

WOMEN AND WORK CHOICES IN THE TOURISM SECTOR: A FORM OF WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

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Abstract:

The covid-19 pandemic profoundly influenced the Balinese economy and tourism industry, particularly in Canggu's growing economy. The general purpose of this research is to discover how Canggu women's career options have changed since the rapid development of tourism in recent years, as the effect of tourism downfall during and after the COVID-19 epidemic. The research objective is to analyze the internal and external elements that impact women's decision to enter the workforce. This study adopted a qualitative descriptive analysis based on the research purpose. Female Canggu Village Youth Organization members were explicitly chosen as informants for this study. The interview process findings and researchers' involvement in the field revealed that women's decision-making in Canggu Village was influenced by internal factors, such as education level and personality traits, and external factors, such as cultural customs and the influence of those closest to them. Despite the economic slowdown caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, women in Canggu Village are mainly confident that tourism will become the leading industry driving the Canggu Village economy. The findings of this study are likely to assist local governments, academics working on women's empowerment, gender equality, and sustainable tourist development, as well as other communities working to achieve sustainable development.

Keywords: Work-Choices, Women Empowerment, Sustainable Tourism, Community-Based Tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment is a significant problem in achieving sustainable development. Economic empowerment of women is essential for elevating their social standing. Gender equality in the labor market is an emerging phenomenon worldwide in Bali, Indonesia. Gender mainstreaming and equal labor-force participation of men and women are crucial indicators for further action and launching a program that can increase people's well-being (Serafimova & Petrevska, 2018). Furthermore, women's empowerment has become a global trend to safeguard and uphold women's rights regarding education, the workforce, and welfare (Izzaty Shahirah Nor Sham et al., 2021). Women empowerment fosters gender equality, allowing women to participate equally in the economic and development processes. Gender equality and empowerment are critical for a thriving and sustainable society, according to the United Nations' 5th Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) (United Nations, 2016). Being empowered means having complete respect, independence, and a fulfilling existence as an actor in workforce.

Tourism has been identified as a powerful tool for empowering women in today's global economy. Because of the 'new trends' of mass tourism, numerous new career opportunities exist for women in the formal and informal sectors (Rizal & Rajamani, 2013). According to Ghodsee (2003), employing women at relatively high incomes in the tourism industry will help increase women's economic well-being. However, when other tourism facilities are established, local women are frequently overlooked in terms of formal employment. Women are often denied formal work prospects in tourism because social norms continue to restrict the types of economic activity in which women can participate (Scheyvens, 2000).

Canggu Village's tourism industry has expanded rapidly in recent years. It is because the Canggu area is roughly 20 minutes from Seminyak, making it an alternative for international tourists who still want to observe Balinese life with rice fields that can still be found in places that can still reach the touristy district of Kuta. Canggu is also around 25 minutes from Tabanan, making it simple for foreign tourists who wish to witness Balinese customs and culture to visit the Tanah Lot Temple (Tunjungsari, 2018). Additionally, Tunjungsari (2018) noted that nearly 70% of Canggu's residents had transferred their livelihoods to the tourism sector, and Canggu's development continues to advance. According to data from the village office, 479 tourism accommodations, including hotels, restaurants, villas, homestays, bars, and others, were documented in 2017. With all of the tourism activities that take place, the development of tourism in the Canggu Village region should impact community welfare.

However, the Covid-19 epidemic has profoundly affected Canggu's growing economy. The pandemic severely influenced the Balinese economy and the tourism industry in general. The local administration declared Bali was in a deep depression, with all tourism services being oversupplied due to a lack of tourists arriving and participating in usual activities. Covid-19 has had the most significant impact on all tourism activities in Bali, affecting around 96% of them (Yuniti et al., 2020). Many workers in the tourism sector, especially hotel and restaurant employees, have been laid off. A disaster that surprised many parties, a normal and fine daily life suddenly changed (Rubio-Mozos et al., 2020). However, with the disaster experienced by Bali tourism, it can still survive. A proof that the spirit of tourism is so great in the community (Larasdiputra et al., 2022). The current state of the tourism industry provides a fresh viewpoint for women in Canggu Village who formerly earned a significant amount of money. This research aims to uncover the field conditions that influence women's employment decisions in Canggu Village before and after the drop in tourism development and how internal and external factors influence these decisions. Based on description provided above, the authors decided to conduct another research titled "Women and Work-Choices in The Tourism Sector: A Form of Women Empowerment".

METHODS

The method and procedure applied in this research is qualitative descriptive research. In qualitative descriptive research, the researchers are concerned with understanding the individual human experience in its unique context. This type of inquiry requires flexible research processes that are inductive and dynamic but do not transform the data beyond recognition of the phenomenon being studied (Doyle et al., 2020; Ormston et al., 2014). This research relied on both primary and secondary data. Primary data are informants' words and actions, images, audio recordings, and videos taken directly by researchers who are part of the community in the research setting, Canggu Village. While secondary data is processed from various archives (pictures, recordings, videos) that can be received from agencies and organizations relevant to this research, primary data is from primary sources. Informants for this study were chosen randomly from the female population of

Canggu Village's Karang Taruna. The data collection methods included observation, interviews, and documentation. The triangulation technique was used to ensure the validity of the data in the study by comparing the observational data with the results of interviews, comparing what people said in public with what they said in private, and comparing a person's circumstances and perceptions with various opinions and views. The Interactive Analysis Model was utilized to analyze data in this study. This model has three components: data reduction, data display, and generating conclusions or verification.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Canggu is a village in the Badung Regency of Bali, Indonesia. Canggu Village has a total population of 6,629 people and a population density of 1,265 (people/km²). The population density climbed from 1,028 people per square kilometer in 2016 to 1,265 people per square kilometer in 2017. Tourism operations in Canggu began in 2000, owing to the allure of the waves in the area. Almost 70% of Canggu's residents have moved their livelihoods to the tourism industry, and the town's development continues to expand. According to data from the village office, 479 tourism accommodations, including hotels, restaurants, villas, homestays, bars, and others, were documented in 2017 (Tunjung Sari, 2018). The land is used in Canggu. However, only a few people sell their land to investors. Agricultural land and subak can still be found in numerous Banjars, and tourism excursions to visit the rice fields are in high demand.

Job Opportunities. This study begins with a review of prior studies, various reading sources and secondary data sources sourced from relevant agencies, and data released by the business sector in accordance with the research's focus. Based on the findings of the literature study, the following steps were planned as a field survey, beginning with a meeting with the key informant, I Gede Wahyu Putra, the Chair of the Canggu Village Youth Organization, who subsequently instructed other informants. The overall number of key informants and additional informants in this study was 11 individuals. The qualitative descriptive research approach was tailored to the existing constraints of the COVID-19 epidemic. After careful analysis, the demographic and sample of informants in this study were female residents of Canggu's Karang Taruna Village. Informants are Canggu Village delegates from each Banjar who are meant to represent working-age women in the village.

Data analysis in qualitative descriptive research necessitates researchers to simultaneously carry out operations such as data collection, interpretation, and drafting of research reports (Creswell, 2014). As a result, this study's data analysis is done in various ways. The researcher actively carried out three (3) components of the analysis throughout data collecting: data reduction, data presentation, and conclusion/verification. Because there was a gathering limit at the start of the year, the interview procedure and the engagement of researchers in the field took place between June and August, which was eventually avoided by dividing the gathering into smaller ones. Of course, researchers visited Canggu Village in compliance with the conditions imposed by the Canggu Village authority. First, the researcher met with the Head of Karang Taruna in Canggu Village for a brief interview in which he explained the goal of the investigation. The meeting resulted in the Chairperson of the Canggu Village Youth Organization serving as the primary informant for this study.

Key informants give critical information and can help steer other informants if they can supply further information that the researcher requires. The situation and settings are also considered so that health protocols to prevent COVID-19 are always followed. Important tourism-related information communicated by key informants provides more job options for women in

Canggu Village, independent of school level or family background. Traditional villages and village administrations (Perbekel) encourage tourism development by enforcing laws and regulations that benefit both outside investors and Canggu Village locals.

Other informants in this study were mainly upbeat about the future of tourism. When the situation allows, the tourism sector in Canggu Village is back up and operating, albeit not as well as before. According to an insider who works as a tourism entrepreneur, particularly regarding: *"Because tourism development in Canggu is accelerating, there is still hope that tourism-related businesses such as restaurants, micro bars, and the like would continue to exist and create work possibilities for residents"*. This statement can be construed to mean that the people of Canggu Village believe the tourism industry will rebound once the COVID-19 pandemic has passed and crowd restrictions are lifted. In the future, village and customary governments can learn from the pandemic conditions to develop a tourism sector that benefits local communities in the sense that all resources used to meet the demands of the tourism industry can come from Canggu and other places in Bali Province.

Internal Factors Affecting Work Decision Making. The majority of the women workforce is entering the informal sector (Lenshie et al., 2021). Tourism can improve informal employment and create viable prospects for entrepreneurship. Psychological elements arising from individual internal processes strongly influence employment decisions, particularly for women with multiple roles to play in their lives. Women's employment decisions are influenced by their awareness of life facts. According to research informants who currently work in cooperatives, *"If the working environment is not to my liking, I will not work there. For me, peace of mind is more important than high pay. Furthermore, I am not married and have no other dependents. If I do not have a job yet, my preferred sector of work is in tourism, and I hope that tourism in Canggu will return to pre-COVID-19 levels."*

Concerning this statement, internal considerations have a significant role in women's employment decisions, particularly in Canggu Village. Women have rights in tourist decision-making, yet their participation in tourism decision-making is still limited (Khan & Omrane, 2020). The UNWTO has implemented an action plan to empower women via tourism. The plan's objectives are to help the impoverished (including through tourism), safeguard the environment, and empower women. Tourism contributes significantly to global GDP (more than 10%) and employs approximately 8% of the global workforce. Women make up about 60-70% of all workers in the tourism industry (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2008).

The flexibility of tourism jobs, such as producing handicrafts, can allow these women to continue their traditions while raising their standard of living. However, informal work also carries a large number of risks. Not all informal jobs are positive. For example, salaries are at risk of not being paid. It can significantly lead to economic or social empowerment failure if it strengthens the traditional gender division of labor within households and communities (United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2011). Women have an important role in tourism operations. Women are becoming more significant than males in tourism activities due to their creativity (Maliva, 2016). Women's participation in tourism activities will achieve equality and justice in family life, promote harmonious partnerships with men, create gender equality, and boost women's roles and independence (Arbarini et al., 2019).

External Factors Affecting Work Decision Making. The environment creates an individual and the individual acts within the environment. Individual conduct is heavily influenced by the many societal strata in which he was born and raised. Individuals from various settings will have varied judgments, requirements, views, attitudes, and tastes (Metcalf, 2009). The family and the culture of the individual's home community are the external variables that most impact an individual's decision. According to the research's interviewees who are currently working as

instructors, particularly; "My family, partner, and closest friends have a big influence on my decision to work." I would like to continue working in the Canggu Village region. Furthermore, Traditional Villages have significant power through legislation that forces hotel and villa developers, among others, to prioritize job openings for Canggu inhabitants."

This phrase implies that culture only sometimes affects women's rights and participation in the labor force. Although women in most cultures have limited mobility and are not taken into account in the workplace, tourism operations in Canggu Village and other tourist destinations in Indonesia are influenced by the role of women. Women manage tourism operations, even though their function is less than optimal and constrained due to their dual role in the home (Maliva, 2016).

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions are drawn from the analysis and discussion: According to informant interviews and observations, most women in Canggu Village choose to work in the tourism sector (as entrepreneurs and in restaurants, hotels, and villas). External factors such as the surrounding environment, family opinions, and traditional villages influence women's work decisions in Canggu Village. In contrast, internal factors such as knowledge of surrounding conditions and related individual personalities influence women's work decisions in Canggu Village. The discovery that the residents of Canggu Village, particularly women, still have faith in the tourist sector suggests that tourism strategies based on local resources can be developed in the future. The income from the tourism business might circulate through the local community, ultimately sustaining tourism and improving the community's well-being. Work possibilities that are not gender discriminatory require policies from the village government and adat. In the tourism business, men and women have equal and equal opportunities. Without demonstrating women's varied responsibilities in social life, it is hoped that there would be no discrimination, particularly in the future tourism labor market for women.

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