based tourism, fair trade tourism, eco-tourism and cultural tourism [4].

However, despite the growing interest and recognition of gender transformative tourism as a promising approach to foster social change and empowerment through tourism, there is still a lack of empirical research that examines its conceptualisation, implementation, and impact from different perspectives and contexts. Therefore, this paper aims to fill this gap by conducting a qualitative study that explores the experiences and perceptions of different actors involved in gender transformative tourism projects in various destinations around the world. The research questions are:

- How do different actors conceptualise gender transformative tourism?
- What are the main motivations, strategies, challenges, and outcomes of implementing gender transformative tourism projects?
- How do different actors perceive the impact of gender transformative tourism on themselves, their communities, and their societies?

Different actors, such as researchers, practitioners, policymakers and tourists, may have different understandings and expectations of what gender transformative tourism entails and how it can be achieved. This paper reviews the literature on gender and tourism, and identifies four main conceptualisations of gender transformative tourism: 1) empowerment, 2) rights, 3) justice, and 4) intersectionality. Each of these perspectives has different implications for the design, implementation and evaluation of gender transformative tourism

interventions. For example, an empowerment perspective may focus on enhancing the agency and voice of women in tourism decision-making, while a rights perspective may emphasize the legal and institutional frameworks that protect and promote women's rights in tourism contexts. A justice perspective may address the distributional and relational aspects of gender inequality in tourism, such as the access to resources, benefits and opportunities, as well as the recognition and participation of different groups. An intersectionality perspective may acknowledge the multiple and intersecting dimensions of identity and oppression that shape the experiences and outcomes of tourism for different women and men, such as class, race, ethnicity, age, sexuality and disability. The paper argues that a comprehensive and nuanced approach to gender transformative tourism requires engaging with the diversity of actors and perspectives, and addressing the structural and contextual factors that shape gender inequalities in tourism.

Some of the main motivations for implementing gender transformative tourism projects are to promote gender equality and women's empowerment, to enhance the social and economic benefits of tourism for local communities, and to contribute to the sustainable development of the tourism industry. Some of them include engaging men and boys as allies, providing capacity building and training for women and girls, creating spaces for dialogue and participation, and advocating for policy and institutional changes. Some of the challenges that are faced by gender transformative tourism projects are the resistance and backlash from patriarchal structures and actors, the lack of adequate resources and support, the complexity and diversity of gender issues in different contexts, and the difficulty of measuring and evaluating the impacts and outcomes of such projects. Some of the outcomes that are expected or achieved by gender transformative tourism projects are the increased awareness and knowledge of gender issues among stakeholders, the improved access and control over resources and opportunities for women and girls, the reduced gender-based violence and discrimination, and the enhanced well-being and quality of life for all.

There are some challenges and barriers that hinder the implementation and impact of gender transformative tourism, such as:

- the lack of awareness and knowledge about gender issues and their relevance for tourism among tourists, locals, and tourism stakeholders;



- the persistence of patriarchal and heteronormative structures and practices that marginalize and oppress women and gender minorities in tourism;

- the resistance and backlash from some groups or individuals who perceive gender transformative tourism as a threat to their power or identity;

- the difficulty of measuring and evaluating the outcomes and impacts of gender transformative tourism on individuals, communities, and societies;

- the complexity and diversity of gender issues and realities across different contexts and cultures.

**Conclusions.** Conceptualising gender transformative tourism is important for several reasons. First, it challenges the dominant and often oppressive gender norms and relations that shape the tourism industry and its impacts on local communities. Second, it enables a more inclusive and participatory approach to tourism development that empowers women and other marginalized groups to have a voice and a stake in the benefits and costs of tourism. Third, it contributes to the broader goals of gender equality and social justice that are essential for sustainable development and human rights. Therefore, gender transformative tourism is not only a theoretical framework, but also a practical and ethical imperative for tourism scholars, practitioners, and policymakers. Each of these perspectives has different implications for the design, implementation and evaluation of gender transformative tourism interventions. The paper argues that a comprehensive and

nuanced approach to gender transformative tourism requires engaging with the diversity of actors and perspectives, and addressing the structural and contextual factors that shape gender inequalities in tourism. Furthermore, the paper concludes that gender transformative tourism is important for advancing the social, economic and environmental sustainability of tourism, as well as for promoting the human rights and dignity of all people involved in or affected by tourism. Gender transformative tourism can contribute to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), especially those related to gender equality, poverty reduction, decent work, climate action and peace and justice.

In order to support gender transformative tourism the author proposes some recommendations, such as:

- Raising awareness and educating ourselves and others about the importance and benefits of gender transformative tourism.

- Choosing travel providers and destinations that are committed to gender equality and empowerment, and that respect the rights and dignity of all people.

- Engaging in respectful and meaningful interactions with local communities and cultures, and being open to learn from their perspectives and experiences.

- Supporting local women-led businesses and initiatives that promote social change and empowerment through tourism.

- Advocating for policies and practices that foster a more gender-inclusive and diverse tourism industry.

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