



Tourism's lost leaders: Analysing gender and performance



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ABSTRACT

Higher education is increasingly engaged with diversity initiatives, especially those focused on women in academic leadership, whilst there is an evolving literature across the humanities and the social, management and natural sciences, critiquing academia's gendered hierarchies. In contrast, senior academics in the field of tourism management have largely eluded similar sustained analysis. This paper builds on recent gender-aware studies of tourism's leading academics with three aims. Firstly, to widen evidence of gendering in tourism's academic leadership by scrutinizing and contextualizing performance indicators, which make and mark its leaders and shape its knowledge canon. Secondly, since critique alone cannot lead to transformation, the paper seeks to 'undo' gender in tourism's academy. Thirdly the paper presents interventions to accelerate academic gender equity.

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Introduction

The diversity and inclusion agenda is increasingly concerning global higher education and recent studies highlight a significant gender and race leadership gap (see [AAUW, 2015](#)). Whilst academia is popularly considered a realm of thought-leadership, it has been slow to address diversity and equality and an evolving literature demonstrates the multifaceted ways in which it "is profoundly gendered" ([Savigny, 2014, p. 794](#)). Disciplines and fields across the humanities and the social and management sciences ([Marcus, 2015](#); [Ozbilgin, 2010](#); [Wylie, 2007](#)) and the natural sciences ([Rees, 2011](#); [Van Arensbergen, Van der Weijden, & Van den Besselaar, 2013](#)) are progressively identifying and challenging their own gender inequalities. These studies have provoked much debate, particularly in male-dominated science, engineering and technology (SET) subjects ([Conley & Stadmark, 2012](#)). Academic fields are not monolithic or hierarchical and in tourism, enquiry is "enacted in multiple versions... across and within different knowledge communities" ([Ren, Pritchard, & Morgan, 2010, p. 886](#)). These communities overlap; some are open and others closed "invisible colleges" ([Tribe, 2010, p. 19](#)), whether they are well-established, such as the International Academy for the Study of Tourism (IAST) or emergent, such as Women Academics in Tourism (WAI^T). Knowledge is continuously (re)constructed, (re)negotiated and (de)stabilised within and across these communities and their senior academics are extremely influential ([Dredge & Schott, 2013](#)). Yet whilst the "patriarchal power" ([Tribe, 2006, p. 631](#)) of many senior academics has been identified, they long escaped sustained scrutiny. Recently, however, we have seen a significant mapping of women's under-representation in leadership positions ([Munar, 2015](#)) and a study, which revealed tourism's UK professoriate to mirror the heavily male-dominated fields of mathematics and accountancy ([Figueroa-Domecq, Pritchard, Segovia-Pérez, Morgan, & Villacé-Molinero, 2015](#)).

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This paper widens this evidence of tourism's gendered academic leadership and organizing structures, challenges the field's gender-blind meritocratic discourses, and focuses debate on why most of its visible leaders are men ([Tourism Education Futures Initiative \(TEFI\), 2014](#)). The paper inspects editorial board memberships, professorial positions and publication metrics – performance indicators, which typically make and mark academic leaders ([Hunt, Gao, & Xue, 2014](#)) – and evaluates a broad literature to provide a critical reading of how gender has shaped the field's knowledge domain. Its analysis encompasses examination of all 677 editorial board positions in 12 prominent tourism journals and all tourism professors in the United Kingdom (UK), New Zealand and Australia, three leading tourism knowledge-generating countries ([Pritchard & Morgan, 2007](#)). This is followed by a gender-aware evaluation of publication metrics, frequently employed as proxies for research productivity and influence ([Benckendorff & Zehrer, 2013](#)). In doing this our aims are threefold. Firstly, to widen evidence of gender as a constituent of tourism's organisational practices, which shape its knowledge canon ([Martin & Collinson, 2002](#); [Poggio, 2006](#)); secondly, to disrupt and 'undo' gender ([Butler, 2004](#)) in the academy; and finally, as the undoing of gender necessitates an undertaking of something else ([Brink & Benschop, 2012](#)), to outline potential gender equity interventions.

Literature review

Academic leadership is a contested concept with negative managerialist connotations ([Bolden, Hawkins, Gosling, & Taylor, 2011](#)), although distinctions are made between organizational and subject leadership ([Macfarlane, 2012](#)). We focus on the latter, a leadership associated with patronage, mentoring and career opportunities ([Bolden et al., 2012](#)). Such academic leaders are knowledge power-brokers, setting the "parameters in which individuals are encouraged to work if they wish to be at the centre of issues in their discipline" ([Spender, 1981, p. 186](#)), their positions conferring an authority to define; to demarcate; to deprecate or to elevate; to dismiss or to legitimize; to delineate their research field. A developing literature reveals a worldwide under-representation of women in such positions ([Thomson-Reuters THE Global Gender Index, 2013](#)), even after decades of socio-economic change, gender equality legislation and diversity initiatives ([Bawden, 2014](#)). In European business and management and social science schools women constitute 55% of students, 59% of graduates and half of doctoral students and faculty ([European Commission, 2012](#)), figures mirrored in tourism studies ([Munar et al., 2015](#); [TEFI, 2014](#)). Worldwide, women constitute 45% of academics, a figure that rises to 52% in non-SET subjects, yet they constitute just 20% of senior academics ([Morley, 2014](#)) and earn 80% of men's salaries ([West, Jacquet, King, Carroll, & Bergstrom, 2013](#)).

Gender inequities have been mapped in: research grants ([Watson & Hjorth, 2015](#)); sabbaticals ([Else, 2015](#)); teaching evaluations ([MacNeill, Driscoll, & Hunt, 2014](#)); salaries and journal editorships ([Morley, 2014](#)); citation rates ([Knobloch-Westerwick, Glynn, & Huges, 2013](#)); selection processes ([Benschop & Brouns, 2003](#)); tenured and professorial appointments ([Brink & Benschop, 2012](#)). Yet, despite their importance, researchers have found it challenging to penetrate the opaque appointments of the academic gatekeepers making many of these decisions ([Bedeian, 2008](#)), such as professors and editors-in-chief. Professors are "the most influential people in academia" ([Brink, Brouns, & Waslander, 2006, p. 524](#)), shaping structures and agenda, whilst editors determine journal boards and publication policies, select papers for review, identify reviewers and settle disputes ([Bakanic et al., 1987](#)). In short, editors play a crucial role in determining women's editorial appointments ([Metz et al., 2016](#)) and publication rates in their journals ([McElhinny et al., 2003](#)). Yet a 'maternal wall', 'glass ceiling' and 'sticky floor' matrix halts many women's careers before they attain these gatekeeper positions. For example, men hold 75% of US professorships ([West & Curtis, 2006](#)), whilst 2,800 of the UK's 14,000 professors are women, just 17 of whom are black ([Garner, 2015](#)). Across Europe, women account for 15% of professors ([Ledin, Borrimann, Gannon, & Wallon, 2007](#)), with 7% in engineering; 19% in the social sciences and 27% in the humanities.

A pipeline argument suggests that today's leadership is skewed by historic male dominance and that tomorrow there will be more female leaders once there are enough suitably qualified women in appointments pools. However, studies suggest that this is a very leaky pipeline ([Heijstra, Bjarnason, & Rafnsdóttir, 2015](#); [Van Anders, 2004](#)) and that increased numbers of qualified women alone will not lead to a proportionate rise in female academic leaders ([Monroe & Chiu, 2010](#)). Instead, whilst some of the pipeline leaks are being plugged, "parity is unlikely to emerge without significant changes in employment patterns" since, based on equal appointments to a constant number of posts, it would take 60 years in the US ([West & Curtis, 2006, p. 7](#)) and 119 years in the UK to achieve ([Savigny, 2014](#)). This professorial imbalance reflects "impermeable academic practices" ([Brink & Benschop, 2012, p. 86](#)) that stall women's careers through gendered social closure ([Brink et al., 2006](#)). Although institutions claim to appoint through open processes, in more than three-quarters of professorial appointments a preferred candidate is already known ([Brink & Benschop, 2012](#)) as appointments committees rely on the 'old boy network' ([Bagilhole & Goode, 2001](#)).

The so-called 'John-Jane effect' ([Steinpreis, Anders, & Ritzke, 1999](#)) suggests that men are more likely to be appointed and/or offered higher salaries than women with identical resumés and to receive more senior colleague mentoring ([Moss-Racusina et al., 2012](#)). In output-driven cultures, academic performance and influence hinge on publishing rates, yet a study of 1.8 million articles across the sciences and humanities reveals women's under-representation in the prestigious first and last authorship positions ([West et al., 2013](#)). Women are more likely to shoulder heavier teaching, mentoring and pastoral care ([Ceci, Ginther, Kahn, & Williams, 2014](#)) and domestic responsibilities ([Klocker & Drozewski, 2012](#)). As a result women tend to publish fewer papers than men, who focus on volume ([Symonds, Gemmell, Braisher, Gorringer, & Elgar, 2006](#)). This parenthood 'productivity puzzle' is well-documented, although poorly understood as it only applies to women since fathers publish more than men without children ([Cole & Zuckerman, 1984](#)). What seems evident however, is that family formation

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