

**SUMMARY: Women in tourism: shifting gender ideology in the Dominican Republic.**

Lauren N. Duffy, Carol S. Kline, Rasul A. Mowatt, H. Charles Chancellor.  
Annals of Tourism Research 52 (2015) 72-86: Elsevier. 2015

In this article, the authors explore how tourism employment impacts on gender relations in the Dominican Republic (DR). Do women working in the tourism industry challenge or reinforce the traditional *machismo-marianismo* gender ideology?

*Machismo* is a Latin cultural expression of what constitutes a man's identity: his masculinity, strength and sexual prowess. *Marianismo* is a counterpart to explain women's acceptance of a submissive and passive role in the household.

For this study, 58 interviews were conducted in twelve communities, based on travel guides and information provided by the DR Ministry of Tourism Office. The interviews started with questions related to overall perceptions of tourism and community issues followed by questions about women's employment in the tourism industry. Both men and women participated.

The high cost of living in the DR has created a situation where Dominican women are now expected to work outside of the home in order to bring in additional income, whilst continuing to carry out their traditional, gender imposed work at home.

Women usually find positions that reflect their traditional domestic roles: chambermaids, receptionists, waitresses, cooks, and tourist vendors. This has resulted in men becoming jealous and having trust issues with their women as they can be required to work late and interact with tourists. Women talking with male tourists can be a problem for some Dominican men who think that the visitors will consider these are women available for sexual intercourse – sex tourism being a tourist attraction. On the other hand, this niche tourism is an opportunity for some Dominican men who pimp their wives, girlfriends or partners to bring in additional income.

Nevertheless, the gender roles remain unchanged and women have to stop working as soon as a couple's economic situation allows it. This is especially important as conflict and domestic violence can often arise in the household as women's status changes as they become economically independent and gain more power and strength.

The article concludes by saying that tourism can create complex socio-cultural impacts on local communities and their institutional social structures. In the case of the DR, the tourism industry challenges the traditional gender roles, which results in a positive change to the way gender is perceived. However, these changes also resulted in an increase of domestic violence and sex tourism in the island.