

RURAL TOURISM AND GENDER

The case of Urbión model forest

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ABSTRAC

In recent decades, different studies, projects and public actions have promoted gender approach in tourism ventures in rural areas as a way to visualize, measure and empower women.

Present the binomial Women and Tourism is not without setbacks, more if possible in rural areas, which is what concerns us. Regional differences that such issue involves, the different public-private partnerships, professionalization of the sector or the degree of organization of women themselves would lead to mixed results in different territories. However, identifying success factors in each case and subsequent transfer of results, techniques and methodologies, would support a model of endogenous, sustainable, impactful and transformative tourism development.

Keywords: *Gendre Polices- Sustainable Tourism- Empowerment- Training and Network- Partnerships.*

In recent decades there has been a series of projects worldwide that are trying to promote rural enterprises in tourism with a gender perspective, integrating within its objectives the empowerment of women.

In general there are two positions on the labor market analysis that revolves around tourism and women: those who observe a reproduction of forms of gender subordination and those who think that serialization of positive chain reaction effects can alter the gender patterns (Cánoves, 2000). In our opinion, and that is just what leads us to consider this approach to reality, all these initiatives provide a glimpse into the agency capacity of women.

No doubt that the regional differences on a global scale of this subject involves and their impacts depends according to the territories of both the senders and receivers, and the degree of organization of women in relation to this activity.

Gender Studies in Rural Tourism are recent and not very abundant in our country, and are raised from different theoretical frameworks, so their results and uneven territorial coverage does not place us in the best scenario to conclude from exemplary situations which offer the best plans of action.

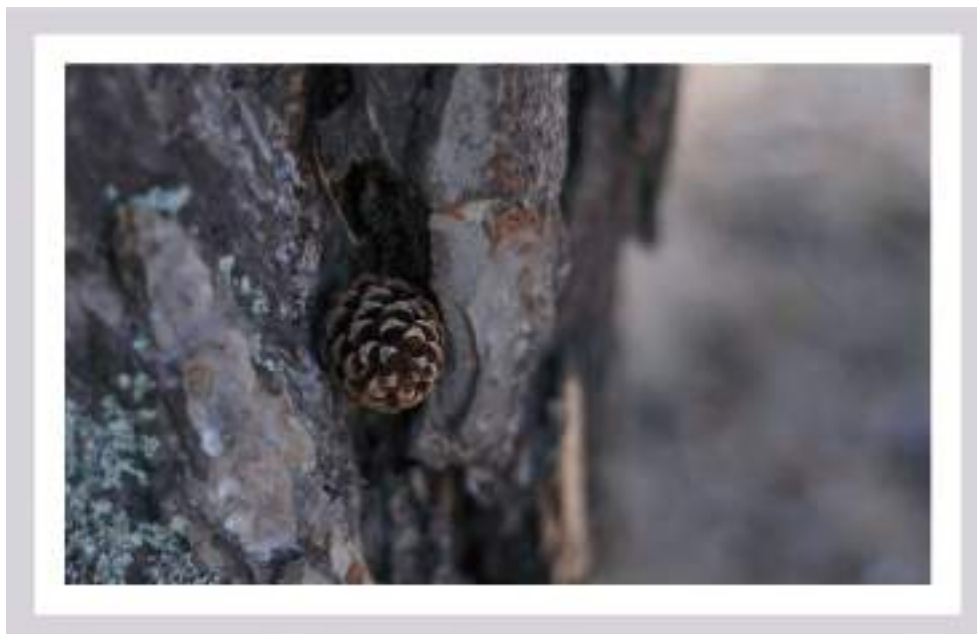
When suggesting the binomial Women and Tourism, we are required an effort of synthesis, given the transversal nature of gender and the different attention that tourism is addressed in rural areas, on the one hand still seen as an emerging sector, and on the other, warning signs of its excess of capacity.

Yet what is at issue is to measure the contribution of women in socio-economic development of the area in question and encourage them to take all of the measures that would achieve gender equity, for only then can we continue to talk about powerful and transformative endogenous development.

The rapidly changing processes should not ignore feasible factors to transfer results in success stories.

OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

With the present work, the assessment of the role of women in tourism development in a particular area of Castilla and Leon community is done that focuses on domestic tourism as one of the strategic pillars of its economic development.



The choice of model mount Urbión was mainly due to that it is the only territorial management model which has earned inclusion in a network with international recognition, the Model Forest, and in the process being declared a Biosphere Reserve.

Theoretical framework

This issue requires an integrated effort of synthesis that allows us to be situated in a time when the sustainability of many destinations in our rural areas pass through the strengthening of

accommodation facilities that are able to meet the new rules of globalization, a process neither innovation nor women should stay out of. They are:

- **Rural tourism:** as an engine of development that implies a brief analysis of the state of affairs regarding origin, current state and prospects of this type of tourism in Spain through literature review.
- **Women in rural areas:** in this sense it is to show their journey from being overlooked to be regarded as essential for the future of these territories.
- **Binomial tourism and gender:** and their application in rural areas.

Research work

The analytical and descriptive nature of this section presents a transversal qualitative investigation. It is not enough to quantify the number of women in the economic activity, but we want to advance as far as the actual capacity of this niche of employment with respect to women's aspirations.

For this reason a semi-structured interview will be used, which allows us to approach reality in a more flexible way. After a preliminary survey, we proceeded to conduct 12 telephone interviews after the summer of 2012 with the owners of establishments.

To ensure greater reliability and validity of the data, there was a carefully planned greater heterogeneity in the sampling from three variables: gender, class and geographical location of establishments. The reliability and validity of the data has considered the heterogeneity in the random sampling.

The result of all this leads us to consider the opportunity that would move forward on an issue that raises efforts in its diagnosis, communication and action. Political agendas often easily leave these issues in the context of crisis, such as is happening in the

present, so the other players should join the achievements that have been made so far and not decapitalize successful initiatives.

Tourism in rural areas

The first initiatives of rural tourism in Spain appear in farmhouses in the seventies. The interest of administrations and data to regulate such activity was directly related to the farms.

However, it is from the late 80s and throughout the 90s when the administrative intervention in this sector is observed, arguing its great potential and opportunity for the transformation of the productive structures of rural areas, which began to become obsolete. The model that was promoted rests on a series of pillars that are still in place:

- *Heritage motives*: 68% of the properties of Cultural Interest are located in rural areas and 29% in municipalities with fewer than 1,000 inhabitants. They would promote the best examples of folk architecture
- *Economic motives*: Regional Tourism (RT) provides nearly 20,000 direct jobs, representing 0.10% of the total of those employed in Spain (EPA 2008). Investments in the sector containing a traction mechanism above other sectors.
- *Social motives*: identity, rootedness.
- *Tourism motives*: saturation of certain destinations and new demands in line with changing times, such as the environment and culture.

It is thus observed that tourism as a driver of infrastructure, conservation and restoration of heritage has a tractor effect on other productive, primary and service sectors. In addition, in Spain this process has been followed by opinions promoted by EU institutions to boost tourism to supplement farm incomes and economic diversification. Overcoming the agrarian vision for rural areas,

the implementation of Structural Funds through LEADER and the Spanish PRODER programs have been effective instruments for its methodologies and its effective demonstration. Alongside the public-private participation, all of these initiatives propose the implementation of local development strategies whose main goal is the promotion of quality of life and diversification in rural areas through support to the promoters of such actions.

The response from entrepreneurs and investors in this area has been positive, which have also received support from other regional and local governments.

However, according to sources, in most cases the alternative is not observed at a major agricultural activity, but rather economic strategies that have resulted in the creation of new businesses in rural areas, whether by residents or not. This logic of “spontaneity” and responds to the clear lack of an implementation strategy of a true model of territorial development of this type of tourism- an uncoordinated administrative or legal framework in which the activity takes place.

There is not a national consensus on policy and rural tourism. In fact, it has been the Autonomous Communities that have been responsible for the regulation of the sector, thereby obeying the constitutional mandate.

In general, each autonomous community has regulated according to their own rural reality: population criteria, dominant economic activities, and on occasion also grouping scenic concepts, put forward to narrow a term to define this emerging economy. In any case, regulation have been focused on the regulation of the different classifications of lodgings and categories.

One result that could better illustrate this scenario is that there are currently 46 different types of accommodations in our rural areas with an annual growth rate of over 30% in the last decade (INE, 2010), an average annual occupancy rate bordering 20% and a pronounced seasonality- facts which do not mention sustainability.

In short, the legislator has paid more attention to the regulation and promotion of the range of accommodations; political discourse on tourism as a solution to development problems still demanding an increase in demand which is increasingly international, but does not specify means and methods.

The evolution of the industry together with substantial alignment of all these decrees to Directive 2006/123 / EC – the beginning of normative hierarchy - is leading many communities to a legislative review on this issue.

The current parameters for the reasons blur the motives of Tourism in Rural Areas and there is still pending the homogenization of the only feasible deal through greater coordination of regional policy. From here, other factors that come together for the positioning of the sector are:

- Creation of a common strategic framework for intervention on RT in Spain that starts from a global, integrated and participatory concept of tourist destinations.
- Creating structures that enhance receptiveness to adequately improve actions and commercialization to a market that is increasingly globalized, demanding and eager for experiences.

Innovation to betting on rural spaces is important, and tourism can remain one of the pillars to lean on. This would require, among others, greater professionalization of the sector and the creation of spaces for public-private cooperation from those who make decisions at all levels, and an increase in the value chain of the tourism sector in areas with a vocation for development. Scant attention has been given to the offer to the structuring and strengthening of the industry, which would be able to allow proper marketing of authentic tourism products or the capabilities of their promoters. Until recently, there was also little attention to the importance that these promoters were women.

Women in rural areas

Rural women in our country are a group that covers about 5 million people. Their situation and expectations for job performance are conditioned by internal variables-age, training, family responsibilities and for external variables in the area, economic dynamics in the area, endowments and service, and the overcoming of roles.

You cannot understand the current situation of women if we do not consider the functional paradigm of rural areas (Garcia Sanz, 2004). Indeed, the crisis of the economic model of the 60s brought the reduction of farming in rural areas and the flight of its workforce-populations attracted by the industrial development of cities.

By providing some data, we can say that of the 8,801 Spanish municipalities, 7,032 can be considered rural, 60% of them have fewer than 1,000 inhabitants, and they have only 4% of the Spanish population.

This exodus from the countryside to the city has been more acute in women, which has involved quite a vicious circle that has been difficult to subvert.

Indeed, the modernization of agricultural activities and professionalization of farming relegates women to second place without regulation of their rights. In a context of limited economic diversification and regressive utilities, their options were to perpetuate their reproductive function and mere “family support” or succumb to the edge of modernity that the city seemed to offer. This is how many young women leave rural areas, which will soon be aged and male-dominated and what is worse, without generational change.

The decrease in the effective population in our State, as in the rest of the European Union (EU), despite the logical regional differences in terms of volume and impacts has led to the inclusion of a gender perspective in Rural Development policy and

the corresponding Regional Rural Development Programs and Community Initiatives.

The response of women to these operational programs has also been widely supported by women. In the different operational programs of LEADER, it has gone from 30% to 46.5%. 80% of these projects which have been framed in the Small and Medium Enterprise measures and services and the Valuing of Heritage and Tourism. As for job creation, we can say that 43% of jobs are female and represent 52% of jobs created (compared to a previous 36%).

New sources of employment arising from the multi functionality sought by the authorities see women as a strategic objective of fixing population in rural areas, with an activity rate still far from that held by women in urban areas (22% versus 43%).

According to statistics, rural women entrepreneurs are mature, they lead family-run small family type businesses and have a lower level of training than that of employed women. Qualitative research suggests that responsibilities and family loyalties are always present in their access to entrepreneurship and in the daily management of their business¹.

No doubt women of rural areas have faced in the last 30 years a situation of change, continuous transformations at all levels, but the facts show that they have adapted and successfully managed the paradigm shift: economy, education, culture and social participation, among others. Not surprisingly, the trend of rural-urban and population flows have seemed to have stopped.

There are many obstacles and challenges in rural areas, but according to the latest data, at least population flows to the city seem to have stopped.

However, the positive impact that women may have had on this whole scenario of structural changes cannot be estimated

¹ Sampedro, Rosario in *Revista Internacional de Sociología*, Vol. LXV, n° 48, pp. 121-146.

as it should due to the lack of data or indicators of territorialized gender to measure the real contribution that women have led combining their reproductive and productive role in our rural areas. Overcoming or not of gender roles would also be part of the debate.

We hope that the periodic reports that forces the recent and specific Rural Development Act for the Spanish State Law 45/2007 for Sustainable Rural Development, on the situation of women in rural life, will have adequate screening and recommendations applied.

“Women entrepreneurs are a pivotal change, this means they bring passion and innovation and creativity” (Jeannie Javelosa). Women, therefore, are change agents and protagonists of their environment.

The Binomial woman and tourism in rural areas: road to empowerment?

Tourism has become in recent decades a way for access of the female labor market and for the empowerment of women in disadvantaged areas.

According to the OIT (*Organización Internacional de Trabajo*), 49% of jobs in the sector are held by women. The percentage of women entrepreneurs is almost double in the tourism sector than the average economic sectors, and their presence in decision-making levels in this area evolves positively in a global way, which does not happen in other economic areas or decision levels. Other scholars seem to confirm how the tourist potential of a region can decide the permanence of women in rural areas.

However, after a period of optimism this relationship is beginning to being questioned by officials of UN Women, who warn that in 2010, most of the jobs that women performed in the sector were of low quality and one of the greatest shortcomings is 60% are represented in informal work.

From the EU emerged various community initiatives that have tried to solve problems of rural development and the problems of women that have influenced the improvement of the situation of both. The principle of equality has been introduced into the plans and community aid, and move from being mere alternatives to forced precepts. The legislator sees women in rural areas as a strategic way of fixing population in rural areas.

In Spain, according to the INE, the employment generated in rural tourism is predominantly female (68%) and employed (63%). The income that is generated is not a guarantee of the independence of the workers, their training, or it is unclear or not related specifically to the sector (wages or salaries M., 2005).

Along with the use of statistics, studies more not excessive, qualitative type, at different points of the Spanish rural geography has dislodged a number of conclusions:

- Women offer competitive advantages in the development of this economic subsector: they are the main workforce, ranging from joint ownership to the informal contribution, thus minimizing production costs.
- The type of businesses undertaken by women are smaller and generate less employment. In some ways ownership can be confused with management under social economy formulas that are adopted.
- They detect imbalances in the distribution of benefits, influenced by gender.
- Overcoming obstacles to increased income and social and cultural exchanges

Women are strong, capable and creative, but they are not leading the sector. They need to be aware of their skills and this is key to their formation, facilitating access to resources and benefits.

VARIABLE ANALYSIS AND RESULTS ON GENDER IN TOURISM URBIÓN MODEL FOREST

Context and geographical demarcation of the area under study

The growing crisis in rural areas in Spain was particularly important in Castilla y Leon. 99% of the rural municipalities of Castilla y Leon have fewer than 20,000 inhabitants and are grouped as 49% of the total population. Most of the nuclei in the region has less than 2,000 inhabitants. But more important is that those municipalities have increased less than 500. 84% of municipalities have a density below 20 inhabitants / km². Therefore it holds one of the highest rates of rurality at the community level.

Facing the dynamism of urban areas, the Castilian-Leon rural areas are currently in a situation of limited territorial significance before a complicated future by the continued loss of economic and demographic vitality of most of its municipalities.

Demographic factors described undoubtedly create a vicious circle of economic activity in rural areas, so any intervention aimed at alleviating this situation must take into account the spatial and human component, and not only from a merely economic point of view.

From the spatial point of view, encouraging conversion strategies has led many mountain areas of the region to adapted to new uses for its high environmental and landscape values. Maintenance and / or recovery of these units have been profitable through promotion, not planning, of tourism through the allocation of funds for it.

Moreover, any policy to develop and involving socio-spatial transformation must serve the population as one of its fundamental objectives. In this community not only their small numbers stand out, but also a demographic structure characterized by aging and masculinization. Which brings us to consider the

aforementioned strategic role previously mentioned for women in such “restructuring”. Besides the generational change which itself is guaranteed by their presence, a number of intangibles that make possible and make visible the new social landscape are provided.

The rural tourism in Castile y Leon: regulation and contribution of the role of women

The promotion of rural tourism in this community is carried out by both public bodies and private entities. It is the first Spanish community in the segment of rural tourism.

In absolute terms, Castilla y Leon lead the supply of rural tourism at the national level with 18% of the total. In relative terms, Navarre mentions, are 14% of overnight stays.

During this study there is currently an ongoing revision of Decree 298/93 of the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, on the management of rural tourism, which was subsequently amended by Decree 84/1995.

That rule provides for rural tourism as a form of tourist accommodation service , and defines it as those buildings located in rural areas whose special construction features, location and authenticity, providing tourist accommodation through their price.

So this law distinguishes between the Country Cottage, either as a rental or Shared Hosting, Inn and Rural Tourism Centre and forwards the very conditions of this type of tourism to its regulations. The capacity management and service delivery increases as they are exposed.

In Law 10/1997 of tourism in Castilla y Leon and the transposition of community measures, changes may be made to adopt the new regulation. One can already anticipate the disappearance of Rural Tourism Centre, which will be renamed Hotel Rural. We

are not aware that other criteria such as environment, economy or gender are included.

The territorial-culture attraction of Castilla y Leon, culture, art, climate- and response by businesses have favored the vantage point of this community, but there are many issues to improve.

According to official data the Castilla y Leon community in 2005, the total tourism companies whose ownership was individual, 52.33% was owned by women. And if we obey the results of other studies² we have as the current dynamics of many rural areas depending on its tourism potential and proactivity of women for the implementation of business activities. The debate is served.

Justification: BMU development model



The Model Forest concept, coined in Canada, was born in order to promote the comprehensive and sustainable management of forest resources, their growth and conservation through the

² Rico, Margarita. La Contribución de la mujer rural en la economía de Castilla y León, en *Rev. Economía Agraria y Recursos Naturales*, Vol. 9, 2 (2009). pp. 51-57

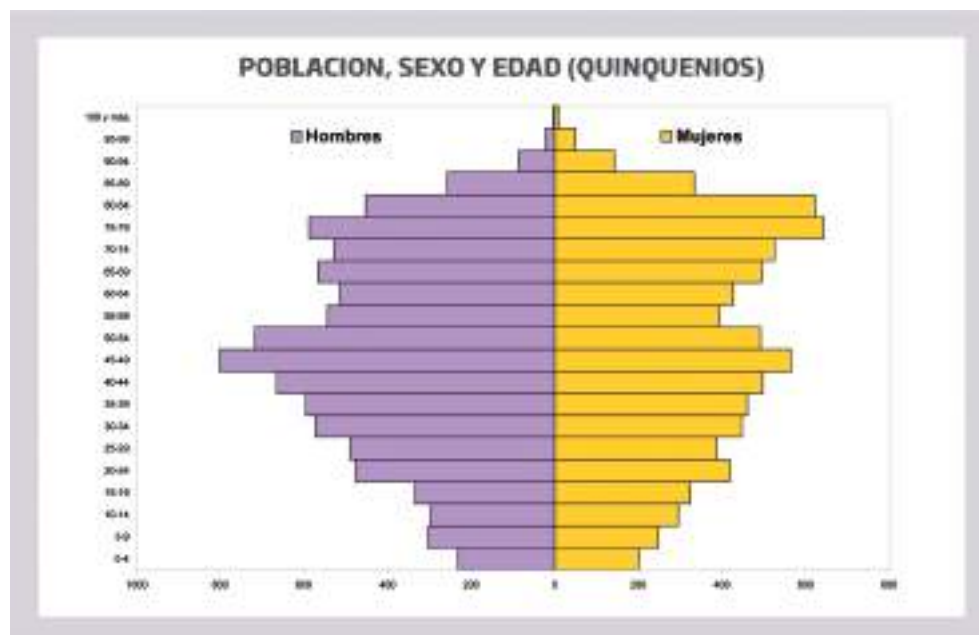
practice of participation and consensus. Since the Rio Conference, it was decided to form the International Network of Model Forests, in which the landscape concept is introduced and the global projection is sought starting from the local.

The territorial area under study is the continuous forest mass -the most extensive of the peninsula- covering more than 100,000 hectares of continuous surface that share 35 municipalities. 15 correspond to the province of Burgos and Soria with 20.

Demography

The volume of people in the area, according to data from the INE (Census 2001 Revision), is 17,033 inhabitants, representing 1.8% of the population of Castilla y León (7.2% Burgos, Soria 1.8%).

The observation of the chart cannot be more illustrative of the fragile demographic situation in rural areas, marked by a high rate of *masculinization and aging of the population*. To the problems that may arise are added to the future of rural areas is the lack of generational change. Hopefully the changes in trends announced in above lines can slow the loss of human resources in rural areas, based above all on sustainability.



Economic Structure

The *pinariega* economy has been based primarily on ranching and logging, followed by stone. According to the INE 2009, the number of companies in this sector would fall to 6% in Castilla y Leon, of which 25% would be recorded in this region. Although not quantitatively important in number, if it becomes apparent that the majority are those that give employment in the region.

However, a weak marketing and transformational structure in this sector in the current crisis has caused a decline in the number of companies in the area by 20% and decreased the number of employees by 15%. Its rate of decline would be around 25%.

In terms of number of companies, the service sector would be the dominant, so it also assists the previously announced outsourcing of rural economies, consisting of very small businesses and low level of employment.

If we add the two variables, number of firms and trading volume, the main economic activities of the region would be: the timber industry, construction, furniture, ground transportation, hotel and retail.

It is just the latter two which we wish to emphasize for being based on the support of tourism, and also because in order that concerns us here are the two subsectors with greater female participation in the area, proactively or not, and even more because the other subsectors, such as wood or construction, are given little to the recruitment of women and even less with the uncertain future that has been described.

The new commitment to the Rural Tourism BMU: contribution of mountain women. Result of research

The *pinariega* economy is in a process of inflexion, but the heritage of the peculiar “communal” management of natural resources is just what has allowed to keep a landscape which is considered

viable to tourism development in the area. Nature, landscape and physical environment, history, historical and artistic heritage, culture, and traditions speaks for itself.³



The supply of tourist accommodations is diversified and has not seemed appropriate to include both hotel and non-specific supply and rural tourism.

The quantitative analysis of this section is made possible from the data provided by the Urbión Tourism Association and the exploitation of those data offered by the Ministry of Tourism of the Junta de Castilla y Leon.

³The first in-pout tourism in this área is without doubt the fact of the convergence of distinct Natural Spaces: The Natural Park of the *Cañon del Río Lobos*, Natural Park of *Las Lagunas Glaciares de Nelia*, *Sierra de Urbión* and *Sierra de la Demanda* reserves, The Natural Reserves of *Sabinares del Arlanza* and *La Fuentona*, The Nature Reserve of *El Sabinar de Calatañazor* and many other protected áreas: Natural Spaces of *Sabinares del Arlanza* and *La Fuentona*, ZEPA *Sierra de la Demanda* and *Sierra de Urbión* and LIC *Sierra de la Demanda*, *Sierra de Urbión* and *Cebollera*, *Riberas del Río Duero tributaries*, where there is a great number of native species in the ecosystems that are present.



Quantitative analysis of total inbound tourism

At this point we must note that in the subsequent sampling, there were only individuals identified as the legal persons since the legal representative does not indicate the gender of their promoters, which undoubtedly would enrich the results of this work.

A second point to consider is who is truly behind the management and / or operation of such land, and this is where lies part of the controversy in relation to tourism and gender: Although women may be landowners it is merely a patrimonial maneuver by the spouse or partner, or may be male exploitation of the female.

Receptive Offer		Ownership						
type of hotels	Units	Subtotals Type	% Total	% Relat.	Legal status	Wo-man	Man	
Apartment	6			3.75				

Hotel / Pensioning	42			26.25				
Camping	5	55	34.37%	3.12				
Hostel	2			1.25		26	17	12
Rural typology Offer					% Rural type			
House/ integrated	75			46.9	71.4%			
Shared House	9	105	65.6%	5.62	8.2%	17	44	39
Rural Tourism Center	15			7.4	15%			
	6			3.75	5.5%			
TOTAL OFFER	160					43	61	51

The first reading that emerges from these data is that in spite of having a very diversified range of tourist accommodation, the range of accommodation types of rural tourism is almost twice that of hotels, which confirms the high growth of this tourism mode which has been mentioned and that can indicate a weakness in the efforts in the control of the offers on part of the administrative authorities.

Within this same form the predominant position of the cottages is also observed, with nearly a third of the total, mostly in the form of integrated regime. Given that we could talk or rather the investment strategy could also be annotated or be the least business management modality or degree of professionalism required for investment.

In any case, since the effects that concern us here is entirely illustrative regarding the preeminence of women in terms of ownership, both for hotel accommodation and rural tourism, even more so in the latter case, there is also greater numbers of those who hold shared ownership.

More women also observed in almost all types of rural accommodations. However, attention was drawn to two cases in which men were leading: Integral Rural cottages in rent, where the presence of the hosts is almost nonexistent, thus not being

able to assess one of the defendants in this criteria type of tourism, and in the opposite case, the posadas, accommodation with the highest degree of demand of professionalism and management, in addition to quality.

Even with the greater female presence in the ownership of these accommodation units, they do not allow us to see the same leadership in managing the size of business.

Supply **table** of the offer legislated under the designation RT

Gender in ownership of Accommodation		Cottage Rental	Cottage Shared	Rural Tourism Center	Posadas	Distribution By gender
Individual Ownership	WOMEN	29	6	7	2	44
	MEN	31	2	2	4	39
Collective ownership: 17						

	Capacity: <= 6 places	Capacity:> sleeps 6
WOMEN	14	30
MEN	9	30
	25	60

We see that from the quantitative data and gender issues targeted in previous sections, such as warning about the size of businesses or greater degree of professionalism.

Qualitative analysis of the data

Along with the share in ownership of these businesses we will mention the following items, from which we approach the topic of the identification of patterns that maintain or modify the gender gap in rural tourism initiatives:

- Social Profile: gender, age, marital status, education or employment history.
- Finding differences in business management of these businesses by gender: seniority in the business, access to resources, promotion, economy, job creation, position in the market, training requirements, and ultimately quality.
- Overcoming or not of gender roles and stereotypes.

a) Socio-demographic data

Most of the responding owners were both men and women are in the age group of 45-54 years old, although there have been registered women in advanced age no younger than 45, a fact that does occur in the case of men. They are natives of the region under study and we found only one case of a “neo rural” man to be exact.

Marital relationship prevails: it is always the case for women. We've only seen one single and another divorced man. Generally these entrepreneurs tend to have an average of two children, although we find it significant that for the same age group, especially among those 40-45 years of age, women already have adult children while not so in the case of men. Although the number of interviews is not wide enough to draw generalization about the area, it seems that women launch tourism enterprises once they have met their family responsibilities.

As for training, primary education dominates especially among women, followed closely by media studies, where again men outnumber women. We only found higher education in one man.

		Age			Marital status			Minor children		Prove-nance		Level of Educa-tion		
		35/45	45/55	55/65	S	C	D	Si	No	Rural	Neo	Básico	FP/ BUP	Dp/Lc
G e n d e r	M(7)	-	5	2		8		3	5	7		5	2	
	H(5)	2	3	-	1	2	1	4		4	1	1	3	1
Total		2	8	2	1	10	1	6	5	11	1	6	5	1

b) Business Data

It first place it can be observed that in years of operation, women and men are equal, but it seems that there are fewer men who decide to appear in the accommodations created in the last decade- A fact which, moreover, seems to confirm the highest number of women as registered holders.

In terms of financial resources, most of these entrepreneurs have also stated that, in addition to their own resources , they had loans from financial institutions and grants from the LEADER groups that are in the area, ASOPIVA (Pinares-Urbión) and AGALSA (Sierra Demand). However, it seems that women have had to borrow more and / or apply for public aid for the start of activities that only serves to make visible the increasing participation of women in paid work and actively respond to new sources of employment in the context of diversification of the rural world, mainly related to rural tourism.⁴

The main reason for making the decision to start the tourist activity is self-employment in the rural areas where there resides both men and women, where there coincides the motivations

⁴ Un estudio del MARM sobre la participación de las mujeres en la aplicación de los fondos LEADER y PRODER pone de manifiesto cómo el Turismo Rural (medida B3) suponen el 66% de las inversiones y un 40% en cuanto al número de proyectos presentados. El Turismo Rural es así el sector protagonista en el emprendimiento de las mujeres rurales.

for the undertaking, in some cases reinforced by having family businesses related with hospitality (hotels, bars, taverns) or the trade sector. Few cases of family businesses related to the primary sector, which also shows the loss of character pull in the current rural economies.

Revenues are not sufficient to maintain this activity only in the family. Especially in the case of houses, either Full or Shared Hosting Rental revenues provide a supplement to household income. They could only be considered as the main source of family income in cases where that strategy is to go beyond accommodation and provide catering and to a lesser extent, offer complementary tourist activities. Only in the case of higher quality accommodation, especially in *Posadas*, and some cases of CTR, both spouses no matter the ownership live from the tourism sector.

In the rest, revenues are complementary to activities related to the sector independently done by the spouse and outside the tourism service sector activities; we found this only with the case of a woman who runs a small farm.

Such activities generate very little paid employment, although in the cases of rural tourism centers and inns there is usually frequent hiring of one or two employees, also typically women. Also noteworthy is the increased importance representing unpaid work for smaller businesses, whether run by a man or woman. This is contrasted with what has been said in the theoretical section of the utmost importance that represents the unpaid work in family businesses run by women and less so with other sources of employment. What is found is that the work of women is key within the rural tourism sector.

As a general rule, the cottages, whether they are Rural cottages, complete rental, are managed by the owner with family support (spouses, parents or natural or political descendants) and only in the case of CTR and *Posadas*, especially the latter, have fixed or discontinuous staff, at most 3 women from the town being the personal contact through recruitment.

In the generation of employment, it is not important the gender difference, especially those with a more recent nature that deal with CTR and Posadas. Moreover, whether they are led by men and women, they are supported by the spouse, and are paid positions without realizing a clear separation of tasks based on traditional roles. The most repeated phrase is “two do everything”, and is the character of the person, rather than gender, which ultimately determines this distribution. We found only one case in which the man does not cook, “*because he does not know how*”.



As for tourism competitiveness strategies, perhaps for the context of crisis, a general message about price is perceived but few they are willing to lower their margins. Again we find that only in cases where there is greater professionalization, CTR and Posadas, policies are carried out for customer loyalty.

In all of the cases competitiveness goes through the customer, both men and women we speak of work on “the detail of the deal,” the care and cleaning of the business, and how not to be on the internet. The environment or location has also been reviewed as another element, but not too much.

A significant part of these entrepreneurs do not have vocational training courses related to tourism or have had previous experience with such businesses. Almost all of the respondents recognize the value of training, with specific cases where they have not participated in any training activity, and arguing that it is not necessary to receive specific training courses on rural tourism because they believe that this activity is an extension of work at home. These cases have occurred in married woman over 55 years old and unmarried men between 50 and 55, perhaps cases where the level of professionalism was not expected for the future viability of tourism in rural areas.

The main training activities for both men and women owners of lodgings have been related to new technologies, customer service and marketing. Specifically they are formed in Business Management, despite reaching this activity without great theoretical knowledge, although they had experience in the catering sector.



Two cases have not drawn attention: the case of a woman over 55 who did participate in training at the start of her activities more than 10 years ago, and who played a highly motivating

role for her entrepreneurial choice, and that of a man, between 40 and 45 years, whose experience and not theoretical knowledge pushed him to training sessions in the area. Although in general a greater willingness has been detected from women regarding lifelong learning.

It is also concluded that men and women exercise more or less formal relations with other social and economic stakeholders involved in tourism development in this rural region, which can affect an improvement in the management of accommodation and rural tourism in general.

The viability of the tourism industry, nobody doubts, is that you must go through quality criteria even more so in times of crisis. The subsector of rural tourism is no exception to any of these two premises. It is a productive activity capable of generating significant revenues which requires a degree of entrepreneurial training. It has to be a professionalized sector characterized by its quality and not lose the essence that it originated from -the survival of lifestyles and traditional rural environment.

The concept of quality has been more controversial and we have found more women who were willing to become certified in quality issues. While most men do not see this line of arguments to ensure the industry's future, it should be noted that the only case of registered certification is for an accommodation run by a man. Also it has come to our attention the phrase of a woman who claims that "quality doesn't pay."

On the promotion of cultural and natural heritage, all agree on its importance although strategies in this point are much sharper in some cases than in others, again, regardless of gender.

Finally, on protective measures on the environment, gender differences were also found. The main measures revolve around saving energy: biomass, pelex, wood, and solar panels. Just in the case of a woman entrepreneur have we have noted action on saving water.



Male and female entrepreneurs declare that the main problems that tourism in rural areas face are associated with an increased supply of establishments faster than the increase of tourists, the lack of promotion of certain areas of the region, financial difficulties, seasonality, inadequate municipal infrastructure and lack of activities that complement the offer of accommodation.

To conclude this section of quality, we would like to summarize the words of one interviewee who says that quality in rural tourism will continue to be given whenever there is the magic of the country, that there is the key to quality and that today, in his opinion, rural tourism can do without that qualification.

		Type of accommodation				Age (In years)			Investment capacity		Importance of tourism income			Motivation for conducting business		
		CRAC	CRA	CTR	PO	<5	5-10	+10	Own (+40%)	Oblivious	Único	Ppal.	Compl.	(1)	(2)	(3)
g e n d e r	M (7)	1	1	3	1	2	2	3	2	4	1	2	3	4	1	1
	H (5)		2	2	2	1	1	3	4	2	2	3	1	2	3	1
Total		1	3	5	3	3	6	6	6	6	3	5	4	6	4	2



c) Women in Business

Many rural women who have chosen to develop their careers within the municipality in which they live have opted for self-employment in activities that are part time or allow some time flexibility and that do not require travel, so that they can attend to other tasks, whether domestic or in the productive sector. In addition, they have recognized jobs, contrary to what happens in the case of women who work in the household or on the farm, which has given them a high degree of self-esteem and economic independence (Garcia Ramon *et al.* , 1995).

In this sense, when asked about making business decisions, the man / woman consensus is usually the general trend, even though there are more women who decide on their own. They also raise the issue that the problems of conciliation are often presented interchangeably if you work, whether employed or on your own, and even some argue that the latter option is precisely because they can address them more directly through such business or because social networks in rural areas still allow some

relaxation on the daily movement of the children . Which they do not say is that there have been women, albeit few , who would have preferred to have fewer responsibilities, having solved the issue of reconciliation through the transfer of parenting to other women who they have had to hire.



The vast majority believe they can conciliate today, especially older women, who have not had anywhere near the children's services that for the moment exist today. It is also stated that younger women, in their perception , have husbands with whom they can “work together” with the housework. In some cases only, this expression of “collaboration” was rectified. And also they seem to confirm the more sensitized nature of the male gender respondents. To highlight an opinion of men in this subject we look to a female entrepreneur who was asked about this subject who argued “she does say that she has conciliation issues.”

About this heading, it was already mentioned in the lines above that you might not detect conciliation issues because entrepreneurs already have adult children, either because there are women that are not aware that working two jobs is something natural.

Consistent with these answers, respondents think all women and men have identical characteristics to solve business issues related to the sector, both related to its internal policies -relationships with employees and with management- and external policies with customers or suppliers. Again, it is the personal character that makes the trend.

However, other major doubts exist again between men and women, most between the latter, when discussing the relationship between smaller businesses and women-owned businesses, and although based on the premise that they should not exist, if they think it may occur in reality. It is even worth noting the position of a man who recognizes that even though he has taken his business with family support, especially with women, this aid cannot be given in the case of entrepreneurs which according to the respondent may even be subject to opinions against business choice. Finally, and in relation to women's associations, the work of the sector is recognized but there is no existing direct connection with such associations since those that exist only perform some activities related to entrepreneurship.



With all this, we see how the presence of women in tourism ventures in the area under study confirms its contribution to the development of the sector in rural areas, and that the characteristics of this project reproduce the behavior of their agency capacity which is apparently more limited than in the case of men, and therefore, is not being taken advantage of as a potential that could develop if women counted with more positive measures of action, more so in rural areas, where the difficulties of women are supposed to be even greater.

We also want to point out something, which is why in addition to justifying greater attention by rural tourism business by women: they have the greatest predisposition to training and attention to concepts of quality, factors that are targeted as key factors for the future of this type of tourism. The only thing that is lacking is that the information technology industry provides this industry with the “creation of emotions”.

CONCLUSIONS

The approach to this subject can make us see that the relationship between tourism and gender, despite a difficult message to communicate, remains a common thread: they are doomed to be understood despite the difficult balance that intervention strategies for development in territories are held with tourism skills and good attitudes of human resources.

The creation of micro business tourism in rural areas has positive multiplier effects on local economies and impacts on the situation of women. There is not enough empirical adequacies demonstrating the controversy surrounding the empowerment of women through tourism as a formula for gender subordination. If there are, they are not sufficiently communicated.

Therefore, they should be more abundant gender studies and analysis of gender, which results encourage all complementary measures leading to a real gender equity of stakeholders.

Political discourse must adapt to the realities, at any scale, of being capable of meeting the challenges of space and human processes that arise in these new rules of the economic game. Do not treat it as a new trend, since this would lead only to a new social and economic marginalization in the long term, to an unsubstantiated innovation.

The creation and promotion of women tourism professional networks served by the appropriate entity would be a strategic factor that would transfer techniques, methodologies and results and activate, under the gender perspective, the real potential of this sector.

Inserted into globalization, we need to innovate and know the diversity in a broad sense. The professionalization of women, public and private cooperation, and sustainable tourism are points where both responsible women in tourism at the international level, agree are challenges for women for empowerment through tourism.

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