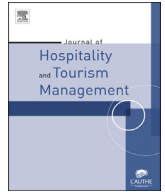




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'Emotional' female managers: How gendered roles influence tourism management discourse

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ABSTRACT

Drawing on recent research conducted in Portugal, male and female tourism managers' perceptions of how gender roles influence managerial discourse are analyzed. The data, gathered through focus groups, is questioned from the ontological position that participants represent gendered economic subjectivities and hence participant accounts illustrate the ways in which gender roles influence tourism management discourse. This paper presents the multiple, context-specific issues arising from thematic analysis of focus group transcripts, using WebQda qualitative analysis software. Focusing on tourism managers' expressions of what comprises desired managerial characteristics, the ways in which gender roles influence the norms surrounding tourism management discourse are analyzed. Results show that managerial characteristics associated with women and femininity, such as emotionality, are progressively being incorporated into managerial ideals, but that gender roles connecting femininity to caring roles continue their influence. The social agitation caused by these complex interactions encourages conceptual progress in tourism management discourse. This paper contributes to a more holistic representation of today's economic reality by presenting an in-depth investigation into how gender roles relate to wider social, economic and political considerations within the context of tourism management in Portugal.

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1. Introduction

Over the past 50 years, there has been an increase in women's employment and education rates globally, fueled by legal changes making gender-based discrimination illegal and a shift in social attitudes towards women working (England, 2010). Despite this influx of women into paid work, disparity among men's and women's wages in the European Union persists (Eurostat, 2015). Recent research on gendered career interruptions and pay in the hospitality industry has found a link between feminized caring roles and the gender wage gap, highlighting how gender roles strongly influence economic discourse (Cebrián & Moreno, 2015). Thus, creating gender analyses is essential for a more holistic representation of today's reality (Ferguson & Alarcón, 2014).

Tourism is a highly gendered industry, with strong horizontal and vertical segregation of occupations and a prevalence of men in

top-level management positions (Baum, 2013; Baum, 2015; Baum, Kralj, Robinson, & Solnet, 2016). More specifically in Portugal, where this study is located, most (57%) tourism workers are female (Eurostat, 2015), but most (60%) tourism managers are male. Worldwide, there are also low numbers of women in managerial positions, especially in executive positions. For example, in 2013, only 14.6% of Fortune 500 companies were headed by women (Soares, Barkiewicz, Mulligan-Ferry, Fendler, & Wai Chun Jun, 2013). In Portugal, only 7.3% of stock indexed companies were led by women in 2014, which is one of the lowest percentages in Europe (Catalyst, 2015).

While women's absence from managerial positions has been justified by relative educational levels, women are now more educated than men (Costa, Carvalho, Caçador, & Breda, 2012; Costa, Breda, Malek, & Durão, 2013). Indeed, the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development states that in European countries, educational barriers have now virtually disappeared (OECD, 2012). Thus, it is useful and important to look to the socio-cultural barriers women may face in being able to adhere to current versions of tourism management discourse. These socio-cultural

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barriers are intricately interwoven with gender roles. Gender roles are behaviours considered as appropriate to a person's gender, according to prevailing social norms. We act and walk and speak and talk in ways that consolidate an impression of being a man or being a woman (Butler, 1993). Increasingly, global gendered ideals connect feminine gender roles with the 'working mother' role (Ferguson & Alarcón, 2014). However, feminine gender roles are also accompanied by persisting expectations that women are responsible for family care and well-being. The stereotyped connection between femininity and caring, as well as the predominance of economic discourse that idealizes masculine worker models, results in complex and discriminatory negotiations within the workplace.

Research shows that female tourism workers' promotion opportunities are influenced by "... the way society views women" (Campos-Soria, Marchante-Mera, & Ropero-García, 2011, p. 91), highlighting a link between gender roles and managerial discourse. Indicative of this is that the influence of gender on tourism labor is especially marked in patriarchal countries, such as Portugal (Carvalho, Costa, Lykke, & Torres, 2014; Costa et al., 2013). Furthermore, research is often conducted in-line with the managerial discourse: "think manager-think male" (Gherardi & Murgia, 2014, p. 691). A recent study on gender-typing in the Spanish hospitality industry shows how masculine characteristics are rated as more important than feminine characteristics for managerial positions (Cuadrado, García-Ael, & Molero, 2015).

In order to survive and advance within gendered work organizations, women have traditionally adopted a number of strategies, including acting as work-centered or unencumbered workers, as is the male worker norm. However, women managers face different barriers to male managers. An example of this is seen in the gendered interpretation of 'ambition' within managerial discourse. Female workers who take up part-time work (often because of familial caring responsibilities) are considered to lack ambition and are penalized by being perceived as unworthy of promotion (Benschop, van den Brink, Doorewaard, & Leenders, 2013; Teasdale, 2013). On the other hand, ambitious female workers have to be careful around how they approach that ambition, as they walk the fine line between "the Skylla of masculine overconfident behavior and the Charybdis of excessively modest, feminine behavior" (Benschop et al., 2013, p. 703). Ambition, as a characteristic of successful managers, exemplifies how gender roles influence women's ability to adhere to current managerial discourse.

Despite the barriers women face in entering management positions, such as being seen as unable to adhere to current managerial discourse, female managers are finding ways of overcoming these barriers by creating their own 'blend' of managerial styles. For example, research by Odgaard and Jorgensen (2003) shows that female managers have an emotional and consensual approach to conflict resolution among employees, by including the staff in their decisions. Female managers are increasingly recognized as displaying a management style which emphasizes relationality by encouraging employees to harness personal aims and interests to collective ends. Furthermore, female management styles favor the concept of power as control not *over* the group, but *with* the group (Gherardi & Poggio, 2009).

Decision-making is another important feature of management discourse and decisiveness is often connected with masculinity. Recent research illustrates little correlation between gender and the propensity to make decisions (Apesteguia, Azmat, & Iriberry, 2011). However, differences in the *type* of decisions that women and men take, has been observed. For example, women are more likely to make decisions that increase social sustainability than men. Analysing how gender influences tourism managers' decision-making styles could provide insight into how tourism

management discourse is being transformed.

Whilst it is recognized that gender roles do play a role in management discourse within tourism, there is scant research on exactly *how* they do this, especially within the tourism literature. One way of investigating why women are misrepresented at managerial levels within tourism is to answer the question: *'How are gender roles currently influencing management discourse in tourism?'* To date, this question within tourism labor literature remains unanswered, and our current paper in this special issues aims to fill this gap in knowledge. Based on this overarching research question, are the supplementary questions of: *'Do female tourism managers challenge the masculine norm within managerial discourse and if so, in what ways do they achieve this?'* In order to answer and explore these questions within the context of the Portuguese tourism industry, a qualitative, focus-group approach was considered the most appropriate.

2. Methods

The study presented in this article is part of a wider research project on gender issues in the tourism sector that was conducted in Portugal over a six-year period, in two phases. The findings presented in this study refer to the second phase,¹ which involved (male and female) top-managers from leading private and public tourism organizations, with the primary aim of analyzing how they perceive gender's role in tourism employment. The research team was composed by a large group of experienced senior and junior researchers from universities/research centres across the country, supported by two governmental organizations for gender equality and financially supported by one of the main national research funding organizations. The data used in this paper was gathered between November 2013 and March 2014, through focus groups that took place in each of the seven Portuguese administrative regions (North, Centre, Lisbon, Alentejo, Algarve, Madeira and Azores), with the objective of collecting information concerning the regional specificities of the tourism industry and tourism employment from the perspective of key stakeholders in each region. Each focus group had an average number of 11 participants, lasted for about three hours, and was conducted in the style of a brainstorming session.

The participants were selected according to their regional representativeness as employers (leading tourism businesses and organizations with high job creation capacity), level of connectivity with other agents (within the regional tourism network) and their role in the definition and implementation of regional and local policies for the tourism sector. Along with consultants from each region, the research team has compiled a list of the main representatives, holding leadership positions, of both public and private sectors, i.e., managers of companies representing all characteristic products and activities defined by the Tourism Satellite Account methodological framework,² and leaders of the most important tourism public bodies (including those of culture and nature regional departments). Hard-copy formal invitations followed an initial contact by telephone. A total of 79 tourism leaders from the private and public sector agreed to participate in the discussions. The focus groups were relatively evenly balanced in terms of male and female participants, with 36 female participants and 43 male participants, which amounted to 46% female participants and 54%

¹ The first phase targeted tourism graduates and students and aimed, primarily, to analyze and identify constraints to women's vertical mobility.

² This study adopted the same classification of tourism industries as those used in the TSA (i.e. accommodation, food and beverage services, transportation, travel agencies, recreation and entertainment services).

male participants overall.

The focus group method was chosen given its emphasis on knowledge as being co-constructed between researcher and researched (Fine, 1994). All the sessions were conducted by a gender-mixed team, composed of two senior researchers (one male and one female) and one female research assistant. All team members tried to adopt a neutral attitude, so the participants would not associate female researchers to “team women” and male researchers to “team men”, reinforcing the idea that both men and women have the legitimacy to express their opinion regarding topics that may be perceived as affecting one of these groups. As only participants' narratives were recorded (not behavior), there appeared to be no differential attitudes when addressing male or female researchers. The discussions were held in Portuguese, recorded in short-hand and then translated into English with the combined efforts of a native English language speaker and a native Portuguese language speaker.

Every attempt was made to represent participants' opinions and experiences as best as possible. It is believed that participants felt safe to discuss their view within the group as they were asked their opinions and insights based on their personal and professional paths/experiences, thus representing their personal views about the sector and not necessarily those of the companies/organizations they represent. Due to the sensitivity of the topic, a guide with key topics and questions was sent to all participants, approximately a week before the focus group. This approach sought to enlighten the participants about the type of questions that would be posed, giving them time to reflect on the matter and get prepared for the discussion. After the session, participants were invited to privately and directly send to the research team any further insights and as no eventual constraints have been reported, no other approach was considered necessary to rate their comfort level with the questioning techniques or topics involved in the discussion.

Focus groups can provide rich interpretative data as participants try to make sense of the fluid concept of gender by engaging in discussion with other participants and building upon their findings as a group, which also potentially contains an element of awareness-raising for participants themselves (Silverman, 2010). For this reason, men and women have been grouped together in an attempt to stimulate debate and unveil potential conflicting views, capturing both perspectives on the same topics. Focus groups are recognized as having overlapping pedagogical, political and traditionally empirical purposes, allowing for the more ‘natural’ behavior of participants, than would be exhibited for example in a one-to-one interview (Leavy, 2014).

Questioning the data from the ontological position that shared social realities exist regarding how gender is perceived by managers in the Portuguese tourism industry, this paper presents the multiple, context-specific truths arising from content analysis of the focus groups, with the help of WebQDA qualitative analysis software. Thematic analysis methods were used for a systematic examination of the collected data, using an inductive approach. Whilst no approach can be completely classified as inductive due to the influence of theories and prior experiences of the researcher, this study did endeavor to be inductive (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011). An inductive approach was adopted by creating the categories which focus group data is coded into, using themes emerging from the transcripts, rather than solely from the initial questions.

The wider study discussion covered themes such as gendered horizontal and vertical segregation within the workplace, selection and recruitment of human resources, the role of gender in leadership, organizational strategies to promote gender equality and to foster economic growth, and the role of gender in entrepreneurship. Coding and analysis were based on a collaborative work processes, as textual representations of all opinions (amounting to

around 160 text pages) in the focus groups and emerging themes (divided in 7 main categories and 23 subcategories) were jointly analyzed and discussed by four members of the research team with multidisciplinary expertise and submitted thereafter to the project coordinator's validation. Data was also broken down according to the participants' profile, namely by gender, region and sector (type of activity and public vs. private). In order to protect the anonymity of participants, they were number-coded and are represented here as *P number* (e.g. *P10*).

3. Analysis and discussion

Gender and management are analyzed here by investigating how manager-participants view tourism management as a discursive practice during focus group discussions. Participants reflect what they perceive to be gender roles and their influence on tourism management discourse through discursive moves, the expression of norms, the use of language and affirmation of values. Thematic analysis of focus group data reveals Portuguese tourism female and male managers' positionality in relation to various aspects of managerial discourse. The four themes that inform this paper are: 1) the persistence of the masculine norm within managerial discourse, 2) the invisibility of gender within managerial discourse, 3) feminine characteristics considered as positive within managerial discourse, and 4) evolution of tourism managerial discourse.

3.1. Persistence of the masculine norm within tourism management discourse

Throughout their lives, women and men are exposed to certain ideas about how an ‘ideal manager’ should perform gender in an organizational setting. However, the ways in which individuals interpret and position themselves in relation to those norms differ, creating various constructions on what is perceived as ‘good’ management. Within the current study, many participants confirm that the masculine norm in managerial discourse persists within tourism in Portugal. For example, one participant says: ‘[...] the question of mentality still exists. It's better to be a man, things will not go wrong.’ (P51, male). Managerial discourse often presents ‘good managerial’ qualities as the ability to be authoritative, decisive, aggressive, competitive, goal-oriented and strong-minded (Holmes, 2006). These are qualities associated with men more than with women, highlighting managerial discourse favors the masculine norm. One participant even notes how male managers are seen to be better managers because they have an inherent property of ‘calmness’. He says: ‘You have to be a very calm person in order to get a more ‘pragmatic’ attitude. The point is that this image is usually associated with men.’ (P42, male). Participants also construct managerial discourse around the premise that power is associated with masculinity. As one participant says: ‘[...] the exercise of power is easier for men.’ (P36, female). By presenting the case that men are more ‘naturally’ perceived as managers than are women, participants mobilize stereotypes relating to hegemonic masculinity.

Research on male and female management styles in a corporate environment in Denmark found that while managers themselves preferred a more ‘feminine’ management style, employees often challenged female leaders' authority (Ladegaard, 2011). Indeed, simply the concept of a female manager appears strange to some participants, but this is something they become used to over time, as one participant states: ‘at first some employees find it strange, but then they get used to it as with time the manager starts to gain credibility’ (P54, male). It is observed that older members of staff find it particularly difficult to deal with having a female manager. One participant narrates how his employee, who has 30 years of

tenure, is devastated when he is told he will have a female manager. He says: “*Sir, you can do anything to me, but not this, do not force me to work with this lady!*” (according to P40, male). Another example of where age plays a significant role in the maintenance of masculinized discourse, is the narration of a female manager about a female colleague. She says (about her colleague): “*her father told her: ‘you have to use the same behavioral formulas that men use’. So she became very masculine*” (P41, female). Indeed, female managers in this Portuguese context are often expected to emulate masculine managerial characteristics, as expressed by a participant who says: “*If she is at the top of hierarchy, she faces it ‘just like a man’*” (P23, male).

Despite years of equal opportunity policies, we see that managerial discourse in the Portuguese tourism industry context still incorporates a male standard which means that in order to succeed in managerial positions women feel that they must manage like a man. However, when a female leader asserts herself ‘like a man’, she risks undermining her femininity. When she ‘talks like a woman’ her integrity as a leader is questioned. These observations lead some authors to call female management an oxymoron (Holmes, 2006). One of the results of male dominance, especially at the top management level, is that cultures characterized by competitiveness and emotional detachment are cultivated; these cultures can further serve to ostracize and undermine women. Whilst this is true in various industries, in tourism which is an industry characterized by high levels of horizontal and vertical segregation according to gender, this observation is particularly pertinent. However, it is often the case that the masculine norm is so embedded within tourism management discourse, that it is rendered invisible.

3.2. Invisibility of gender in management: a gender-neutral discourse?

While many participants speak of the characteristics that make women ‘better’ managers than men, there is an overwhelming perception that gender does not play a role within managerial discourse. As one female manager says: “*I think that gender has little influence in management processes*” (P28, female). Another manager expresses the opinion that employees respect male and female managers the same, indicating the lack of external influence on the perception of ideal manager characteristics. She says: “*I do not see the employees respect someone (just) due to the fact of being a man or a woman*” (P12, female). Indeed, it is both male and female leaders who express this opinion to the same extent.

Although many of the existing theories of management were developed with male managers in mind, they did not purposely exclude female managers, despite this being the result of such theories (Powell, 2012). Partly because of the women’s movement and progress in pressing for women’s rights within the workplace and outside it, many people believe that gender inequality is ‘a thing of the past’ and that the ‘gender problem’ has been solved (Broadbridge & Hearn, 2008). Indeed, one female manager stresses that it is not a matter of gender that defines managerial style. She says: “*The leadership style is as different amongst men as it is amongst women.*” (P15, female). However, current research shows that gender roles still influence economic processes to a great extent. An obvious example illustrating this is the continuing existence of a global gender pay gap (Hausmann, Tyson, & Zahidi, 2012), which is especially prominent within the hospitality industry (Santero-Sanchez, Segovia-Pérez, Castro-Nuñez, Figueroa-Domecq, & Talón-Ballesteros, 2015). This indicates that participants may be embedded within the masculine norm of managerial discourse to such an extent that they do not realize it, effectively making gender’s influence invisible in managerial discourse.

Despite gender disparity being present, it is often attributed to disparity through individual deficiency, rather than looking deeper at the socio-cultural and politico-economic structures which maintain masculine advantage. One participant expresses this idea by saying that: “*It has nothing to do with gender. These are personal characteristics [...] so it has to do with the training of the person and his/her characteristics.*” (P38, female). Another, male manager also expresses a similar sentiment by saying that: “*[...] you have to be born with it in your DNA, there are natural leaders [...] It is indifferent if you are male or female.*” (P11, male). The concept of management abilities being down to individual character traits, or as the participant says, management being “*in your DNA*”, masks the underlying gendered structures which influence character formation and interpretation. Yet another participant puts it down to the managers’ ability to encourage team-work which they perceive as being a gender-neutral characteristic. He says: “*Leadership is a function of how the team will work, regardless of whether a man or a woman is in charge.*” (P45, male).

Such perceptions reveal a faith in the existence of a meritocratic system that erases gender disadvantage, linking perceptions of management ability to individual choice and ability. Indeed, past research shows that women managers often rationalize gendered disadvantage as being linked to the effects of personal decisions, avoiding reference to gendered organizational practice that may work against them (Simpson, Ross-Smith, & Lewis, 2010). However, the continuing low number of women in all levels of management, despite the fact that women are becoming more educated than men and the ‘working mother’ ideal has become more of a norm within Europe, hints at the inability of women to adhere to the masculine norm within managerial discourse (Bendl & Schmidt, 2010). The perceived invisibility of gender within managerial discourse highlights not only the ambiguity of the concept of gender, but also the ambivalent and multi-faceted nature of economic reality.

3.3. Feminine managerial discourse: decision-making, conflict resolution and emotionality

It is evident that most participants support the idea that managerial discourse is gender neutral, with both male and female managers having similar strengths and weaknesses; however, some insist that managerial characteristics are somehow biologically determined. A male participant expresses this as such: “*The way men and women see things, their management style is clearly different, they are physically and psychologically different*” (P22, male). The opinions of male and female managers on what are the characteristics of a good female manager are collated in Table 1. Some of the positive characteristics associated with female managers are: being disciplined, having tact, being able to empathize, being able to multitask, being discreet and being able to deal with employees’ ‘emotionality’.

When looking at Table 1, it appears that female managers in this study were more forthcoming than male managers about the positive characteristics of women as leaders. This in itself is interesting, since it could suggest that male managers do not associate good management abilities with femininity. It could also mean that male managers are limited in their ability to see further than the positive characteristics of female managers which are correlated to stereotyped gender roles connecting femininity with sensitivity, emotionality and discretion. Female managers on the other hand present a far wider scope of positive characteristics that they perceive female managers to possess. Having a ‘female way’ to get things done can be seen as a way in which women can carve their space in managerial discourse, as they adhere to normatively feminine ways of managing. Looking at the positive characteristics

Table 1

Male and female managers' opinions on what makes a good female tourism manager.

Female managers' opinions	Male managers' opinions
Able to multitask	Female leaders do not take credit for their actions
Attentive to detail	Discreet
Good managers at home, so good managers at work	More able to deal with employees' 'sensitivity' and 'emotionality'
Good negotiators	Efficient
Attentive to non-verbal communication	Make decisions faster
Empathize	
Collaborate with a sense of sharing and partnership	
Analyze situations	
Have 'tact' in discussions	
Disciplined (because of work-family management)	
Do not schedule meetings outside work hours	
View leadership as 'active citizenship'	
Have 'common sense'	

associated with female managers, they can be divided into two themes: 1) decision-making and 2) conflict resolution.

3.3.1. Decision-making

Female tourism managers are perceived to be better at making decisions than male managers. One male participant says that female managers can make decisions faster than male managers. He says: *"usually the woman has the need to manage the various aspects of her work and family life, so her decision turns out to be made faster"* (P66, male). Another male participant echoes the sentiment that female managers make decisions faster than male managers by saying that: *"If a problem appears in a specific area, he starts saying 'I did not do it, I cannot do it' [...] whereas a woman does not act like this, she solves the problem"* (P78, male). One possible reason why female managers are perceived to be able to make decisions faster than male managers is that feminine caring positions often mean that female tourism managers need to adhere to strict timelines. As one female participant says: *"I'm super-strict with time-management; it is necessary to have discipline. Maybe men do not have this concern, as they can arrive home at 9 or 10pm"* (P68, female). As women are stereotypically expected to be responsible for family well-being which includes being at home to cook, receive the children and their husband and complete general caring activities, this could be an instance when gender roles connecting femininity to caring have transferred into how female managers, manage. Effectively, this illustrates an instance of how gender roles influence tourism management discourse.

As well as trying to get consensus when taking decisions, female managers are also more likely to take decisions related to workers' well-being, such as achieving a work-family balance, than male managers are. As one female participant states:

If there are female directors, yes, they have some concern about work-family reconciliation measures, such as not scheduling meetings at the end of the day. If there are no female directors, less so. (P59, female)

Past research supports the finding that female managers are more concerned about work-family reconciliation measures (Walker & Aritz, 2015). Male co-workers on the other hand are perceived as insensitive to work-family balance issues. One female participant expresses this by saying:

If I tell my co-worker that my children are sick, he will probably say: 'ah, and so what?'. He may seem cold or insensitive, but it's this kind of pragmatism, this ability not to speak about other matters not related to work that I value in male colleagues (P64, female).

Recent research on how executives rank work-life balance, also shows that most executives adhere to the masculinized economic discourse of separation between family and work life. This is illustrated by how although some executives expressed a desire for work–family balance, participants predominantly restricted career choices to favour one over the other (Ezzedeen, Budworth, & Baker, 2015).

One of the reasons, suggested by participants, that female managers are better at taking decisions in general than male managers, is because femininity is associated with primary responsibility for household management. As one participant says: *"Women are good managers at home and so good managers at work"* (P25, female). A female participant also echoes this connection between gender roles connecting femininity to primary responsibility for caring by saying that: *"Women [...] are used to being leaders"* (P70, female). As femininity is socially constructed to be connected to primary responsibility for caring activities, female managers may be seen to have a comparative advantage in certain leadership characteristics, since they have been acculturated in and trained from a young age in the art of caring (Federici, 2012). Female managers are also perceived to be more analytical, giving more attention to detail when deciding what is the best solution for their company. As one male participant says: *"The woman analyzes. And before making a decision, things are analyzed further"* (P71, male).

Indeed, apart from being *faster* at taking decisions, female managers are also perceived to have a different way of taking decisions, which involves the more 'emotional' component of trying to get consensus. One male participant illustrates this by saying: *"they [female managers] have another level of emotionality when managing relations, they try to get consensus."* (P61, male).

However, whilst feminized decision-making is viewed to be faster, more analytical, more considerate of employees' well-being and more inclusive than male managers' decision-making, female leaders in this study are simultaneously criticized for lacking the confidence to take decisions. This suggests that participants in this study concur with the stereotype that decision-making is a masculine trait, with female managers apparently lacking the confidence to make effective negotiations. As one participant says: *"when it comes to effective negotiation, there are some problems when dealing with women...there is a certain lack of confidence"* (P32, male).

3.3.2. Emotionality and conflict resolution

There are a number of participants who support the idea that female managers are less adequate than male managers because of the gender role associated with emotionality. The connection between emotionality and femininity is a stereotype based on sex

roles that can influence perceptions of ideal manager characteristics (Willemssen, 2002). The perception of women being 'emotional' influences how their abilities to manage are perceived, as being emotional is considered a sign of weakness. Weakness does not fit within the masculine discourse of management where power through aggression and assertion is equated with good management characteristics.

Research shows how the incongruity between feminine social roles of caring and being emotional, and the managerial discourse, means that female leaders suffer prejudice (Johnson, Murphy, Zewdie, & Reichard, 2008). Being 'emotional', instead of being an asset as it means that women can sympathise with employees and better understand their problems and hence respond to them more efficiently, is often perceived as a negative managerial attribute. One participant expresses this by saying: "Women take it personally as they use emotional intelligence" (P43, male). Another participant goes on to say how this emotionality influences group dynamics as: "when something bad happens, women tend to harm the group environment" (P6, male). Male managers are perceived as being 'above' these emotional responses and hence are seen to manage situations more effectively. As one participant says: "men are more tolerant to failure because they have a higher capacity to forgive, to accept failure, which make relationships less prickly" (P24, male). Another participant notes how male managers are able to separate emotions from the workplace:

When it comes to compromising to achieve the goal, men are better at it. They [male managers] don't think 'I don't like this fellow, but I need him to reach my goal'; we cooperate within the limits of our professional relationship (P27, female).

However, some participants note how being 'emotional' can have a positive effect on management outcomes: "Women have more capability in understanding" (P55, male), illustrating how female managers are seen to be better at recognising employee issues and hence more effective at addressing them. Looking to the sub-texts that the participants mention when talking about female manager conflict resolution qualities, it is observed that women are good at conflict resolution because they are attentive to 'non-verbal communication'. As one participant says: "Another female capacity is the ability to negotiate, we are very attentive to the non-verbal communication" (P30, female). Indeed, female managers are perceived to have special abilities in correlating with employees. There is an overwhelming perception that "Women have a 'female' way to get things done, with more tact" (P64, female). Another participant expresses this by saying that: "[female managers] have the ability to dismantle reality in a specific way [...] ability to empathize, to collaborate with people with the sense of sharing and partnership" (P75, female). Male managers are not perceived as having these characteristics connected to mentoring and collaboration through empathy, which puts them at a perceived disadvantage in comparison to female managers. One male participant suggests this is because male managers cannot deal with employees' 'emotions'. He says "managing people with all these sensibilities and emotions is not easy [for a man]" (P55, male).

In summary, male tourism managers in this study are perceived to lack emotionality and in some case be able to deal with conflict situations with a 'cool head', so to speak, but in other cases this lack of empathy constitutes them as unable to understand the root of their employees' conflicts. Female tourism managers are perceived to be 'emotional' and hence at a disadvantage to manage effectively as they "take it personally" (P43), but they are also considered to be able to resolve conflict situations exactly because of this inherent quality they are perceived to have. The dissonance between emotionality being considered a positive managerial characteristic

in some cases and a negative one in others, indicates the complex nature of gender roles and managerial discourse.

4. Conclusion: the evolution of management discourse in tourism

What are perceived as feminine management characteristics are seen as becoming much desired within tourism management. Many participants point to the positive characteristics of female managers, and indeed contemporary research findings from international literature also point towards an increasing preference for feminine managerial characteristics, such as compassion, communality and empathy. For example, it is observed that a positive characteristic of female tourism management style is the different way of taking decisions, as female managers mobilize the more social component of achieving consensus in order to take a decision. This positioning of the female managers' decision-making style favors the concept of power as control not over the group but with the group.

Our findings reflect recent trends as current theoretical progress in managerial discourse is also incorporating a normatively feminine management style that is characterized as "facilitative, indirect, collaborative" (Ladegaard, 2011, p. 16). Participants in this study effectively construct a third positioning for managerial activities, less tied to gender stereotypes. As one female participant says: "women are still creating a new leadership model - their own model - as the one they have now is inspired by masculine characteristics" (P25, female). Hence, a hybrid managerial style is emerging as we find that it is more common that the style of personal, relational and facilitative characteristics of female managers are combined with the male styles of being assertive, directive and commanding. Indeed, a male participant notes how managerial discourse is gradually becoming disassociated from masculinity. He says: "Our new President, a woman [...], did not have to adopt a masculine leadership style to be respected by all" (P6, male).

Male dominated cultures are often characterized by emotional disassociation, and the ostracization and undermining of women, through perceiving them as 'emotional' (Broadbridge & Simpson, 2011). Since being emotional is not part of management discourse, female managers are sometimes perceived as being at a disadvantage. However, we find that the perceived enhanced capacity for emotional intelligence simultaneously puts women at an advantage and a disadvantage in comparison to their male colleagues, and illustrates how discourses surrounding managerial discourse are complex. This observation highlights one of the limitations of this study, which is the lack of indicators to further clarify the term 'emotionality'. A more precise definition of the term would allow for a better understanding of how participants are using the concept and help us to draw more conclusions about tourism management discourse. Other limitations to this study regard the method used, is that individual interviews (in addition to focus group discussions) may have helped participants who did not feel comfortable to express their views within a focus group situation.

It is through research such as this, which highlights the importance of normatively feminine discourse in workplace interactions, that associations of management with masculinity can be eroded and new associations of effectiveness with femininity be established. A participant expresses this idea by saying that: "in the long term, feminine management characteristics will allow women to occupy more positions of leadership" (P48, female). As gendered constructions are an ongoing source of inequality within tourism managerial discourse, but often concealed, future research should continually monitor gendered difference in order to inform policy and practice. This can help us to identify how, with evolving

economic and social conditions, gender inequalities are manifest and how they transform. One of the foci of management and gender research should be to conceptualize new and evolving forms of gendered hierarchies, to reveal hidden aspects of gender and the processes of concealment within norms, practices and values.

One interesting avenue for future research, inspired by the participants' narratives, is that of physical appearance within tourism management discourse. Our findings indicate that hegemonic masculinity within management discourse is mobilized within participant descriptors of managers' appearance. One female participant says: "[...] most women thought that by dressing and talking like a man they would represent their union better" (P28, female). Appearance, in a world dominated by the fast consumption of image is critical in terms of power, to the extent that it can easily affect election outcomes (Sanghvi & Hodges, 2015). Female politicians, an example of which is German chancellor Angela Merkel, are especially subject to criticism regarding the way they look and dress, highlighting the salience of dress in discourses surrounding power (Lünenborg & Maier, 2015). In order to be perceived as good and successful managers, women leaders often display agentic behaviors associated with masculinity but violate scripts about desired femininity. Simultaneously, our models of femininity are becoming increasingly hypersexualized. Investigating the interplay among gender, power and appearance is especially important in tourism management discourse as tourism is an industry intimately connected with desire, sensuality, and hedonism (Pritchard, 2014). Despite this, recent research shows that female workers who do gender well and differently are becoming more acceptable (Vinkenburg, van Engen, Eagly, & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2011). An example is the Italian Minister, Licia Ronzulli, who, during her term in parliament in 2014 brought her baby with her to EU meetings. In the US, a university professor argued that her breastfeeding whilst giving lectures should not be treated as a news item (Pine, 2012; Pine, 2014). These challenge discourses separating economic roles from displayed femininity.

Policies that increase gender equality at national level can help include a feminized version of management discourse in tourism. This idea is based on our findings and backed up by recent research. The stronger the gender equality in a country on the whole, the more likely it is for managers to include 'feminized' managerial characteristics within managerial discourse (Walker & Aritz, 2015). In conclusion, this paper has attempted to provide an in-depth investigation into how gender roles relate to wider social, economic and political considerations within the context of tourism management in Portugal, and aspires to contribute to a more holistic representation of the changing nature of tourism management discourse.

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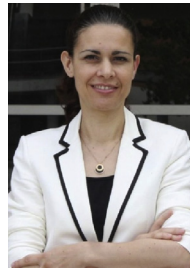
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