

## Gendered Tourism

Shariqa Hussain\*  
Vani Narula\*\*

### **Abstract**

*The paper has explored the role of women and transgender in the tourism sector and also the motivation to join the sector through the lenses of gender by interviewing people (includes women, men and transgender). It was found that there is gendered tourism when it comes to join it as there are hardly any motivations provided to women and transgender whereas men*

*have more opportunities as compare to other gender despite of the fact that gender is socially created phenomenon and Covid-19 has increased inequality. Besides, there are some societal hurdles/stigma prevalent in the society for example- is it safe to work with transgender? Whereas in the case of women it was considered first whether the environment is safe where women are going to work or how are the people there in the working area of women? These are some of the reasons that limited the role of other gender people.*

*Special attention is given towards the tourism sector in Jammu & Kashmir region as there are barriers for men as well who are working in the tourism sector due to various reasons and least involvement of women was found which is different from northeast.*

*It can be concluded that awareness regarding the sector and for the gender becomes very crucial as tourism sector has potential of much growth -for the region itself and for the people engaged with the sector and it can be helpful in providing livelihood opportunities Inclusion of women and transgender will enhance the solidarity in the society ,make them empowered and also lead us one step closer to some of the sustainable development Goals like Goal5(Gender equality)and to economic growth with a quality social fabric of the society.*

**Keywords:** Women, Gender, Tourism, Sustainable Development Goals.

### **Background and Theoretical framework**

UNWTO depicted the tourism as a social, cultural and financial phenomenon which includes the movements and things to do by people

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\* Researcher, Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia University

\*\* Professor, Department of Social Work, Jamia Millia Islamia University, Email: say.shariqa10@gmail.com

travelling to countries and staying in locations that are not their normal place of residence environment for not longer than twelve months for fun, private or /work purposes and can have other different motives and motivations. These people are called visitors or sometimes either travellers or excursionists, residents or non-residents. Tourism is not same as travel and the term travel does not denote the term tourism despite of this fact these words are being used interchangeably. In order for tourism to happen, there should be a displacement: an individual has to travel, by using any type of means of transportation that includes even if someone might travel on foot which t is often the case of poorer societies and take place even in more developed societies, and concerns pilgrims, hikers etc.

According to Lamas (2000), the contemporary conceptualisation of gender, ‘alludes to the set of beliefs, practices, representations and social prescriptions that emerge amongst the team of people established on a symbolisation of the physical difference between men and women’. In that capacity, gender is socially developed and its specific expressions, along with masculinity and femininity, rely on the culture in which they grow, develop and social group they participated in. To recognise gender constructs, the specific cultural context in which they are developed ought to be understood. Gender can be modified like all social constructs however some gender transformations may be perceived as transgressing social practices considered as normal. People who epitomize sex dissidence usually face different difficulties in their daily lives, for instance, the people who are beyond conventional norms of gender such as transgender.

Many research studies have investigated how these difficulties are manifested in family, educational, work and healthcare contexts by people of different gender (Chang & Chung, 2015; Dispenza, Watson, Chung & Brack, 2012; Rodríguez Madera et al., 2015; Socías et al., 2014).

Tourism in one such sectors where involvement and live experiences of women specifically transgender are not much explored. Manifestations of Gender are frequent and intensely encounter with social gazes, so gender is more likely to have an influence on social interactions associated with the sector of tourism. Nonetheless, transgender people travel motivations and tourism experiences have been simply ignored. According to Muñoz, Bullón and Hanson (2009), this significance is based not solely on necessary work opportunities, business and entrepreneurship but also on its impact on well- being and life experiences of women. Furthermore, the United Nations (UN), defines gender equality as the fifth sustainable development goal as a central

issue for growth and development through its sustainable development goals (SDGs). Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2020) said that tourism is one of essential sectors for women and for transgender as well.

However women and men are provided with same laws that means that they must have equal rights both in social and business life so is right for tourism industry or tourism business, it is found that discrimination based on gender is often made in business life. It has been confirmed that gender biases in work life is found in all of the developed and developing countries has resulted from many complex and varied reasons together with economic, social and cultural reasons. Research studies done by Tribe (2006), Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2015), Pritchard and Morgan (2017), Mooney (2020) Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2020;

Moreno Alarcón and Cole, 2019; Costa et al., 2017 in tourism sector shows an increasing interest to the application of gender perspective .That's not confined to it but consisted of studies in marketing, human resources, entrepreneurship, development, planning and many more other areas.

At the same time, it is found and determined that this area of research study has a wide potential margin for development and improvement (Chambers et al., 2017 and Korstanje, 2018).

In addition to above noted findings of different research articles and studies WTO for the UN highlighted that the use of gender in tourism and both concepts together is an area that requires a deeper knowledge of the relationship between the participation of a extensive range of social actors, like scholars, entrepreneurs, employees, tourists, public administration and Non-Governmental Organizations, etc. (Pritchard, 2018). Although no or hardly any direct studies has been found on the topic of tourism and transgender but Guaracino ( 2011) found that with this broadening of the market, various niches have emerged within the tourism sector including gay tourism.

In tourism the social construction of gender has outcomes at three levels that is individual level, interactional and institutional (Segovia-Pérez and Figueroa-Domecq, 2018).

Risman (1998) described that these three levels are related to each-other, and can't be understood without understanding the other levels. At the individual level, the personal thought of the self as belonging to one gender or any other is considered. It is the manner by use of that people are arranged and created as women or men, it shape us in a way what we called as personality, as feminine or masculine self, in light of how we expect a number of behaviours, values, beliefs practices and preferences, qualities, and make selection on that behalf. As per Risman, 1998, At the

interactional level, men and women have to behave as expected from them by others depending on their gender, even when they occupy same structural positions. This is the thing that was portrayed by Eagly et al as “gender role expectations”. At last, the institutional level tell us about how the social, cultural and organizational constructions divide establishments and society in accordance to it by replicating gender differences like division of power, hierarchies and labour. The different one of a kind aspects of the institutional level are recognised with the maintenance of power and resources majorly by men. A very thin line is there between each level and how these three are associated to each other that should not be ignored.

As per professionals of ILO ,“we cannot immediately conclude that women are in the majority in tourism”, because the complete data of women working in the industry may actually be under-represented and much of the labour in the sector is under casual working relationships.

Research Director at the WTTC defined that, “ The records reflecting the share of women in the Travel & Tourism workforce is quite different from country to country. So, it is feasible to say that women hold almost half of all employments in T&T but it is tough to go much further than that on a worldwide scale without other research studies to support it but there is one thing that we do know is that female employment is majorly present in the low paying service jobs and clerical job sectors and much more efforts needs to be done to increase the number of women into senior administration positions”.

Women, who account for 54% of the tourism workforce, youth, and migrant workers with constrained or no access to social protection, are amongst the ones who are among those who are especially vulnerable to the impact of COVID-19 on tourism. They're also more vulnerable to part-time or casual work prospects. According to evidences COVID-19 is expected to have a disproportionately negative impact on women's economic and productive lives. Globally women save less than males because they earn less and have less secure jobs. capacity of women to absorb economic shocks is consequently more limited than that of men because most single-parent homes have limited access to social protections and obligations.

Low-wage workforce part of the tourism sector is mostly make up of women. Compounding these challenges is the high incidence of informal work arrangements in the tourism sector are due in part to its seasonality with weak regulations, enforcement, and labour organization.

According to Albayrak, the tourism industry is one of the most major industries where gender discrimination is found in business life. Despite the fact that the number of women employed in the industry, which

consists enterprises which provides a large range of different types of services, is roughly twice more than the number of men work there, women working in the industry are subjected to different practices and discrimination due to their gender. Until now, almost every study conducted by academics and international organizations have proven that women are facing discrimination in terms of their jobs, earning amounts, working conditions, promotion and internal social relations because of their gender. Giving women particular rights and responsibilities by taking into account their gender rather than their skills, educational levels, background, and experience constitutes the most apparent indication of discrimination. Providing best service to their customers is considered as the main basic aim of tourism sector in order to satisfy them and enhance their income and profitability along with this it is crucial for the future of the businesses to evaluate the employees in terms of their qualities rather than their gender within the industry.

### **Rationale**

Millions of people rely on tourism for livelihoods, and billions more are there to appreciate and embrace, enjoy their own and other cultures, as well as the natural world. In some cases. It can account for more than 20% share in a country's GDP and it is world's third largest export sector overall. The Covid19 epidemic has had a significant influence on tourism, affecting economies, livelihoods, public services, and opportunities on all continents. While it is critical to protect the livelihoods of those who rely on tourism on priority basis, it is also a chance for transformation, with a focus on leveraging its impact on places visited and building more resilient societies and businesses through innovative practices, digitalization, sustainability, and partnerships with different stakeholders.

So, the use of gender viewpoint in the understanding of tourism has shown notable differences between men, women and transgender for an extensive set of issues (e.g. employment, entrepreneurship and demand). Usually, as a result of societal stereotypes roles and the social construction of gender this variation changed into a disadvantage for the latter and more vulnerability. Consequently, tourism research helps with the identification, understanding and information dissemination needed so as to reduce gender inequality.

### **Objectives**

- To study the role of women and transgender in the tourism sector.
- To find the motivation to join the tourism sector by women and transgender.

### **Research questions**

- What is the role of women and transgender in the tourism sector?
- What are the motivations available to women and transgender to join the tourism sector?

### **Methodology**

20 people including men, women and transgender were selected as a subject by convenience sampling for the purpose of the study. Interviews were taken to understand the role and motivation by the people of different gender to fulfil the objectives of the study. Out of 20 people 4 were transgender, 4 people taken from Jammu and Kashmir and 4 people were from the North-eastern states of India. In total 8 men, 8 women and 4 transgender were included. For data collection, researcher has used the telephonic medium and email and descriptively analyzed it.

### **Key findings and discussion**

It was found that there is gendered tourism when it comes to joining of tourism sector as there are hardly any motivations provided to women and transgender whereas men have more opportunities as compare to other gender despite of the fact that gender is socially created phenomenon and Covid-19 has increased inequality further as different responsibilities of women were increased in domestic work while men were relatively burdened with less responsibilities at home that made them available less time for work and tourism is like any other sector that require time to work although there was flexibility in work timings as one can work in season or in different spheres of it like cooking for tourist , work by being a guide by telling them cultural or main geographical aspects of the region.

However, there have been rising issues gap between earning by men and women which now include the transgender and poor representation of different gender people at professional level and burden of work without pay in the tourism industry by women and least by transgender denotes that for equitable distribution of social and economic benefits, structural measures ought to be taken in all spheres of tourism work. Temporary nature of work and irregular timing of work was also one of the factors for limiting the role of women as family wanted for women to have permanent jobs that can secure their future with fixed timings of work preferably morning time.

One significant point need to be taken care of was found that almost all the respondents be it men or transgender had consensus on the opinion that women should not work as guide as it can be dangerous for them rather they should be involved in tasks like cooking or making craft for selling to tourists directly or to shopkeepers to sell these items to tourists.

Another striking contradiction was found in North Indian regions and North-eastern states that as women are given complete responsibilities of work like household chores, cooking, rearing children etc. whereas men are free from these responsibilities and it was comparatively more or less balanced in the North-eastern states.

Special attention is given towards the tourism sector in Jammu & Kashmir region as there are barriers for men as well who are working in the tourism sector due to various reasons like political reasons, geographical barriers, seasonality and cultural norms prevalent there and least involvement of women was found with no transgender involvement as per the recorded response from respondents which is different from the scenario present in the north-eastern states where involvement of women was found more than the men but hardly any transgender people involved there. Besides, there are some societal hurdles/stigma prevalent in the society for example- is it safe to work with transgender? Whereas in the case of women it was considered first whether the environment is safe where women are going to work or how are the people there in the working area of women? These are some of the reasons that limited the role of other gender people. No transgender involvement was found with no motivation for them but barriers that were more of prejudices and societal hurdles rather than of practical which could be sought. So, this plied that awareness about the transgender.

Especially ones who achieved success by overcoming shortcomings of their lives as transgender should be made available to the people of society to let them know about them and let them aware about transgender also motivated them to join the tourism sector like any other people of any gender. This showed that women had good opportunities in terms of motivations as compared to transgender but not as equal as men have which limited their role in the sector.

It can be concluded that awareness regarding the sector and for the gender becomes very crucial as tourism sector has potential of much growth -for the region itself and for the people engaged with the sector and it can be helpful in providing livelihood opportunities. Inclusion of women and transgender will enhance the solidarity in the society, make them empowered and also lead us one step closer to some of the sustainable development Goals like Goal5 (Gender equality) and to economic growth with a quality social fabric of the society. Besides, the findings of this study is limited as it included only few participants so generalization is not possible but it is certainly helpful in having idea of contemporary time that emphasis on the an urgent need to do more study on the role of transgender people in the tourism sector.

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