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EMPOWERING WOMEN IN RURAL TOURISM DEVELOPMENT AT SAUNG CIBURIAL TOURISM VILLAGE, GARUT, INDONESIA

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Abstract

In this modern era, every human being has the same right to work including in the development of tourism in a destination. Likewise, women deserve an equal share and are empowered. Rural tourism is not only alternative tourism but is a vital aspect of the community's socio-economic development. Rural tourism is also an important tool in upholding the principle of gender equality because women take a large role in employment relations in rural tourism development. The main focus of this research is to review the extent of women's empowerment in the development of rural tourism in the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village, Garut City. Using descriptive methods and qualitative approaches, data collection was carried out through observation and integrated interviews where the participants in this study were all stakeholders and women who were involved in rural tourism activities in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village. The results showed that women in the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village had been actively involved/empowered in tourism activities, starting from technical staff, lower-level management, to upper-level management where they were trusted to be administrators and even leaders of village government organizations/agencies.

Keywords: *Rural Tourism, Women Empowerment, Gender Equality*

Introduction

Today, the development of the tourism sector globally does not only talk about the movement of tourists to and from tourist destinations but also plays a vital role in upholding the principles of sustainable development including the commitment to gender equality, empowering women, and leaving no one behind (Khoo-Lattimore et al., 2019). In this modern era, every human being has the same right to work, especially in the context of tourism development in a destination. Likewise, women deserve an equal share and are empowered. Women's empowerment describes the ability of women to determine, control their own circumstances, and realize their aspirations to live the life they have (Galie & Fanworth, 2019). The empowerment of women through tourism

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has proven to break the perspective of women's role only to raise children while men support the household financially. Through tourism, women's empowerment is available in the form of education and involvement in organizations (Aghazamani , Yeganeh & Hunt, Carter A. (2017). Empowerment In Tourism: A Review Of Peer-Reviewed Literature. Tourism Review International, 21, 2017)

The involvement of women in tourism has been shown to increase economic and welfare opportunities as well as improve social conditions. In Southeast Asia, most of the destinations that have provided sufficient space for women's involvement in tourism development are tourist villages. In recent years, rural tourism is not only seen as alternative tourism but has become a major concern in its development and has a major influence on improving the socio-economic sector of the community. Rural tourism is also an important tool in upholding the principle of gender equality because women play a large role in employment relations in rural tourism development (Duarte & Pereira, 2018).

In Indonesia, the development of tourism in rural areas is closely related to the term community-based tourism. Community-based tourism is considered to provide opportunities for the community to increase their involvement and participation in tourism so as to provide benefits to economic, social and cultural conditions (Nitikasetsoontorn, 2014).

One of the tourist villages that implements community-based tourism is the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village, Garut City, West Java. Saung Ciburial Tourism Village is the flagship of Garut City because it has succeeded in entering the 50 2021 Indonesian Tourism Village Awards. Tourism development in Saung Ciburial Village, prioritizes empowering local communities and improving the economy (Nugroho & Suprapto, 2021). As is known, tourism village development must uphold gender equality to achieve sustainability because without gender equality there will not be sustainability (Alarcón & Cole, 2019).

Over the years the division of labor still sees differences in gender and physical conditions. Although there are still many inequalities regarding the share and position of women in employment empowerment, rural tourism is a great opportunity for women to play an active role, and perform professional functions with impact, which promotes gender equality (Duarte & Pereira, 2018). Therefore, there is a need for further studies regarding the portion and position of women in the development of rural tourism.

Research Method

Primary data collection, namely in the form of quantitative data, was carried out by distributing questionnaires containing demographic data on community involvement in tourism activities as well as indicators derived from the concept of women's empowerment by (Scheyvens, 1999). As for the distribution of the questionnaires, a sample of 40 female tourism workers was taken where the population size was 97 people, with details of 31 male workers and 66 female workers. The questionnaire data obtained was analyzed simply with descriptive statistical methods. Furthermore, the primary data that has been obtained is strengthened by a literature study of several policies belonging to Saung Ciburial Tourism Village and previous studies as secondary data.

The principle of data analysis is to compare the actual condition of women's community empowerment with the concept of women's empowerment in tourist destinations which has been elaborated through a variable operationalization matrix.

Result and Discussion

A. The Actual Conditions of Community Empowerment in the Tourism Sector in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village

Women in the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village have been empowered in tourism activities in their villages. According to the results of interviews with several women in Saung Cibural Tourism Village, the involvement of women in tourism activities began in 2002 when women were involved in programs such as Family Welfare Empowerment (PKK), Women's Special Consultation (MKP), and women's involvement in the District Election Committee. (PPK). In 2007 and 2008, women in Suka Laksana Village were further involved by becoming managers of one of the BUMDes business units, namely the management of clean water which was distributed to all residents of Suka Laksana Village. Until now, women in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village have been involved in other BUMDES business units such as being environmental administrators (cleaners), food and drink providers, managers of tourist cottages (homestays), MSME managers, receptionists, and are included in the organizational structure of village managers. Saung Ciburial Tourism and BUMDes management side by side with men.

This is following what is reflected in the answers in the distributed questionnaire regarding the general description of their involvement in tourism activities and the benefits they experience. This can be seen from the questionnaire data processing which is summarized in the following table:

Table 1
Proportion of Citizen Involvement in Tourism Activities

Category	Job Formation	Number of Citizen Involved		Involvement Percentage (%)	
		Women	Men	Women	Men
Managerial & Operational	Membership of Village Owned Enterprises as the body that oversees all village business and economic affairs	7	4	63.64	36.36
	Membership of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS) as the	3	6	33.33	66.67

	operational manager of village tourism				
	Management of tourist attractions and activities	12	8	60.00	40.00
	MSME Empowerment	6	0	100.00	0.00
Technical Manager	Environmental Manager	10	2	83.33	16.67
	Homestay manager (accommodation)	16	0	100.00	0.00
	Food and beverage provider	8	0	100.00	0.00
	Maintenance of tourism infrastructure	0	7	0.00	100.00
	Tour guide	4	4	50.00	50.00
	TOTAL	**66**	**31**	**68.04**	**31.96**

Source: Data Analysis (2022)

From the table above it is known that most of the job formations in tourism activities in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village are filled with female workers, both in managerial and operational categories, as well as in more specific areas such as even technical managers. This can be seen from the large percentage of the total involvement of the female workforce which is equal to 68.04% compared to the male workforce which is only 31.96%. This shows that tourism activities in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village are carried out by the dominance of female workers from various sectors. Nevertheless, it is undeniable that for several types of job formations that require special expertise and quite a lot of energy, such as maintenance of tourism infrastructure, such as the construction of infrastructure and maintenance utilities, 100% are still held by male workers. Likewise, the management of the Tourism Awareness Group (POKDARWIS), which has many technical matters in the operation of tourism activities, is still filled by men with a percentage of 66.67%.

B. Forms of Empowerment Carried Out in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village

In general, there are four forms of empowering women in tourism activities, according to what was stated by (Scheyvens, 1999). The forms of empowerment include:

1. Social Empowerment
2. Psychological Empowerment
3. Economic Empowerment
4. Political Empowerment

Next, through an analytical approach following the results of distributing questionnaires to 45 workers in the tourism sector as samples from this study, the actual forms of women's

empowerment in tourism activities are mapped according to the conditions that occur in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village. The following is the analysis and discussion:

Table 2
Questionnaire Distribution Results Data

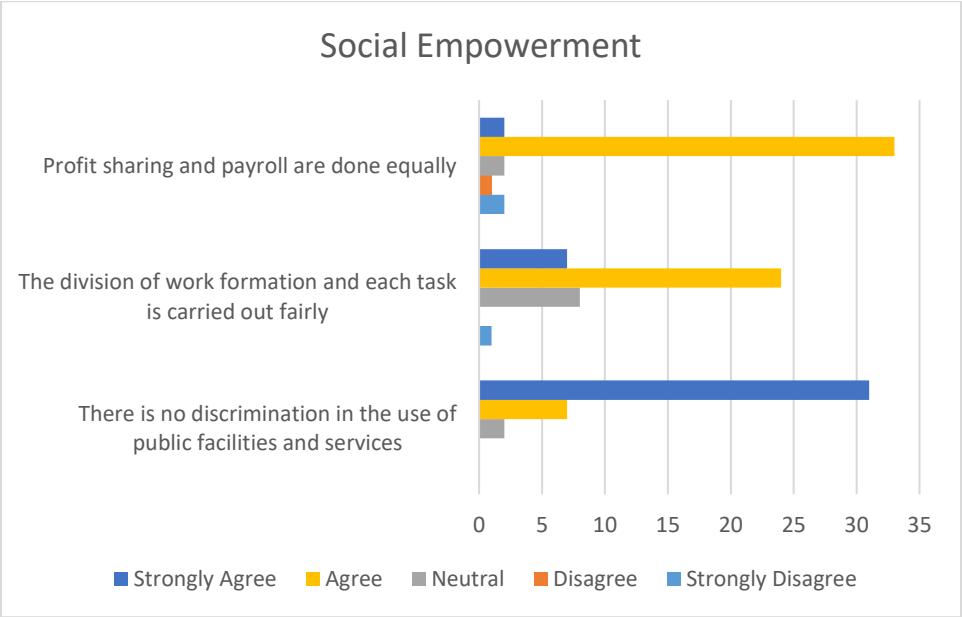
Dimension	Indicator	Answer				
		1	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Social Empowerment	There is no discrimination in the use of public facilities and services	0	0	2	7	31
	The division of work formation and each task is carried out fairly	1	0	8	24	7
	Profit sharing and payroll are done equally	2	1	2	33	2
Psychological Empowerment	The sense of justice and equality received fosters a sense of optimism about the future	1	4	3	28	4
	Productivity is always maintained and increased	0	1	4	23	12
Political Empowerment	Women are always included in every discussion related to tourism activities	1	8	5	16	10
	Women have the same opportunity to give opinions and make decisions	5	7	2	11	15
Economical Empowerment	Women have the same opportunities as men in getting jobs and carrying out tourism economic activities	2	1	6	11	20
	There are no restrictions for women to work in tourism activities	0	0	0	17	23
	The involvement of women in tourism activities has changed the welfare conditions of the village community in general	0	0	0	28	12

Source: Data Analysis (2022)

1. Social Empowerment

Social empowerment refers to the integrity of the community that is able to carry out an activity such as ecotourism, where social empowerment expands access to public services or facilities such as water and health clinics (Scheyvens, 2000).

Figure 1
Social Empowerment Responses Analysis



Source: Data Analysis (2022)

From the picture above, it can be seen that in all the 3 indicators asked of the sample, a positive perception was obtained where the majority of them agreed with the existence of fairness in profit sharing and payroll, agreed with the fair division of tasks and job formation, and strongly agreed with the statement no. there is discrimination in the use of public facilities and services. This indicates that society, especially women, feels that they have been equalized in the context of social life.

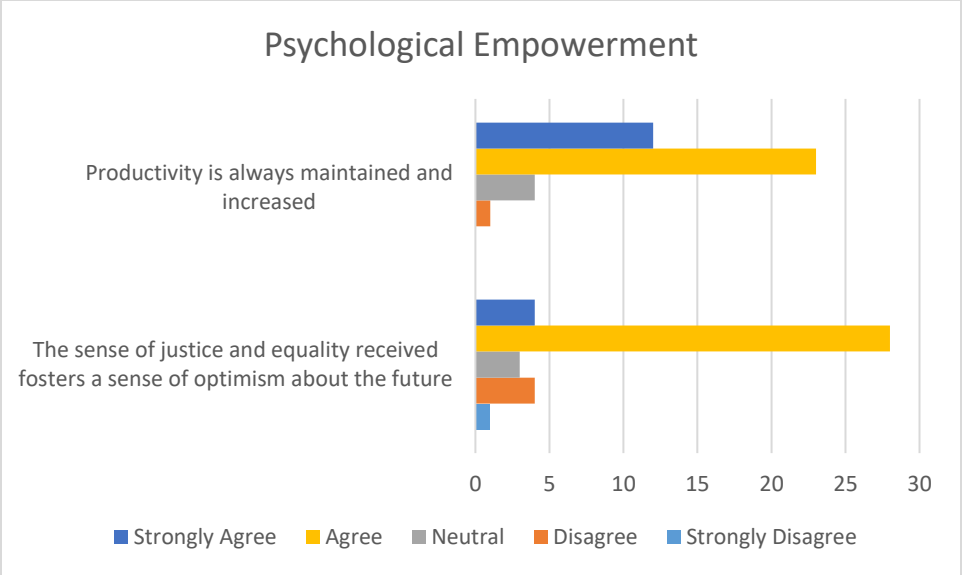
This form of empowerment has been explicitly described in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village. One real example is the absence of discrimination in accessing or utilizing clean water sources. In addition, there is already a clear division of tasks in MSME management where men handle the process of collecting raw materials, and take on heavy work roles in the construction of public facilities while women are responsible for managing or maintaining these facilities.

2. Psychological Empowerment

One indicator of psychological empowerment is an increase in optimism in a person due to an improvement in the person's condition after being empowered. (Scheyvens, 2000) said that psychological empowerment makes local people optimistic about the future, have

confidence in their abilities, are independent, and are proud of their traditions and culture. This has been seen in the women of the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village where they admit that since there were tourism activities, they feel proud to be part of the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village because they feel their village has become better known by the wider community.

Figure 2
Psychological Empowerment Responses Analysis



Source: Data Analysis (2022)

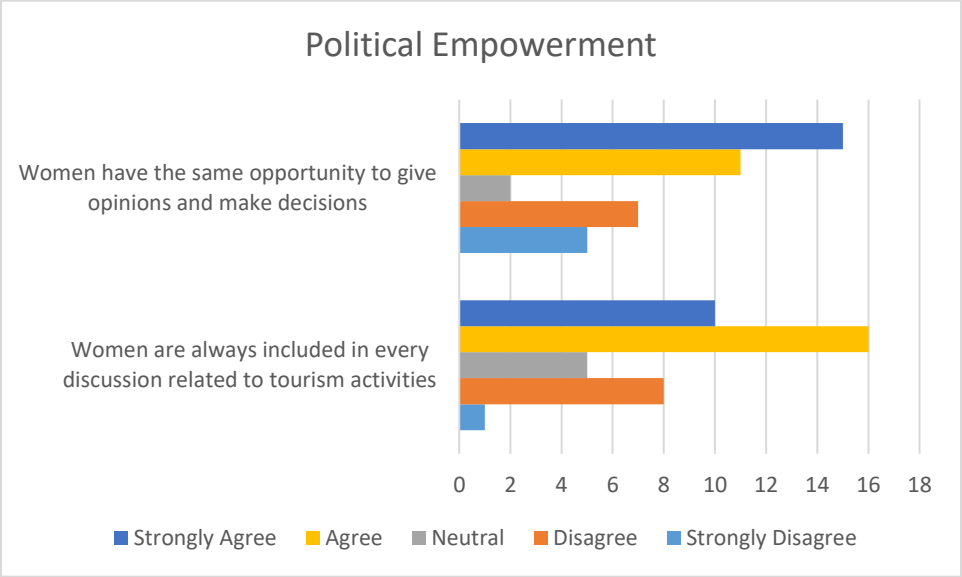
The table above indicates that there is a positive perception of the two indicators in question, namely productivity that is always maintained and optimism about future conditions thanks to perceived fairness and equality. This can be seen from the majority of the sample who agreed with the two indicators.

In actual conditions, the women of Saung Ciburial Tourism Village have been involved in preserving village traditions and can utilize tradition to produce a product and increase their sense of pride and confidence in their tradition. One example is that those who have a tradition of processing the Kewer plant into a product in the form of Kewer tea can mass-produce this tea and make Kewer tea a special product and welcome drink.

3. Political Empowerment

Political empowerment implies that every element of society has equal portions and points of view in political activities or in the sense of having the same rights and obligations in the formation of every decision from a program/policy context (Mardiatno et al., 2022). The main indicator of this form of empowerment is that women have the opportunity to be involved in official decision-making.

Figure 3
Political Empowerment Responses Analysis



Source: Data Analysis (2022)

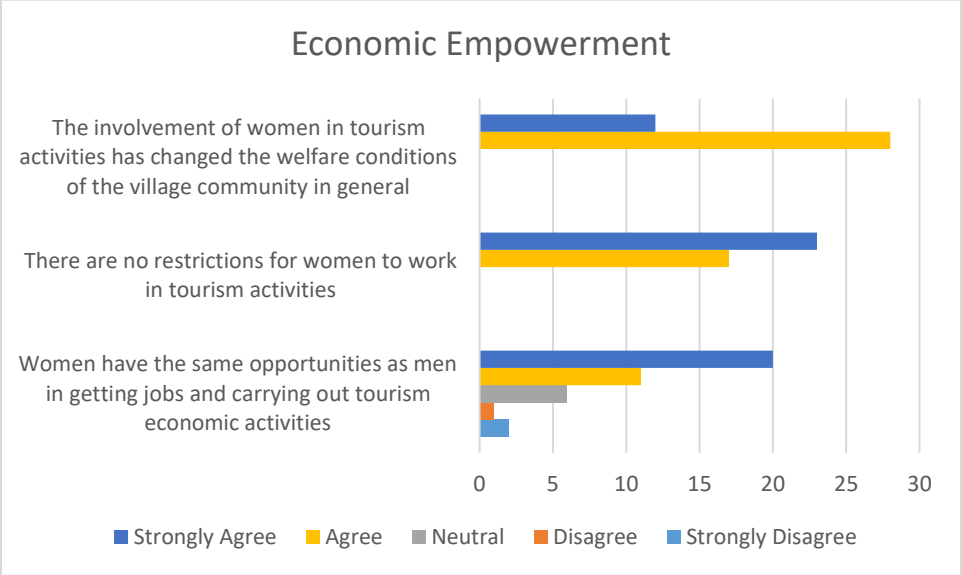
Unlike the previous two dimensions of empowerment, which predominantly found positive perceptions on each of the indicators asked, this political dimension has almost the same proportion of positive and negative perceptions. However, even so, the tendency is still towards positive perceptions where the majority of the sample answers strongly agree with the indicator that women are given equal opportunities to have opinions and make decisions, and the majority of answers agree with the indicator that women are always involved in making all decisions related to tourism activities in the village.

In practice, women in the Saung Cibural Tourism Village were involved and dominated the organizational structure of the management of the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village. Women dominate the organizational structure of the management of Ciburial Tourism Village because women are considered more able to accommodate or manage properly and thoroughly. Women can also voice their opinions regarding the management and development of tourism in the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village in formal and non-formal forums. In addition, women are also involved in the organizational structure of the Suka Laksana Village BUMDes management, which is even led by a woman. This is following what was said by (Scheyvens, 2000) where political empowerment occurs when all community groups have equal opportunities to express their opinions and are involved in tourism activities and are involved in monitoring and evaluating these activities.

4. Economic Empowerment

The main indicator in economic empowerment is to consider job opportunities that arise in the formal, informal, and business sectors. Economic empowerment opens opportunities for women who sometimes do not have the opportunity to work and provides economic benefits or income on a regular basis that can be relied upon (Mardiatno et al., 2022).

Figure 3
Economic Empowerment Responses Analysis



Source: Data Analysis (2022)

From the summary of the answers in the figure above, it is found that all indicators received positive perceptions, even the indicators of involving women in tourism activities have increased the welfare of society in general and the absence of restrictions for women to work received an absolute positive response (agree and strongly agree).

In reality, there has been economic independence and the opportunity to work in Saung Ciburial Tourism Village, and the opportunity to run a business for women. Since the existence of tourism activities, women have been involved or employed in several fields to support the course of tourism such as homestay managers, cleaning workers, food and beverage providers, and MSME managers. Women who are involved in tourism activities receive a monthly income that can help improve the standard of living of the family, sometimes getting a bonus or additional income from the entrance fee. Women also have the opportunity to run a business by fully carrying out MSME activities from production to marketing activities.

Conclusions

From the results of the analysis and discussion, it can be concluded that women in the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village have been actively and comprehensively empowered in tourism activities in the village. There is no gender discrimination in each stage of the implementation of tourism activities. The involvement of women in tourism activities has even reached the top level where women are trusted as administrators and leaders/chairmen of an organization or village government agency. In addition, when adjusted for the four

forms of community empowerment proposed by (Scheyvens, 2000), it is concluded that women in the Saung Ciburial Tourism Village have fulfilled these four forms and have benefited from their involvement in tourism activities. Therefore, the results of this study can be a reference for other tourist villages in empowering women to support gender equality and the enforcement of sustainable development goals.

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