

## **'Boys will be boys'? Submissive masculinity and sexual harassment in the gay tourism industry**

### **Abstract**

This paper considers the intersection of sexual harassment and internal hegemonic masculinity in assessing the experiences of men working in the gay tourism industry in Spain. It reports data from 36 interviews with managers and employers in a range of organizations primarily catering for gay, male customers. Consideration of the experiences of men working in the gay tourism industry allows for an understanding of how they navigate the near-constant sexual harassment they experience from customers and how these experiences can be located within contemporary debates about masculinity. The paper introduces the concept of 'submissive masculinity' to explain how the sexual harassment suffered by the men working in this context is normalized and accepted, despite being unwanted, contributing to the vulnerability and subordination of men experiencing sexual harassment from other men.

### **Introduction**

Gay tourism represents an emerging and increasingly visible niche tourism market globally, attracting increasing researcher interest (Hughes 2006; Jarvis 2015). Interest in gay tourism, in many respects, is an extension of wider engagement with the consumption patterns of LGBT+ communities (Coombes and Singh 2022). Gay tourism has been characterized as a dynamic and lively phenomenon (Vorobjovas-Pinta 2021a) that has attracted academic interest due to the growing visibility and acceptance of gay individuals, as well as the increased demand from gay consumers (Vorobjovas-Pinta and Hardy 2016). According to Vorobjovas-Pinta (2021a: 1), gay tourism is defined as 'a specialized form of tourism that involves the development and marketing of tourism products and services to lesbian, bisexual, transgender, queer/questioning, intersex, and other individuals (LGBT+).' In this article, the term 'gay tourism' is used to refer to a travel market primarily catering to the needs of men clients who have sex with other men.

The field of tourism research has long examined various aspects of sexuality (Monterrubio and López-López 2016; Vorobjovas-Pinta and Hardy 2016). However, existing literature has predominantly focused on the experiences of gay men as customers (Hughes 1997, 2002, 2006; Melián-González et al. 2011). Much of the research has concentrated on the assumed economic power of gay travellers and their motivations for travel, often emphasizing opportunities for sexual encounters as the primary reason. Although these arguments have been challenged by scholars who suggest that other motives also drive travel (see for example Vorobjovas-Pinta and Hardy 2016), the LGBT+ tourism literature has remained relatively uniform over time in terms of the topics covered. Recently, Ong et al. (2022) have argued that individual customer experiences and behaviour have been the main focus of research in this area. Surprisingly, little is known about the experiences of individuals working in LGBT+ tourism (Vorobjovas-Pinta 2021b), while problematic customer behaviour, such as abuse, and sexual harassment have received limited attention in gay tourism scholarship. Similarly, Mills and Owen (2023: 780) note 'LGBT workers' experience of interactive service work are near-absent from the literature, yet they have the potential to provide unique insights into the service labour process'. Additionally, as Jarvis (2015) highlights, limited research has discussed issues around masculinity and gay men in tourism contexts.

Gay tourist destinations welcome the open presence of queer subjectivities and homosexual activities (Waitt and Markell 2006). Customers help drive the gay tourism industry by spending so-called pink dollars/euros<sup>1</sup>, while hospitality workers enliven various commercial settings by embodying the cisgendered Adonis ideal of men with chiselled chests and washboard abdomens, while serving mostly men customers in gay-friendly or gay-only commercial venues and experiencing frequent sexual comments, touching, and propositions from patrons. Indeed, low-wage workers in the hospitality sector's pink euro niche, such as bars, resorts, and sex clubs in global gay tourist hotspots experience a host of issues from customers seeking information from them (Sharp et al. 2022) or to have sex with them. This paper explores how mostly gay men workers in the low-wage hospitality sector in Spain's gay tourism industry in Gran Canaria and Sitges experience customer sexual advances towards them and reflects on the intersections of sexual harassment and hegemonic masculinity. These elements are related to the power dynamics and imbalances within the service triangle that lead to sexual harassment (Hadjisolomou et al., 2023). Customers, as those who exemplify more privileged forms of masculinity, exploit their power to engage in unwanted sexual behaviours, targeting workers who are perceived as less powerful within the gay tourism context.

Research reveals sexual harassment as endemic, rampant and uncontrolled in the hospitality industry (Good and Cooper 2016; Poulston 2008; Reguira and García-Izquierdo 2021). For example, hospitality workers report incidences of harassment more than any other private sector industry (Poulston 2008), often by customers (Booyens et al. 2022). However, there is limited focus on man-to-man harassment (McDonald and Charlesworth 2016; Waldo et al., 1998), especially in highly sexualized environments, such as the gay hospitality and tourism industry. Unlike the extensive literature which considers how women employees experience the sexual interaction with customers (in relation to sexual harassment perceptions and sexualization of the labour process), research has neglected sexuality within this enquiry, and particularly sexuality within the same sex. This issue remains an under-researched theme in the areas of service sector employment, gay and sex tourism and surprisingly in the wider sexual harassment and masculinity literatures. Empirical data and resources for gay people who experience sexual harassment within the workplace are limited with the majority of evidence discussing harassment outside the workplace, or largely focused on sexual violence and partner abuse. Research emerging from queer theory related to inequality and diversity, discusses the experience of gay and lesbian employees in the (heterosexual) workplace and/or the discriminatory experience of transgendered individuals (Webster et al. 2018; Hadjisolomou 2021). Limited research, however, has explored these issues within conspicuous homosexual spaces (Hadjisolomou et al., 2023)

The experiences of men who work in the gay tourism industry offers a case to understand the intersection of sexual harassment and hegemonic masculinity. Unlike most tourist realms that appeal to heterosexual travellers, gay tourism destinations celebrate being 'out' and, supposedly, create safer spaces to be queer (Waitt and Markwell 2006). Yet, as this study shows, sexual harassment is evidently an entrenched, but unchallenged and normalized, problem in the gay tourism industry. Using insights from interviews with men working in gay bars, clubs, restaurants, saunas and sex clubs we explore how homonormativity shapes customer encounters in the hospitality sector. The article contributes insights into how sexual minorities, in this case gay men working in the gay tourism industry, navigate the near-constant sexual harassment they experience from customers. We theorize how gay men service workers

---

<sup>1</sup> Given the national context of the research (Spain) in this article we use the term pink euro

normalize these service encounters by reifying manhood as a practice of unapologetic sexual dominance. In doing so, they often perform what we refer to as *submissive masculinity*, reinforcing their position as the subordinate within worker-customer sexual power relations of the hospitality industry. We define submissive masculinity as the adoption of behaviours and attitudes that prioritize the satisfaction of others, and in this context the desires of gay tourists/customers. Submissive masculinity encompasses vulnerability and subordination to unwanted sexual advances by customers, driven by the sexualized nature of the industry and sectoral cultures within which the superiority of customers over service providers is implied, with the latter consenting to sexual harassment by the former (Hadjisolomou et al., 2023)

Before describing the methodological approach, we synthesize the relevant scholarship on sexual harassment with an emphasis on gender and sexual inequality. The paper then draws on interview data to illuminate the sexualized context of gay tourism in Spain and the establishments gay patrons frequent during their holidays. Our findings highlight the extent to which men working in the gay tourism industry experience sexual harassment of both verbal and physical forms.

### **Gay men and internal hegemonic masculinity**

Men dominate in patriarchal societies. Across interpersonal, organizational, and structural domains, men engage in gender practices to reproduce their superior positioning. Doing so involves enacting a standard, recognized form of masculinity that scholars have conceptualized as hegemonic masculinity. This concept refers to the idealized form of gender for men and boys, which emphasizes bodily strength, (hetero)sexual prowess, rationality, and competitiveness (Connell 1995). For nearly thirty years, scholars have used Connell's (1995) theorization of hegemonic masculinity to understand men's gendered practices and experiences (Chaudhry and Amis 2022; Jarvis 2015; Scarduzio et al. 2018; Waitt and Markwell 2015). Although, Connell's hegemonic concept has been the dominant theoretical framework to understand the hierarchy of masculinities, authors call for more research on more complex renderings of masculinity, referring to the diversity and intersectionality among men (Jarvis 2015). Indeed, how masculinity shapes power dynamics between and among gender groups, as well as how it co-constitutes identities and social locations other than gender remain key issues (Bridges and Pascoe 2014). Despite the ubiquity of hegemonic masculinity, men are not equally dominant (Connell 1995) nor do all men have the capital necessary to perform this gender ideal (Coles 2008).

While Connell (1995) acknowledges the existence of multiple masculinities, the emphasis on hegemonic masculinity tends to overshadow alternative expressions of masculinity. Men may well be subordinated within the gender social order, similar to women, as well as transgender, nonbinary, gender queer, and intersex people. Differences between heterosexual and homosexual men allow researchers to explore gender dynamics, given the primacy of straightness to hegemonic masculinity. As Connell asserted, 'Patriarchal culture has a simple interpretation of gay men: they lack masculinity. ... If someone is attracted to the masculine, then that person must be feminine – if not in the body, then somehow in the mind' (1995: 143). Effeminate views of gay men distance this group from hegemonic masculinity, suggesting they may harbour a lesser capacity to fulfil mainstream gender ideals. Subordinated masculinity is commonplace for gay men, especially those who are effeminate (Demeteriou 2001).

Social researchers use hegemonic masculinity to explain acts and ideologies of domination between and among gender groups. Across the literature, scholars treat hegemonic masculinity as a conceptual anchor to understand gender as a set of power dynamics (Bedera and Nordmeyer 2021; Berdahl et al. 2018; Scarduzio et al. 2018). Central to this conversation is how masculinity overlaps with or co-constitutes identities and social locations other than gender. Sexuality, race, class, and other forms of social difference receive much consideration, often related to the question of how masculinity varies across *social locations and contexts* (Bridges and Pascoe 2014; Chaudhry and Amis 2022; Childs 2016). Men alter their practices depending on the context, leading to an enactment of internal or external hegemonic masculinity (Demeteriou 2001). Whereas external hegemonic masculinity is about men and boys exerting power or otherwise enjoying advantages over other gender groups, namely women and girls, internal hegemonic masculinity is 'a social ascendance of one group of men over others' (Demeteriou 2001: 341). However, most scholarship considers how men subordinate women, leaving internal hegemonic masculinity enacted within spaces exclusive to men less understood.

Whom men attempt to dominate clearly matters, whilst the *context* within which they dominate equally matters. Connell, however, fails to adequately address the contextual power dynamics and complexities that arise within marginalized communities and thus overlooks the experiences of gay men. Gay men's status, as sexual minorities, is well known, with Demetriou (2001) discussing the subordination of gay men by straight men as they fall outside of the assumed, normative heterosexual status of hegemonic masculinity. As argued, however, their marginal status is not static. Research suggests that across institutional settings, gay men actively negotiate, reinforce, and challenge their subordination relative to straight men and to women (Cisernos and Bracho 2019; Ocampo 2012; Winder 2015; Yeung et al. 2006). Nevertheless, other research clearly illustrates how gay men consent (i.e., give in) to sexual harassment by other men (Hadjisolomou et al., 2023). This raises question regarding the subordination of gay men by other men who have sex with men, and the plurality of masculinities within a context and space that gay men interact, such as the gay tourism industry.

Given this lacuna of literature on internal hegemonic masculinity, we leverage a case study of service work in a global gay tourist sector to consider how men workers experience unwanted sexual advances by other men who have sex with men. The power dynamics between men come to the fore in gay-friendly contexts, making Demeteriou's (2001) concept of internal hegemonic masculinity especially pertinent to studying the niche sector of the gay tourism. Since most low-wage workers in the gay tourism sector identify as gay, bisexual, or pansexual (as is in this study's interview sample, detailed below), we consider the intersectional identity of gayness for men. Interactions between gay men are our main focus in exploring how men workers navigate uninvited sexual comments and sexual touching from men customers in the hospitality industry. This approach allows to reconceptualize masculinities beyond merely individual expression or identity and to understand deeper the power imbalances, (mis)behaviours, and systemic issues that contribute to sexual harassment.

### **The neglected workplace sexual harassment of men by other men**

Research on workplace sexual harassment has largely focused on men as harassers of women (Bates 2014; Berdahl and Moore 2006; Cortina and Areguin 2021; Morgan and Pritchard

2019). Studies in this vein examine how sexual misconduct shapes women workers' experiences as well as organizational practices and workplace culture. Scholars have begun to consider how men experience sexual harassment on the job (Waldo et al. 1998; Scarduzio et al. 2018). Studies of men in the women-dominant occupation of nursing have shown sexual harassment to be widespread. For example, research considering men nurses in Greece and South Korea found that sexual coercion (i.e., unwanted touching and beyond) was the least common type of sexual harassment among men nurses (Jeong and Chang 2022; Papantoniou 2021), which may reflect the more sterile organizational milieu of health care compared to sexier contexts like gay bars.

Good and Cooper (2016) highlight the blurred lines of what is considered sexual harassment in a sexualized context, such as gay bars and clubs. Gay tourism, sex tourism and marketing research discuss how sexuality, the gay social life and 'looking for sex' (Clift and Forest 1999; Köllen et al. 2012) are significant drivers for customers' travel decisions, which gay destinations need to meet and provide (ILGA EU 2020). Within this context, however, it is unclear what occurs as unwanted sexual behaviour, echoing authors who suggest that the hospitality industry attracts and supports sexual behaviour (Poulston 2008; Warhurst and Nickson 2009). As Ram et al. (2016) comment, (selling) sex is fundamental in the ideology of tourism and hospitality, suggesting a strong link between tourism, sex, and sexual harassment. Indeed, sexual harassment in hospitality is associated with the characteristics (i.e., gender and sexuality) of both the employees and the nature of service, which involves close relationships between employees and customers (Poulston 2008). As Folgerø and Fjeldstad (1995) noted, the inherent characteristics of service create a prime breeding ground for sexual harassment, often by customers.

The philosophy of the contemporary service economy, within which 'the customer is always right', constructs the superiority of customers over service providers, implying that customers can misbehave, while the service providers have to tolerate it (Booyens et al. 2022; Ram et al. 2016; Yagil 2008) or even more ominously accept it 'as part of the job' (Good and Cooper, 2016; Poulston, 2008). Ram et al. (2016) report that this is an industry that subtly or overtly sells sex themes, which encourages employees to 'serve the emotional and sexual needs of tourists' (Pritchard and Morgan 2000: 888). The same authors note that whilst this ideology is sustained, scholars and industry practitioners will misinterpret sexual harassment as an acceptable part of the job. Poulston (2008) similarly concluded, sexual harassment is systemic in the hospitality and harmful to both the victims and the industry. Unsurprisingly, however, the sexualization of women has dominated the literature on sexualized work with theoretical and empirical analyses focusing on women employees who need to conform within heterosexualized demands.

Warhurst and Nickson (2009) suggested that the gendering of sexualized work needs to be rethought to encompass men's sexuality in relation not only to interactions with women customers but also with men customers. The necessity to expand our understanding on the sexualization of service work is highly noticeable in this study, where evidence provides strong links between sexualization of the working environment and the labour process with sexual harassment. This study, therefore, seeks to address the following research questions:

- How do men working in the gay tourism hospitality industry make sense of customers' unwanted sexual attention and sexual coercion of them?
- What discursive strategies do men use to explain sexual harassment in the workplace?

- How can theories of masculinity shed light on the experiences of men-to-men sexual harassment within the workplace?

## Methodology

The study was conducted pre-pandemic in two Spanish destinations, Gran Canaria/Maspalomas and Sitges, which are well-known for being openly gay-oriented tourism destinations. These areas benefit significantly from gay tourism, contributing to the local economy and labour market. Gran Canaria, in particular, is marketed as one of Europe's top gay tourism destinations, offering a wide range of establishments that are either exclusively for or friendly towards gay individuals. The region has a rich history in gay culture and has thrived as a gay tourism hub in the southern part of the island since the 1990s, mainly due to its year-round warm weather and winter sun. Additionally, the area hosts various gay events throughout the year, such as Gay Pride and Winter Gay Pride, which contribute significantly to the local economy (see Anon (a) n.d; Melián-González et al. 2011). Sitges is similarly promoted by the Spanish government as an internationally renowned LGBT+ destination along with Ibiza and Maspalomas (see Anon (b) n.d), offering gay-friendly leisure activities, accommodation, and parties.

These destinations have invested in strategies to support a 'pink euro' economy. The concept of 'pink currency' refers to the branding of the high purchasing power of LGBT+ communities, although it is important to note that assumptions about gay men having more disposable income and higher spending power have been challenged in the literature (Ooi 2021; Vorobjovas-Pinta 2021a). Nevertheless, the notion of 'pink currency' aligns with a profit-maximization logic for tourism businesses (Ooi 2021). This is not surprising, as Hughes (2006) has long recognized that many LGBT+ festivals and activities have been highly commercialized. Indeed, as the data in this study indicates gay tourism organizations in the explored areas have developed business strategies based on 'pink euro' marketing, often assuming that sex is one of the main motivations for all gay tourists (though for a critique of this view see Vorobjovas-Pinta and Hardy 2016)

Data were collected from a variety of organizations operating across the spectrum of gay hospitality venues (see Table 1). These included hetero-friendly gay bars, men-only hotels and resorts, gay clubs, sex clubs, and gay saunas. The selection of this broad spectrum of businesses allowed us to assess the issue of sexual harassment from customers, across different organizational contexts, from a 'normal' gay bar towards more overtly sexualized venues that offer spaces for sexual encounters (e.g., gay saunas and sex clubs).

### **Table 1 here: Range of organizations**

The first author conducted semi-structured interviews with bar owners/managers and frontline employees as shown in Table 2. The interviews were conducted in English and Spanish and lasted between 45-140 minutes. Each interview was recorded and transcribed verbatim. Access to participants and organizations was gained via an individual gatekeeper who introduced the first author to some workers in the two areas. Thereafter, a snowball sampling strategy was followed accompanied by visits to organizational premises, approaching bar managers, owners, and employees to informing them on the research and recruit participants. In total 36 in-depth interviews were conducted (six managers, 30 employees). The sample included men with

diverse nationalities, such as Spanish, German, Polish, Cuban, Latin American, English, and Italian, as well as diverse ethnic backgrounds. Five participants identified as people of colour, specifically Latinos and African-Caribbean individuals.

This research has obtained ethical approval from a university ethics committee, ensuring compliance with ethical standards. All participants involved in the study were anonymized to protect their privacy and confidentiality in line with GDPR legislation. To ensure anonymity, pseudonyms are used to safeguard against the disclosure of personally identifiable information.

### **Table 2 here: Interviewee profile**

A thematic analysis was followed to provide a structure to manage the dataset and achieve a deeper analysis through coding. Coding was utilized to organize and analyse and disaggregate data, as well as to recognize relationships between themes and produce integrative categories (Miles and Huberman 1994). Themes generated from the coding process included the sexualization of gay tourism, sexual harassment, normalization of sexual harassment in the sector and tolerance towards sexual advancements.

#### **The sexualized context of gay tourism**

Participants across both destinations recognized how gay tourism organizations, in chasing the pink euro, sought to create a sexualized environment to attract gay customers. As Mateo reported: 'Over the years you see more and more gay hotels. All the hotels are gay-friendly but there are more "men-only" hotels now.' The embeddedness of sex, as a selling point, in the local gay tourism industry was widely recognized among interviewees. Manuel commented: 'What brings money here is sex. There are so many people visting Gran Canaria [because] you can have sex every day with different people. This is why people come here.' Most participants repeated similar views, highlighting the liberal sexual environment of the gay tourism industry as the main attraction for the gay customer. They referred to the two destinations, and particularly Gran Canaria, as a 'gay paradise' and a 'sex paradise'. Michael, a bar manager stated:

People come here to other places because of the sexual freedom. There are sex bars here and it is very difficult to get a sex bar, even in London. So, I think people come here because they know that everyone has a shared interest in sexuality.

Martin elaborated on the attractiveness of gay tourism as 'sex tourism', suggesting that the main motive for tourists' visit is sex. He suggested that the 'gay scene' has become more exclusively a 'sex scene' since 'There are still people who go there and want to have fun, but now it is more about going in the sex club, take off your clothes, have sex, and go home.' The hospitality sector has prioritized these experiences, as Martin explained: 'The sex clubs [business] grows more and more. There was only one 15 years ago and now we have about 10. It grows very fast.'

Jorge also said that the history of Gran Canaria is sex tourism:

Basically the message is come here and fuck. Gay men have developed a sex culture. We have the bars, the apps, the sex clubs, and the saunas. Now sex is everywhere and most of the people come here to find sex. This is a gay destination, the biggest one in Europe during the winter, the biggest one in the world.

Alessio, who worked in a men-only resort further recognized that it was not uncommon workers to have sex with customers and this is part of the 'sex-culture' imprinted in the industry:

If you like them [customer] you can also have sex with him... This is typical of these jobs in Gran Canaria. I was working in the bar and my colleague went in the darkroom<sup>2</sup>, had sex, and then walked back in the bar. Some people [workers] like that. This is the liberty in Gran Canaria, everybody is free. My friend who [still] works in that bar always says to me: 'I'm taking money, I 'm drinking and I have sex every night. What do I want more?'

Sex can be considered a job perk for gay men working in the pink euro industry. Having sexual encounters is a selling point in these tourist venues. Ben, a heterosexual barman, who worked in a men-only resort in Maspalomas, highlighted the example of the darkroom as an absolute necessity in gay commercial spaces:

A darkroom is typical. Straight people have swingers' clubs, where they also have Jacuzzis and a sling or whatever, but I don't think there's anything similar to a darkroom. In the small complex where I work they even have a basement which is dark and you have lots of bars where there is a darkroom ... I haven't seen a hetero complex or adult only complex where you also have a darkroom. But if you are a men-only complex you need to have a darkroom or a cruising area. Everywhere where that there is a darkroom, then the customer will have sex. This is why people go to these bars or resorts, there's lots of sexual action there and this is what you sell basically.

The existence and uniqueness of the darkroom is a clear indication of the sex tourism approach in this industry. Raul, a heterosexual barman in men-only sex club in Sitges, suggested sex is the reason for customers to visit the venue and having a darkroom is necessary to provide the space for this activity. Although it might be expected that a sex club will provide a space for sex, Jonas, an assistant manager in a terrace bar with a darkroom in Maspalomas, recognized:

When people come to Gran Canaria the main reason is sex, they might like the weather but the main reason is sex ... Some of them don't even drink they go straight to the darkroom. Even in my bar [open bar] we have now a darkroom. The bar is more sexual now because they have installed a darkroom. Last year a free sex club downstairs has closed, and they had a huge darkroom. So, when they closed we noticed immediately people coming in our bar. We are now the only one free-entrance darkroom left ... We have lots of new people, different people who normally wouldn't come in our bar coming in and it is definitely because of the darkroom.

---

<sup>2</sup> A darkroom is a darkened, or low lighted space where sexual activity takes place.



Pink euro organizations have developed a strategy within which 'sex' is a central concept and a core selling strategy. As Mateo reported, '[customers] come here on holidays and they go out every night, they drink, they go to the darkroom, even the toilet, to find people. Here everywhere you go it smells like sex.' This branded sexual experience has, however, created an ambiguity around selling the service and selling sexuality with participants commenting how the overtly sexualized context of the industry leads to a lack of respect for hospitality workers and uncontrolled incidents of sexual harassment between men.

### **When sexualization leads to sexual harassment**

Although the evidence shows that some workers sometimes chose to have sex with customers, there was also significant evidence of unwanted sexual attention and harassment from customers, with almost all participants reporting such attention on a daily basis. The data illuminate the high frequency, and the variety of unwanted sexual practices customers exhibit. From sharing sex stories, pictures, and videos to making inappropriate verbal comments, gestures and inappropriate touching, men in Gran Canaria and Sitges experience sexual harassment as a routine aspect of their service work.

### ***Verbal sexual harassment and inappropriate touching***

Andrea, a café/bar manager, discussed customers' tendency to share their sex experiences with hospitality workers. Although sexual commentary is unwanted and regarded as inappropriate, workers also understood it as a typical behaviour driven by the gay tourism sex culture:

Everybody shares stories of their private life. Most of the stories are the sexual ones, 'oh I've met someone, he had such a big cock and my throat still hurts, or oh my ass hurts, I cannot sit down'. A couple even showed me videos with them having sex ... As a barman or as a waiter you are the one who listens to these stories. The people that work though don't want to listen to these stories, it's just wrong...But it is part of the scene. There are people [employees] that are not very used to this chat. For example, one of the guys who works here said to me 'why is he telling me how brave his asshole was?'. But they know where they are, they know they work in gay place, they know that gays talk about sex, is a very important part of their life.

Alessio similarly commented on customers' tendency to talk about sex and sexual experiences, suggesting it was part of hospitality work to chat with customers and ask about their holiday experiences. However, despite his recognition that discussion about sex is not welcomed in a working environment, he suggested that they are nevertheless entrenched in the pink euro service economy.

As the data further show, customers also make sexual comments on employees' appearance. For example, Pepe noted:

You get comments [about your physical appearance] all the time. Some people will comment about my eyes: 'oh you got lovely eyes, you got beautiful eyes' ... Others will comment directly about my ass and my cock, that's much more sexual.

Nico reported similar behaviours, further suggesting the normalization of verbal harassment in the industry:

Sometimes because I am in shorts they can see my bulge, so they comment on it. I have a nice body they were commenting my body, 'oh you are so big, what do you like' ... It is normal to get this attention... This approach is not right for me, I try to approach people in a different way. But when you are on holidays in a gay resort and you have a sexy fit [male] worker, half-naked walking around you might make a comment. It's like the pool boy fantasy.

Customer comments could also be very direct and more sexual, for instance, requesting workers to exhibit nudity and/or asking for a sexual encounter. As Pepe said, 'I've been asked in the toilets to get my cock out.' Gustavo, also mentioned that requests for sexual encounters are a daily phenomenon in his bar: 'They ask for sex every night...people come to you directly and say, "oh you are so fucking sexy, can we have sex after your work?"'

Participants across different types of organizations echoed Gustavo's view with virtually all interviewees sharing stories and incidences when customers explicitly proposed sexual encounters, either verbally or using gestures, or even offering them money for sex:

I had another man before he came in with money and he wanted to pay me to have sex. He tried to prostitute me; he offered me 500 euros to go home with him. I said 'No'. He goes 'oh come on, everybody has a price, how much is your price?' I said, 'you are definitely not rich enough for getting me'. He insisted though, 'come on tell me your price' and I went 'okay, give me one million euros and you will have me for one night. That's the price and it's not negotiable, I'm not going down. I am not on discount'. For me this is a sad person. It's stupid. You say 'No' and he continues, he insists.

Customers exhibit highly sexual behaviours, which workers interpret as an understandable reflection of the setting. Salva argued customers' direct advances result from the sexualization of the gay tourism industry and the confusion by customers, which conflates hospitality and sex work. As he explained:

I had people offering me money to have sex with me. They will approach you and say directly: 'Can I have sex with you? I'll pay you'. I said to him 'I think you are confused; I am not an escort. On this island you will find so many escorts, there are escorts in bars, masseurs are also escorts'.

The assumption that sex workers are ubiquitous in pink euro destinations puts the onus on restaurant and bar workers to enforce boundaries between themselves and customers. Nico, who worked in a men-only resort, also recognized that customers explicitly asking for sex via both verbal requests and gestures was commonplace:

One day I was cleaning a bungalow alone, usually we do cleaning in twos but that day I was alone. It is different to clean in pairs, you have more space to defend yourself in case something happens. If we are two there's no problem, but if you are cleaning alone then you need to be careful, because everybody is trying to do something with me ... I knocked his door, and he was like 'yeah come in'. I was in the bathroom and he came behind me and he was like 'oh I like you, I am here for you' and I laughed and tried to change the conversation ask him about his holidays and as I was talking he left and he went to the bedroom. So, I was like 'okay he went away'. I was cleaning the kitchen and then moved to the bedroom and he was lying on his bed waiting for me with his cock hard and goes 'I was waiting for you'. I said, 'sorry I am working' and kept cleaning the bedroom.

Nico and Ben, who both work in men-only nudism resorts, shared similar stories. They described incidences of customers touching themselves sexually both in their private rooms/bungalows when the worker was present, as well as in public spaces such as the pool area or even the breakfast area. As Ben reported such behaviours are deemed normal in this context by customers and workers:

A man from France, he is about 55, good-looking man. And he has a big, big cock, it is massive. And every time he was coming on the bar, he was always stroking his cock. So, he was coming to the bar to have his breakfast, always every morning, scrambled eggs and orange juice, and say 'hi Ben, will you make my eggs please, I'll sit there'. 'okay no problem'. And he was sitting there wanking his gigantic penis. It is normal for him to do that. The first time I saw that I already knew he was doing it that because the boys that work here, they told me about this man from France that comes here two or three times a year and he is always wanking his cock. So, I knew everything, so it was not a surprise for me.

Nico also reported the normalization of nudity and sexual gestures in the gay tourism industry:

Sometimes I might go to clean and change their bed sheets and they are just sitting there naked on the terrace, touching their thing you know, wanking. But this doesn't bother me anymore because I've been seeing these things for so many years. Maybe in the beginning I would just leave everything, stopped what I was doing and go. But now is a normal thing. I just smile and do my job.

Arguably in the gay-men nudist resort, nudity and sexual gestures are normalized given the hyper sexualization of this context. Indeed, similar behaviours were reported by participants in other types of highly sexualized organizations. Salva, for example, who worked in the gay sauna, a space where customers seek sex, reported that it was commonplace for customers to sexually touch themselves and his discomfort in these situations: 'It wasn't just guy it was guys [masturbating in front of me]. It has happened a lot of times' The organizational context may help explain the frequency of these interactions, despite doing little to assuage the negative impact on workers.

However, such behaviours were also shared by participants in less overtly sexual contexts such as open gay bars and even in hetero-friendly bars. Ross, for example, who worked in an open-space drag queen show bar described an incident with a customer masturbating while sitting in the corner of his bar. Andrea detailed similar encounters in his café/bar during breakfast time, reporting public self-stimulation is typical for customers, though the morning display itself is aberrant:

Several times I had people who just take everything out ... They might sit in front of you and play with it like this [masturbation gesture]. This has happened several times... We are not working in night-time; we serve breakfast so how much can happen during breakfast? I mean it is not normal for breakfast, but he is on a sex holiday after all.

Andrea's reaction highlights how workers in the gay tourism industry normalize the off-putting and uninvited sexual actions of customers by interpreting the gay tourism industry as interchangeable with sex tourism and related 'sex holiday[s]'.

Pedro recalled a similar situation in one of the hetero-friendly bars, noting his shock and surprise at such behaviour in a public space:

The most extreme was when a customer had their cock inside the menu. I wasn't expecting that. I was in shocked. I was like really? It was this man who was sitting on the tables outside and I approached him to ask him what he wants to drink. And then I've noticed that he had the menu [2-page folded menu] on his knees, and he had his erect cock [inside] the menu. I was shocked and I said, 'Sorry you cannot do that', and he said, 'oh look what I've got here for you'. I said, 'No, no, no, this is a bar. This is not a sex club or a cruise bar...' And he put that thing inside his pants again [laughs]. This is something I will never forget because it was one of the first things that have shocked me in the gay scene here.

### ***Physical sexual harassment***

Touching was not a behaviour that remained between customers. The data revealed numerous incidences of customers sexually touching workers across the two locations and across different types of organizations. This behaviour, according to participants, is linked to the sexualized culture of the industry. As Leonardo argued in the Spanish culture people greet each other with a kiss on the cheek. In the gay culture, and in the gay tourism industry workers would greet or say goodbye to customers with a kiss, which is sometimes on the lips. Often, customers would take this further and harass workers to an action beyond just a welcome or greeting, as Michael reported:

There have been times when I've given to customers a kiss on the cheek. Obviously, we are in Spain that's what we do, that's how you say goodbye to people. So, I walked off the bar 'thank you so much for tonight', you know to build a good rapport ... I kissed them on both cheeks. Then one said, 'give me another one on the cheek' and I go on to kiss them and they turned around and grabbed me, hold me tight and tried to kiss me on the mouth. I pushed them off and had to explain to them that this is not acceptable regardless of where you are.

Such behaviours were acknowledged by participants as commonplace, with workers having to physically defend themselves: 'There will be always somebody who tries to kiss you on the lips, and you block that out,' Miguel explained, 'You put your hand to push them away but a lot of people will remain assholes and eventually you just turn your cheek.'

Other interviewees, though, said that customers would touch workers sexually on every part of their body. Pablo, who worked in the drag queen show bar, reported:

Every day people try to touch you ... a few days ago, it was the beginning of the night before the show starts so I am trying to bring people in, sit them down. There was a man and a woman, I thought they were a couple actually, but this was not the case. So, I find them a table, they sat down and the man was going to tell me their drinks. He put his hand on my waist, like is normal, everybody does it, it's fine, even I do it when the customers come by ... And while he was telling me their drinks his hand was moving lower and lower and lower, I wasn't listening to what he was saying my brain was like 'what the fuck are you doing?' And he went all the way down to grab my ass and I went like 'hey, No'. I said I am working.

Raul, a straight man working in a sex club, commented:

Every half hour we have to go in [the darkroom] and check if there is a problem, maybe a customer has passed out, people drink a lot, they use drugs. When we go in there we have a flashlight because it's dark you can't see anything. So, I had a guy before trying to touch me, he started touching my ass, my cock, so I then put the light on my t-shirt, we wear a t-shirt with the club logo and I said 'hey I am working', he moved on to find someone else. It's the kind of bar you expect this behaviour, that's why people come there. Especially at this time of the year [Pride week].

As Raul highlights, extreme forms of customer sexual advances are expected in the sexualized context of sex clubs. Beyond this hyper-sexualized context similar incidents and behaviours were discussed by all participants, such that touching by customers was seemingly expected in the gay tourism industry. For example, Valerio said:

[Touching] happens. I don't have a problem if they give me a kiss here [cheek] or a kiss here [other cheek] or they touch my arm, my shoulder. It's fine, it's public relations. I know where I am; I know where I work. Gay men love this, and this is our customer.

Similarly, Ben, a straight barman commented:

They might touch you but is fine, I won't say to someone don't touch me. It's okay, it's no problem for me. But I wouldn't allow them to touch my cock. It is the same for me as an ugly woman coming to me and grab my cock, I would also say 'look I am sorry but I am not for general use or something'.

Several interviewees felt that customers thought they had a right to touch workers, with Eduardo noting customers had a perception of being entitled:

The customers think because they buy a drink, they can do whatever they want...'I am having my drink here, so I want my kiss, so I get it'. Or they touch your ass, 'hey I just paid 12 euros for a drink, give me some of that'

Roberto also suggested gay tourists often assume hospitality workers in gay venues are available and want sex. In this vein, Andrea, a café/bar manager, argued workers should expect such behaviours as 'part of the scene'. As he continued, 'you know this stuff happens so you cannot go like, "oh you touch me on the ass" or something like this you can never say something like this to a customer'. The majority of participants echoed Andrea's view. For example, Ben suggested, 'If I'm in a gay place I assume there's a risk that that will happen.' Pedro similarly emphasized that those working in this industry should expect such behaviours:

You have to enter in these jobs knowing that there might be some touching. This is in any customer service job; I am not just talking about sexuality, but it is more in a gay bar or a gay club. So, you should know that; you should have that expectation when you go in those fields of work.

Evidently, men workers in the pink euro tourism niche regard being subject to sexual harassment as an expected and unavoidable part of their workplaces.

### **Boys will be boys: Sexual harassment and masculinities**

The data reveal the normalization of sexual harassment in the gay tourism industry. As noted above, participants suggested that workers should expect (mis)behaviours from customers. Andrea, a café/bar manager, explained that 'sex tourism' is driving customers' harassing behaviours:

Gran Canaria is very specific, it is not like other places. Here it is all about sex tourism. So people come and they try different stuff and they have no respect for the people working here ... They think they are on holiday and they can do anything they want, such as touching your ass, pulling your t-shirt, calling you names and stuff like this. It happens a lot ... And you have to deal with it. It is part of the job.

Ross similarly discussed the uncontrolled (mis)behaviours by tourists which is driven by the sexual culture of the industry:

Customers think that they can do and say whatever they want ... when they come here they act differently. They wouldn't do the same they do here back home. So they think they are allowed to be someone they are not, like as if Gran Canaria is a place with no rules or laws.

Other interviewees pointed to the manner in which the sex tourism culture and the anonymity within it as the driving factors for customers to harass hospitality workers. Miki highlighted the fact that gay customers would act differently when on holidays, 'indulging in sex, which is the culture of gay tourism', as he put it. Nico also reported:

When tourists come on holidays, they are freer and more relaxed and act more sexual. They come here for sexual adventures. I don't think they come because the island is beautiful, or the people are friendly, or the weather is nice ... The problem though is that tourists come here, and they act in a different way. A bad way. In their country they are a completely different person. Here they say nobody knows me, I am anonymous so I can do whatever I want.

Others, however, provided a different explanation of the embeddedness of sexual harassment in the gay tourism industry, one which is rooted in cultures of masculinity, with the phrases 'men are men' or 'boys will be boys' being repeated by many participants.

[The gay scene] is selling sex and it is a sexual environment. Go have a good time, meet a nice guy ... I think people go to gay bars to pick up, to have 'fun' [sex]. It is a sexual environment ... the majority of people that go there are men, and men are testosterone you know, whether they are gay or straight. So, boys will be boys. I don't think women behave like that. I don't think women touch other women whether they are gay or straight like that. Boys touch each other more, especially gay boys.

Ander and others commented how customer misbehaviours are driven by gender behaviours and the idea that 'men like sex' [sic], 'We are human beings, we are men. It has something to do with gender but nothing to do with sexuality. Boys will be always boys'. Jonas, similarly, commented how straight men on holidays behave in similar ways. He suggested straight men and gay men are similar to how they behave in a sexual environment, giving the example of straight men in Ibiza 'pulling girls', as he put it. Ben, a straight barman, similarly reported:

We are men and we see sex as fun, it's that simple. The straight man would do the same if women were more liberal in that sense. Gay men are a bit more open and easier on that [sexual behaviours], but men are men, they like to show off. It is more common in the

gay community. Don't ask me why, but it is more common. Men are men, whether it is straight men or gay men. We all love sex, we all talk about sex, we all show off about sex. When I lived in Holland and I worked in a regular [straight] bar all the guys in there talked about sex as well. I think guys in general like to talk about sex.

This view on gender and masculinity driving (mis)behaviours was not, however, universal across the sample. Other participants made a clear distinction between 'straight' and 'gay' contexts, suggesting that sexuality is a stronger driver for sexual harassment and the experiences of hospitality workers. As Miki commented:

Sexuality is part of what is happening in the gay bar. It is different from the straight bar. We make the assumption that because we have the same sexuality the barrier is lost already; the barriers are down. Like if you go in an environment where you might describe as mixed you would not necessarily know someone's sexuality, but we make the assumption that you go in a gay venue then it is okay. But that's because that's what we see it as. Nobody told us that, but we assume and from my experience if you go in a gay bar mostly the guys are gay. It's rare to have a straight guy working in a gay bar. It does happen though. So yeah, we know the environment that we are in.

Eduardo, a straight barman, compared his experience in 'straight' and 'gay' bars, arguing that gay men are 'more direct' than women in how they behave and approach workers and other individuals:

What I see is that I get more compliments and more of those [sexual] comments from gay men than from girls. Maybe girls hide it, or they are afraid to say it. Gay men are more direct. It's not common to walk in the bar and you have a girl saying jokes or making comments. This would happen more with gay men than girls. Gay men are more open to talk about sex.

Ben, also a straight barman, shared a similar view, yet a different experience. He reported he has received sexual comments from women in 'straight bars'; however he has never been physically harassed in contrast to the current context in which he worked, noting that gay men are more liberal which leads to physical sexual harassment:

Girls are not so bold, maybe they use words more, they never touch me. Gays, on the other hand, are more daring. Gays take advantage of their won freedom to say or do what they want and some of them transform it into debauchery.... Sometimes guys touched my cock, that bothers me. Being liberal however does not mean having the right to do whatever it takes.

Others similarly compared straight and gay men suggesting that gay men are more open-minded and more sexually free, yet more aggressive which leads to more widespread sexually harassing practices in gay leisure spaces. José discussed the sexual culture of the gay scene and gay tourism leading to liberal sexuality and transfer of 'darkroom behaviours' in other contexts.



We have a lot of darkrooms and sex bars, fetish weeks and Gay Pride to celebrate our liberal sexuality with lots of parties and sex parties. We feel that we have the possibility to do whatever we want when it comes to sex. For example, here on Gay Pride people fuck in the street. That's normal to happen here but it won't happen in a straight festival. Not to this extent anyway. So that sex freedom allows gay men to behave like that in the bar as well ... gay customers touch people because they believe that nobody will say anything because this is what happens in the gay scene. When you go in the darkroom your communication with others is by touching, you touch anything you want and anyone you want. They can stop you by putting your hand away. Sadly, this behaviour is transferred outside the sex club to open bars where customers also think that they can touch anyone they want and anywhere they want because this is how we behave.

As the data show, such sexually forward 'darkroom behaviours' should be expected by those working in the gay tourism industry. Participants clearly stated that this is part of the gay culture and it is embedded in the gay tourism, whilst such behaviours would not be acceptable in the 'straight' world. Ray explained:

I think it is part of the gay culture. I am really tactile so sometimes I have to stop myself from being so tactile. Maybe it is not okay to invade someone's space or to touch somebody. Some people might find that really offensive or be uncomfortable with that. But I think it happens a lot more in gay bars because I think generally, maybe this is a generalized statement, gay men are more tactile, or we are closer in that physical sense. I wouldn't imagine seeing my [straight] brothers do that in a bar at all.

Ray discursively distanced the patterned actions of men customers groping men workers in the gay tourism industry from the notion of sexual harassment by naturalizing men as more unabashedly touchy-feely or 'tactile' in asserting their sexual desire. Evidently, however, there is a wider perception and expectation that workers in this industry should expect, accept, and tolerate such behaviours as these are rooted in the gay culture, whilst there was a perception that women who work in hospitality have greater protection from sexual harassment. As Nico reported:

For people that work in the bars they accept that. In the gay world I can expect this situation. In the hetero world, the woman does not necessarily expect this. If it is a prostitute bar yes, but in a normal bar the woman doesn't expect this to happen. In the gay life we as waiters we expect that the customer touches us. It is part of this job, it's part of the scene.

Gustavo argued that women workers who face sexual harassment get more support within the workplace to resist customer advances than gay men. Women's otherness is perceived to disrupt men's sexual harassment. In the spaces without women, gay men workers recognize men customers as allowed to harass them without disruption from social norms and organizational safeguards. Internal hegemonic masculinity thus leads to the practice of submissive masculinity given the shared gender status between workers and customers. He suggested that security will step-in to protect women, unlike gay tourism where workers feel unable to complain or report sexual harassment, either to management or the police, 'we are

still in a society with the heritage of masculinity, a dominated man society and if a man complains about sexual harassment coming from a man or a woman somebody will laugh about it [sic],’ Gustavo claimed.

Jonas similarly noted men workers are expected to tolerate harassment because it happens in a gay bar. Citing its ubiquity, gay men workers highlight how men’s sexual advances on each other in public settings have been naturalized in the discourse of service work in the gay tourism industry. As he continued:

...there is something here about sexuality and gay men seeking approval and attention all the time. So maybe it is an expectation that those things can happen in the gay bar because we are used to that, or we’ve been told that that’s what happens here and it’s okay.

Finally, Manuel, echoing others’ arguments on the normalization of sexual harassment in the gay tourism industry and a phenomenon that is of minor importance given the highly sexualized culture of the sector and the gay community, suggested that the community does not need more information on this problem. ‘I don’t think gays need any more information on it [sexual harassment],’ Miguel similarly argued, ‘I don’t think the community itself needs any more information on it. I think we are all aware that it happens and where it happens.’ As he put it, this issue is between ‘equal’ parts (i.e., man-to-man) and it is not a significant problem for the gay community, unlike man-to-woman sexual harassment. He continued:

Obviously, the idea of misogyny does not exist within the gay community because everyone is a man, whereas there’s a long-standing history with men in society having held the hierarchy against women. So, for those men that touched women in a sexual way is a lot more objectifying than it is two men on equal playing touching each other...[Therefore] that comes down to attraction and essentially I don’t feel like sexual harassment in the gay industry is a problem but at the same time I don’t feel like it has a lot of the societal backing than [as] it does for women in the straight community more so because there’s a longer history in the straight community.

## **Discussion**

This article considers the sexualized nature of the gay tourism industry, exploring two popular gay tourism destinations in Spain, revealing how sexual harassment is a behaviour which is normalized in this industry. In line with Good and Cooper (2016) the data has confirmed the blurred lines of what is considered sexual harassment in this context, suggesting that the (hyper)sexualization of labour becomes the driver for normalization of sexual harassment by the customer. In assessing this issue we have addressed the neglected issue of sexual harassment by men of other men (McDonald and Charlesworth 2016). Reflecting on Connell’s influential studies, we have suggested a new concept of internal hegemonic masculinity, called ‘submissive masculinity’. This concept describes the vulnerability and subordination of men in the service industry to unwelcome sexual advances from other men (customers) due to the sexualized nature of the industry and the prevailing sectoral culture which suggests that

customers have a superior position over service providers, resulting in the latter consenting to sexual harassment from the former (Hadjisolomou et al., 2023).

The data offer a useful insight and contribution on debates related to hegemonic masculinity and specifically to Connell's (1995) classic theorization of multiple masculinities. Specifically, we adopt Demetriou's (2001) critique on Connell, arguing that there is no clear definition or differentiation between what Connell notes as 'subordinated' versus 'marginalized' masculinities. A long and central argument in scholarship is how masculinity intersects with identities and social locations other than gender (see for example Roberts and Elliott 2020). This article contributes to these debates examining how gay, as well as straight, men working in the hyper-sexualized context of gay tourism negotiate hegemonic masculinity within the power social relations and dynamics of the triadic service employment relationship. As Connell (2000: 26) has long recognized, the analysis of masculinity needs to be consolidated 'in relation to class, race and ethnicity, and other issues of power'.

Research so far has mainly focused on sexual harassment against women workers as a constant comparison, which is a discursive strategy to diminish the transgressions men workers experience. Gay men workers in this study adamantly position sexual relations between men as naturally different and gay community members as more accustomed to overt sexual expression. However, they also highlight the shortcomings of a heteronormative and homophobic sexual social order as not yet recognizing sexual harassment against men as noteworthy, let alone damaging or deviant. This shows that status of masculinities varies across social locations and contexts (Bridges and Pascoe 2014; Chaudhry and Amis 2022). The context of gay tourism, where the interaction between male gay customer and male (likely gay) worker is evident, generates a new category of subordinate masculinity that we call 'submissive masculinity'. Subordinate masculinity refers to men who do not fit into the construction of hegemonic masculinity and are therefore treated as lower on the gender hierarchy. Connell notes gay men as the most visible example of subordinate masculinity suggesting that they are subordinated by cultural exclusion and even violence (Connell 2005; Eivergardet et al. 2020). Connell, however, as well as other scholarship, does not consider subordinate masculinity within specific contextual dynamics, such as the service triangle and the triadic employment relationship, within which masculinity becomes subjected to issues of power and customer superiority.

In gay tourism men workers adopt submissive masculinities as a means of conformity to the customer-centric highly sexualized culture of gay tourism and customer expectations. In other words, male workers feel pressured to maintain a submissive character to meet customers' expectations, fearing negative consequences or jeopardizing their employment. **Although the majority of participants in this research identified as gay men, evidence shows that straight men working in the industry are also subject to sexual harassment, albeit with lower tolerance in comparison to gay workers.** The normalization of sexual harassment in a context where men interact with other men, as participants reported, and the lack of support by management, driven by gendered perceptions of sexual harassment serve to reflect the view of Dawson et al. (2021: 3) that 'men are less likely to label sexualized behaviour at work as sexually harassing and are more tolerant of sexual harassment than women'. Such harmful stereotypes, in line with the unequal power dynamics within the service triangle, create a space and environment in which submissive masculinity intersects with sexual harassment to meet sectoral norms that promote submissive behaviours and tolerance and acceptance of customer misbehaviours (Hadjisolomou et al., 2023).

## Conclusion

As several authors have already acknowledged, as also evident in this study, in the contemporary service economy customers are powerful and superior to service providers and they can misbehave, while the latter have to tolerate it (Poulston 2008; Ram et al. 2016; Yagil 2008) or accept it 'as part of the job' (Good and Cooper 2016). This philosophy constructs an imbalance of interactive power (Flecha et al. 2020) between service providers and service receivers who are called to comply to sexual harassment, with their masculinity becoming submissive to the customers' masculinity. The contribution of this article connects the theory of internal hegemonic masculinity (i.e., the social dominance of men customers over men workers) with the pink euro contextual factors that construct the submission of workers' masculinity in the gay tourist industry (Demetriou 2001). While Connell's (1995) masculinities theory has made valuable contributions to understanding gender and power dynamics, it falls short of comprehensively address the experiences of men facing sexual harassment by other men.

The concept of submissive masculinities in this service work context indicates that a more nuanced understanding is required, one that acknowledges power dynamics, and structural inequalities. As this article discusses, gay men, by accepting, tolerating and normalizing sexual harassment, subordinate to gender performances that reproduce hegemonic masculinity (Seely 2018). This pattern is evident in the data, with participants reflecting and comparing their experiences of sexual harassment with those of women, suggesting that in gay tourism sexual harassment is a normative and accepted behaviour. Our conceptualization of submissive masculinity relates to the underdeveloped concept of the authorization of subordinate masculinities (Connell 2005) as a set of practices that perpetuate hegemonic masculinity. Overall, this study contributes to this concept illustrating that the 'authorization' of subordinate masculinities falls outside the normative heterosexual status of hegemonic masculinity and is constructed within the internal hegemonic masculinity, where men become subordinate and submissive to other men's' sexual behaviours.

Future research is required in more diverse markets, for example the gay hospitality industry in cities, and different national and non-western contexts (see Nghiem-Phu and Suter 2021; Jeffrey and Sposato 2021) where a more diverse clientele and workforce might be present. This line of enquiry may address the limitations of Connell's (1995) hegemonic masculinity context, by taking into consideration the intersectional identities of men who have sex with other men and how these impacts on power relations and submissive masculinities. Additionally, the context remains crucial to understand how masculinity varies across social locations and contexts (Bridges and Pascoe 2014; Chaudhry and Amis 2022; Childs 2016). Therefore, there is still a need for further research to understand sexual harassment within non-tourist LGBT+ spaces and the power structures that shape masculinities in such commercial and non-commercial places.

## References

- Anon (a). (n.d), 'Gran Canaria gay friendly', available at:  
<https://www.grancanaria.com/turismo/en/gay-friendly/gay-friendly/>(accessed 11 May 2023)
- Anon (b). (n.d), 'Celebrate Pride in Madrid, Ibiza and Sitges', available at  
<https://www.spain.info/en/discover-spain/gay-pride-madrid-ibiza-sitges/> (accessed 11 May 2023)
- Bates, L. (2014), *Everyday Sexism*, London: Simon & Schuster.
- Bedera, N. and Nordmeyer, K. (2021), 'An inherently masculine practice: understanding the sexual victimization of queer women', *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, 36:23-24, pp. 11188–211.
- Berdahl, J. L. and Moore, C. (2006), 'Workplace harassment: double jeopardy for minority women', *Journal of Applied Psychology* 91:2, pp. 426-36.
- Berdahl, J. L., Cooper, M., Glick, P., Livingston, R. W., and Williams, J. C. (2018), 'Work as a masculinity contest', *Journal of Social Issues*, 74:3, pp. 422–448.
- Booyens, I., Hadjisolomou, T., Nickson, D., Cunningham, T. and Baum, T. (2022), "'It's not a big deal": Customer misbehaviour and social washing in hospitality', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 34:11, pp. 4123–41.
- Bridges, T. and Pascoe, C. (2014), 'Hybrid masculinities: New directions in the sociology of men and masculinities', *Sociology Compass*, 8:3, pp. 246–58.
- Chaudhry, A. and Amis, J. (2022), 'Negotiating masculinities in times of crises: On the COVID frontline in Pakistan', *Gender, Work and Organization*, 29:2, pp. 650-65.
- Childs, A. (2016), 'Hyper or hypo-masculine? Re-conceptualizing "hyper-masculinity" through Seattle's gay, leather community', *Gender, Place & Culture*, 23:9, pp.1315–28.
- Cisneros, J. and Bracho, C. (2019), 'Coming out of the shadows and the closet: Visibility schemas among undocuqueer immigrants', *Journal of Homosexuality* 66:6, pp. 715–34.
- Clift, S. and Forrest, S. (1999), 'Gay men and tourism: destinations and holiday motivations', *Tourism Management*, 20:5, pp. 615–25.
- Cohen S.A, Prayag G and Moital M (2014), 'Consumer behaviour in tourism: Concepts, influences and opportunities', *Current Issues in Tourism*, 17:10, pp. 872-909
- Coles, T. (2008) 'Finding space in the field of masculinity: lived experiences of men's masculinities', *Journal of Sociology*, 44:3, pp. 233–248.
- Connell, R. W. (1995), *Masculinities*, Cambridge: Polity.
- Connell R.W. (2000). *The Men and the Boys*. Sydney: Allen & Unwin.

Coombes, P., and Singh, P. (2022). In Pursuit of the “Pink Pound”: A Systematic Literature Review. *International Journal of Market Research*, 64:4, pp. 451–469.

Cortina, L. M. and Areguin, M. A. (2021), ‘Putting people down and pushing them out: Sexual harassment in the workplace’, *Annual Review of Organizational Psychology and Organizational Behavior*, 8, pp. 285-309.

Dawson, Mary, Michelle Russen, Lindsey Lee, and Juan Madera. 2021. “The Unique Aesthetics of Organizational Climate that Contribute to the Prevalence of Sexual Harassment Incidents within the Restaurant Industry.” *Journal of Foodservice Business Research*: 1– 19.

Demetriou, D. Z. 2001. ‘Connell’s concept of hegemonic masculinity: A critique’, *Theory and Society* 30:3, pp. 337–61.

Flecha, R., Tomás. G., and Vidu, A. (2020) ‘Contributions from psychology to effectively use and achieving sexual consent’, *Frontiers in Psychology* 11:92, pp. 1-14.

Folgerø, I. and Fjeldstad, I. (1995), ‘On duty—off guard: Cultural norms and sexual harassment in service organizations’, *Organization Studies*, 16:2, pp. 299–313.

Good, L. and Cooper, R. (2016), “‘But it’s your job to be friendly’”: Employees coping with and contesting sexual harassment from customers in the service sector’, *Gender, Work and Organization*, 23:5, pp. 447–69.

Hadjisolomou, A. (2021), ‘Doing and negotiating transgender on the front line: Customer abuse, transphobia and stigma in the food retail sector’, *Work, Employment and Society*, 35:5, pp. 979-88. Hughes, H. (1997), ‘Holidays and homosexual identity’, *Tourism Management*, 18:1, pp. 3–7.

Hadjisolomou, A., Nickson, D. and Baum, T., 2023. ‘He is the customer, I will say yes’: Notions of power, precarity and consent to sexual harassment by customers in the gay tourism industry. *Gender, Work & Organization* 30:4, pp. 1407-1428

Hughes, H. (2002), ‘Gay men’s holiday destination choice: A case of risk and avoidance’, *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 4:4, pp. 299–312.

Hughes, H. L. (2006), *Pink Tourism: Holidays of Gay Men and Lesbians*. CABI. Oxfordshire

The International Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Trans and Intersex Association (ILGA) EU (2020), Annual Review available online <https://www.rainbow-europe.org/annual-review>, (accessed 11/12/22).

Jarvis, N. (2015). ‘Masculinity and the gay games: A consideration of hegemonic and queer debates’, in . M. Thurnell-Read and T. Casey (eds) *Men, Masculinities, Travel and Tourism* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 58-72

Jeong, S. and Chang, H. E. (2022), ‘Workplace sexual harassment of male nurses in South Korea: A cross-sectional online survey’, *BMC Nursing* 21, pp. 303–13.

Köllen, T. and Lazar, S. (2012), 'Gay tourism in Budapest: An exploratory study on gay tourists' motivational patterns for traveling to Budapest', *American Journal of Tourism Management*, 1:3, pp. 64–8.

McDonald, P. and Charlesworth, S. (2016), 'Workplace sexual harassment at the margins', *Work, Employment and Society*, 30:1, pp. 118–34.

Melián-González, A., Moreno-Gil, S. and Araña, J. (2011), 'Gay tourism in a sun and beach destination', *Tourism Management*, 32:5, 1027–37.

Miles, M. and Huberman, M. (1994), *Qualitative Data Analysis: An Expanded Sourcebook*, 2nd ed., Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Mills, S. & Owen, B. (2023), 'Customer abuse and aggression as labour control among LGBT workers in low-wage services', *Work, Employment and Society*, 37:3, 776-93.

Monterrubio, J.C. and López, A. (2014), 'Recognising homoeroticism in male gay tourism: A Mexican perspective', in T. Thurnell-Read and M. Casey (eds) *Men, Masculinities, Travel and Tourism*, London: Palgrave MacMillan, pp. 171–85.

Morgan, N. and Pritchard, A. (2019), 'Gender matters in hospitality', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 76:B, pp. 38–44.

Ocampo, A. (2012), 'Making masculinity: Negotiations of gender presentation among Latino gay men', *Latino Studies*, 10:4, pp. 448–72.

Ong, F., Vorobjovas-Pinta, O. and Clifford L. (2022), 'LGBTIQ + identities in tourism and leisure research: A systematic qualitative literature review', *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* 30:7, 1476– 99.

Ooi, C. S. (2021), 'Gay tourism: A celebration and appropriation of queer difference', in O. Vorobjovas-Pinta (ed) *Gay Tourism: New Perspectives*, Bristol: Channel View Publications, pp. 15-33.

Papantoniou, P. (2021), 'Are male nurses sexually harassed? A cross-sectional study in the Greek health system', *BMC Nursing*, 20:137, pp. 118–134.

Pritchard, A. and Morgan, N. (2000), 'Privileging the male gaze: Gendered tourism landscapes', *Annals of Tourism Research*, 27:4, pp. 884–905.

Poulston, J. (2008), 'Metamorphosis in hospitality: A tradition of sexual harassment', *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 27:2, pp. 232–40.

Ram, Y., Tribe, J., and Biran, A. (2016), 'Sexual harassment: Overlooked and under-researched', *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 28:10, pp. 2110–31.

Reguira, C. and García-Izquierdo, A. (2021), 'Women as victims of court rulings: Consequences of workplace harassment in the hospitality Industry in Spain (2000–2016)', *Sustainability*, 13, pp. 1-20.

Roberts, S. and Elliott, K. (2020), 'Challenging dominant representations of marginalized boys and men in critical studies on men and masculinities', *Boyhood Studies*, 13:2, pp. 87–104

Scarduzio, J. A., Wehlage, S. J. and Lueken, S. (2018), "'It's like taking your man card away": Male victims' narratives of male-to-male sexual harassment', *Communication Quarterly*, 66:5, pp. 481–500.

Seeley, J. L. (2018), "'Show us your frilly, pink underbelly": Men administrative assistants doing masculinities and femininity', *Gender, Work, and Organization*, 25, pp. 418–36.

Sharp, M., Ferrugia, D., Coffey, J., Threadgold, S., Adkins, L., Gill, R. (2022), 'Queer subjectivities in hospitality labor', *Gender, Work and Organization*, 29:5, pp. 1511-25.

Vorobjovas-Pinta, O. and Hardy, A. (2016), 'The evolution of gay travel research'. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 18:4, pp.. 409-16.

Vorobjovas-Pinta, O. (2021a), 'Gay tourism: New perspectives' in O. Vorobjovas-Pinta (ed) *Gay Tourism: New Perspectives*, Bristol: Channel View Publications, pp. 1-12.

Vorobjovas-Pinta, Oscar. (2021b) 'LGBTQI+ resort workers: blurring the lines of work and leisure'. in O. Vorobjovas-Pinta (ed) *Gay Tourism: New Perspectives*, Bristol: Channel View Publications, 119-133.

Waite, G. and Markwell, K. (2006), *Gay tourism: Culture and context*, New York: Haworth Hospitality Press.

Waite, G. and Markwell, K. (2015), "'I don't want to think I am a prostitute": Embodied geographies of men, masculinities and clubbing in Seminyak, Bali, Indonesia' in M. Thurnell-Read and T. Casey (eds) *Men, Masculinities, Travel and Tourism* London: Palgrave Macmillan, pp. 104-119.

Waldo, C. R., Berdahl, J. L. and Fitzgerald, L. F. (1998), 'Are men sexually harassed? If so, by whom?', *Law and Human Behavior*, 22:1, pp. 59–79.

Warhurst, C. and Nickson, D. (2009), "'Who's got the look?'" emotional, aesthetic and sexualized labour in interactive services', *Gender, Work and Organization*, 16:3, pp. 385–404.

Winder, T. J. A. (2015), "'Shouting it out": Religion and the development of Black gay identities', *Qualitative Sociology*, 38, pp. 375–94.

Webster, J., Adams, G., Maranto, C., Sawyer, K. and Thoroughgood, C. (2018), 'Workplace contextual support for LGBT employees: a review, meta-analysis and agenda for future research', *Human Resource Management*, 57:1, pp. 193-210.

Yagil, D. (2008), 'When the customer is wrong: A review of research on aggression and sexual harassment in service encounters', *Aggression and Violent Behaviour*, 13:2, pp. 141–52.



Yeung, K., Stompler, M., and Wharton, R. (2006), 'Making men in gay fraternities: Resisting and reproducing multiple dimensions of hegemonic masculinity', *Gender & Society*, 20:1, pp. 5–31.