

# Exploring the Relationship between Women's Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development in Tourism: A Literature Review<sup>1</sup>

Eylla Laire M. Gutierrez<sup>2</sup>

Kazem Vafadari<sup>3</sup>

Received Date: 2022-07-25 | Publication Date: 2022-08-30  
<https://doi.org/10.33001/18355/IMJCT0105>

## Abstract

Women's empowerment across industries have been prioritized alongside aims to achieve the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) and community development across the globe. For years now, tourism industries have been lauded for the opportunities it provide to women who comprise majority of the industry's workforce. Despite this, studies suggest that women's participation in tourism do not necessarily contribute to their empowerment, nor result to their equality in the industry. In building on the existing discourses, this study examines the existing literature to investigate the impact of women's participation on their empowerment and its impact on community development. By conducting a literature review, a conceptual model based on the study's propositions illustrate the relationship between women's participation and empowerment in tourism. The findings of the study suggest that not all forms of tourism activities contribute to the empowerment of women. More specifically, the results reveal that while women's participation positively influences the psychological and economic empowerment of women, its positive impact on their political and social empowerment remain questionable. Similarly, the results reveal the positive influence of women's economic empowerment on community development remain challenged.

**Keywords:** Women, Participation, Empowerment, Tourism, Community Development, UN SDGs

<sup>1</sup> This article is culled from the author's working research study titled Women Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development in Tourism Areas in the Philippines.

<sup>2</sup> College of Asia Pacific Studies, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, [gu21e6qa@apu.ac.jp](mailto:gu21e6qa@apu.ac.jp)

<sup>3</sup> College of Asia Pacific Studies, Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University, [kazem@apu.ac.jp](mailto:kazem@apu.ac.jp)



## 1. Introduction

Women's empowerment across industries have been widely advocated in established developmental goals. The seminal work of Boserup (1970) earlier emphasized the value of involving and including women in the larger schemes of development which includes the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs)—specifically sustainable development goal (SDG) 5 “achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, SDG 8 “promote sustained, inclusive and sustainable economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all”, and SDG 10 “reduce inequality within and among countries”. The same developmental goals are mainstreamed in tourism industries where women comprise the majority of the industry's workforce (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2019). Amidst the growing number of women participating in tourism industries, several studies (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Alshareef & AlGassim, 2021; Elshaer et al, 2021; Scheyvens, 2000; Wilkinson & Pratiwi, 1995) pointed out issues and limitations that they currently face. Costa et al (2011), for example, found that women are more affected by employment issues such as seasonality, job rotation, part-time work, gender pay gap (Zhang & Zhang, 2021). For women entrepreneurs, they continue to suffer from issues in accessing credit and finance (Rinaldi & Salerno, 2020). Women also face challenges in balancing gender-designated responsibilities such as house and domestic work to their economic labor (Carvalho et al, 2018). As Ferguson (2011) argued, without genuine commitment to these developmental agenda promoting gender equality and women empowerment, the disparity and in the labor market will prevail. Thus, despite their dominance in the industry, the nature and extent of their participation remains contentious (Ramirez et al, 2020).

As suggested by Cole (2018), participation do not always result to empowerment. Following the multi-dimensional approach to empowerment by Scheyvens (1999), empowerment goes beyond the provision of economic opportunities and income, instead it also entails the psychological, social, and political empowerment of individuals. That is, women's empowerment facilitates the advancement of women's agency, autonomy, and authority (Cole, 2018). Thus, empowerment translates to freedoms where women are

freed from discriminating cultures, traditions, institutions, and systems (Moswete & Lacey, 2015). Empowerment therefore encompass the ability of women to make decisions and choices for themselves (Kabeer, 1999). As a concept requiring systemic modifications, empowerment entails a “negotiated process” (Movono & Dahles, 2017, p.10) necessitating interactions between community members, both men and women. However, because men and women are affected differently by developmental initiatives, pursuit of gender equality is deemed essential in promoting inclusive community development (Gyan & Mfoafo-M’Carthy, 2021). As suggested by Mansuri and Rao (2004), community development may be defined in terms of development that is for, by, and of the people. Arguably, without women’s involvement in developmental activities, inclusive community development will not be achieved—since women continue to face multiple challenges in participating and contributing to community development activities (Gyan, 2021). In the context of tourism, community development is pursued through Community-Based Tourism (CBT) initiatives (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010) where local community members are deemed as the key players in tourism development initiatives. Because of the diversity of communities, the experiences of women involved in tourism also vary (Cole, 2006).

Against this backdrop, this study addresses the question on **“what is the impact of women’s participation on their empowerment and their contribution to community development in tourism?”** To do so, the study aims to conduct a literature review on relevant studies on women in tourism and to propose a conceptual model illustrating the relationship between women’s participation and empowerment and their contribution to community development in tourism. The findings of the study builds on the growing literature examining women’s experiences in participating in tourism and in community development initiatives.

## **2. Literature Review and Proposition-building**

### **I. Discourses on Women in Tourism**

The growing presence of women in the tourism industry has been observed globally—comprising approximately 59% of industry’s workforce (UNWTO, 2019). Compared to other sectors, women were found to dominate the industry’s workforce with an employment rate that is two times higher than



men (UNWTO, 2011). With this, studies have emphasized the value of tourism as an enabler of women empowerment given its dynamic and flexible nature (Ateljevic, 2008). Tourism positively impacts women's employment through the economic activities it generates (Sinclair, 1998). As suggested by Fruman & Twining-Ward (2017), tourism offers opportunities for women to participate as a workforce in the industry and to occupy leadership positions in the economy. Arguably, tourism development empowers women by providing equal opportunities to sustain themselves and their livelihoods (Nassani et al, 2019). The same case is observed by Ferguson (2010) in Central America where women were found to be more empowered given the income from tourism activities. As suggested by Gentry (2007) in examining the experience of women in Belize, because women were believed to be more suitable engaging in domestic and care work, women were found to establish their own guesthouses. Aronsson (2000) also found that tourism creates opportunities for women to engage in self-employment activities that generate income. Arguably, by playing a more active role in tourism, women may be empowered (Ferguson, 2010, 2011).

On the other hand, Momsen and Nakata (2011) suggested that the impact of tourism depends on the individual's role in the industry. Arguably, tourism remains a highly gendered industry (Ferguson, 2011; Lenao & Basupi, 2016; Scheyvens, 2000; Tucker & Boonabaana, 2012). In fact, Sinclair (1997) emphasized the presence of a clear delineation between men's and women's work where women are engaged in lower-paid activities. The working conditions of women in tourism have also been questioned. As the International Labor Organization Report noted, 46% of women working in tourism industries are wage workers. The same report suggested that women in tourism occupy the lower levels of organizational structures in the industry (Belau et al, 2001). Women were found to be susceptible job seasonality, job rotation, part-time work, among others (Zhang & Zhang, 2021). Moreover, women were found to suffer from horizontal and vertical segregation that limit their potentials in the industry (Cave & Kilic, 2010). Beyond these employment implications, women were also found to be constrained by gender designated work. As Wilson (2003) found, working in hotel and catering sectors of tourism tend to be labeled as women's extended domestic roles or their family roles (Akođlan, 1996). Several other studies, found in **Table 1**, were examined to further the investigation on women in tourism.

**Table 1. Relevant Studies on Women in Tourism**

Author/s	Findings	Research Locale
Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Findings suggest that perceptions of women's work and entrepreneurial ventures significantly affect women's empowerment in tourism.	Cross-country study of three Arab countries: Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman
Alshareef & AlGassim (2021)	Despite the growing number of women participating in the industry, women believed that there are gender appropriate jobs in the industry. Women were seen to receive less economic, social, political, and psychological beliefs than their men counterparts.	Tourism employment in Saudi Arabia
Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino (2021)	Along with the benefits women receives from undertaking tourism work, contradictions from their interaction with their family and communities are still experienced. Conclusions suggest that gender mainstreaming is not an individual work, instead should involve stakeholders from families, communities, enterprises, etc. to holistically transform gender interactions.	Rural tourism in Mexico
Elshaer et al (2021)	Tourism is perceived to contribute in women's empowerment. Psychologically, women believed that tourism gave pride to their culture through their interactions with visitors. Consequently, this allowed them to become self-reliant. Politically, they defined their empowerment in terms of their ability to be involved in the decision-making processes through the support of policy-makers and policies. Through their psychological and political empowerment, women significantly influence sustainable tourism development.	Women employees in the tourism industry of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia
Vukovic et al (2021)	Support from self-help groups positively influences women's empowerment. In further examining women's empowerment, self-employment was found to be its primary goal. The patriarchal arrangement in societies remain a challenge which necessitates a systematic assessment of empowerment.	Villages in Serbia
Casado-Diaz et al (2020)	By analyzing cross-section data (Encuesta de Estructura Salarial/Survey of Earnings Structure) of hospitality workers in Spain, findings suggest that women are concentrated in lower-skilled occupations with less supervisory responsibilities and seniority than men.	Spain

Su et al (2020)	Engagement of women in embroidery tourism facilitated their economic, social, psychological, and political empowerment	Cultural tourism in Ningxia, China
Nutsugbodo & Mensah (2020)	Ecotourism development was found to result to more environmental benefits that socio-cultural and economic benefits	Ecotourism in Kakum Conservation Area, Ghana
Nimble (2019)	Tourism development did not enhance the political status and political empowerment of women. As suggested, the elites among communities are the ones who control who and how individuals can be empowered by tourism.	Rural tourism in Himachal Pradesh, India
Bakas et al (2018)	In examining the narratives of tourism managers in Portugal, findings suggest that gender inequality in tourism labor continues to exist. More specifically, gender wage gap in the industry was found to persist given various issues including the dominance of men in hierarchical positions, horizontal segregation, among others.	Portugal
Caparros (2018)	Although the women on Ladakh have been viewed as advanced, at a closer look, their level of agency was found to be not as high—with discrepancies in their empowerment externally and internally within their own homes and families.	Female-operated travel company in Ladakh, India
Foley et al (2018)	The women involved in Kokoda were able to negotiate their role and participation in tourism by establishing microenterprises. Microbusinesses in tourism support women's significant role in Kokoda development	Community-based ecotourism development in Papua New Guinea
Vizcaino Suarez (2018)	Tourism offers opportunities for women to socialize and to engage in productive labor, thereby enhancing their economic and psychological empowerment. The findings exemplify how women are able to negotiate and redefine their roles, identities, and work against a society limiting women's capacities.	Women artisans in Metepec, Mexico
Movono & Dahles (2017)	Women engaged in tourism employment and businesses were found to have gained empowerment, In economic sense first followed by social, psychological, then political empowerment. As a consequence of women's empowerment, men's roles have also been altered.	Tourism businesses in Fijian village
Panta & Thapa (2017)	Women were found to have increased self-confidence, acquired economic income, and enhanced decision-making capacities in their families	Entrepreneurship in Bardia National Park, Nepal

Tajeddini et al (2017)	Several factors were found to influence women entrepreneurs in Bali including gender traditions, marital status, religion, ethnicity, among others. Women's religious, ethnic and social networks provide both moral and financial support for women to establish their own enterprises.	Tourism entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia
Kunjuraman & Hussin (2016)	Ecotourism activities, specifically homestay operation, allowed women to enhance their psychological, social, political, and economic empowerment	Ecotourism in Sabah, Malaysia
Lenao & Basupi (2016)	Ecotourism development posed an effect on both the empowerment and disempowerment of women	Ecotourism in Botswana
Duffy et al (2015)	Tourism employment impacts the economic and social empowerment of women, however, issues pertaining to systemic gender issues prevail.	Dominican Republic
Moswete & Lacey (2015)	The new policy contributed to women's active participation in tourism ventures. More specifically, the policy resulted to women's economic, psychological, and social empowerment where they became economically independent from men and families, and felt more psychologically empowered as individuals. Men also acted as partners and facilitators of women's participation in tourism.	Safari Tourism in Botswana
Tran & Walter (2014)	Women were able to gain economic and psychological empowerment from their involvement in tourism activities. Resulting from women's increased economic independence and autonomy, gender antagonism was observed as shown in men's use of narcotics and alcohol.	Community-based ecotourism in North Vietnam
Feng (2013)	Tourism development in the community resulted to women's flexibility in terms of them undertaking men's work (i.e., agricultural work, small businesses, etc.), but men still refused to take on women's designated domestic work	Fenghuang County, Rural China
Ishii (2012)	Women's increased participation and empowerment through tourism resulted to increased women antagonism where men were found to use narcotics and alcohol as a response.	Akha, Thailand
Ferguson (2010)	The identified project focused in Copan, Honduras, while aimed at involving women through microenterprises, remained problematic.	Tourism-based micro-enterprises in Copan, Honduras
Schellhorn (2010)	Local women were found to be disadvantaged given their lack of access to economic opportunities given cultural and societal constraints	Sasak village, Lombok, Indonesia

Dunn (2007)	<p>CBT was found to be effective in contributing to psychological, social, and political empowerment. Economic empowerment, however, was limited. For one, CBT is considered as a supplementary source of income. Similarly, men were still found to receive higher incomes compared to women. For women who were involved in tourism activities, they were found to suffer from balancing domestic housework and tourism work as men were still unwilling to take charge of house and care work.</p>	Community-based tourism in Thailand
Miettine (2006)	<p>Unconsciously, the tourism development amongst local communities led to the empowerment of women. Women were seen to be active participants in creative industries, where their constant interaction with tourists enhanced their self-esteem and identity construction while becoming economically independent from the handicraft work they do.</p>	Lappish communities in Finland
Pleno (2006)	<p>Although the women involved did not necessarily gain significant income or political and leadership positions through ecotourism, they were reported to lead happier lives with their sense of psychological and social empowerment by engaging in tourism</p>	Bohol, Philippines
Stronza (2005)	<p>While men were found to be more engaged in ecotourism business activities, women were given an opportunity to be involved in multiple jobs that increased their political and social standing within their own communities.</p>	Community-based ecolodge in Peruvian Amazon
Kelkar (2004)	<p>Through their involvement in ecotourism development, women were found to benefit economically from increased income by engaging in entrepreneurial ventures, however they were also found to have less political involvement and power over decision-making processes</p>	Mosuo communities around Lugu Lake, Yunnan, China
Scheyvens (2000)	<p>Women's participation in ecotourism has led to significant improvement in their gender roles and relations. In well-planned ecotourism initiatives, women have directed the development of their ventures as shown in the cases of women in Nepal and Samoa, among others. On the other hand, in some ventures, economic benefits are unequally distributed to men over women where women have little to no control over its development.</p>	Ecotourism ventures in Third World Countries
Bras & Dahles (1998)	<p>The regulations imposed by the government on tourism activities affected women engaged in tourism differently: for entrepreneurs, their businesses have been formalized through policies, while some women also exploited new market niche.</p>	Women entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia



Scott (1997)	Tourism development do not transform gender roles but instead extends them. Women's participation in the industry remained limited to existing gender roles and division of labor.	Girne, Northern Cyprus
Wilkinson & Pratiwi (1995)	Despite the prominence of elite control in tourism development, women still received benefits in the form of economic empowerment from being involved in informal sector. Economic empowerment in this perspective allowed them to gain control over their own lives and their respective families' survival in the context of poverty.	Java fishing village, Indonesia
Castelberg-Koulma (1991)	Women engaged in co-operatives have benefitted in tourism through the income they receive from their work and improved public position in their communities and larger society.	Ambelakia co-operatives in Greece
Levy & Lerch (1991)	Women were found to be employed in lower-paid, less stable, and lower-level jobs. Women required more financial resources and networks to sustain their economic participation compared to their male counterparts.	Tourism workers in Barbados

## II. Women's Empowerment in Tourism

Women empowerment has been a subject of debates for years now resulting to the varied definitions designated to it. As Agzhamani and Hunt (2017) pointed out, empowerment has been inherently discussed in several scholarly works on tourism. Generally, empowerment is defined by Sen (1999) as the ability and freedom to make decisions for themselves. In other social sciences, empowerment is perceived as the ability of individuals to participate in political processes (Friedmann, 1992). It may also be referred to as a process of power re-distribution by capacitating those considered oppressed and unrepresented (Chronister & McWhirter, 2003). In applying the concept to women's studies, empowerment may be viewed in terms of having agency—gaining ability and power to make choices and to implement these choices (Kabeer, 1999). As Cole (2018) elaborated, this entails the achievement of the three A's of empowerment: agency, autonomy, and authority. In the context of tourism, scholars have suggested a multi-dimensional perspective on empowerment. Scheyvens (1999), for example, proposed four key dimensions including economic, social, political, and psychological empowerment. As Aghazamani and Hunt (2017) proposed, empowerment in tourism contexts may be defined as a “a multidimensional,

context-dependent, and dynamic process that provides humans, individually or collectively, with greater agency, freedom, and capacity to improve their quality of life as a function of engagement with the phenomenon of tourism” (p. 333). That is, empowerment encompasses multiple dimensions and may be viewed differently depending on the context. As it entails modifications at the individual, community, and societal levels, empowerment entails a “negotiated process” (Movono & Dahles, 2017, p.10) among members of society. In relating these definitions to the prospects of community development, empowerment may be perceived in terms of a relationship-building process that foster a greater sense of community (Rossing et al, 2001). Following these definitions, several dimensions of empowerment are adopted and explored in this study:

*Economic Empowerment.* The economic empowerment of women may result to their ability to gain control over capital, resources, entrepreneurial opportunities, and income parity with their male counterparts (Stanistreet et al, 2007). In this sense, financial freedom enhances the ability of women to take control over their own lives (Soroushmehr et al, 2012). Beyond oneself, economic empowerment also allows women to improve their social and family status given the independence afforded by the income they receive from tourism (Moswete & Lacey, 2015). Through their enhanced economic capacities, women can negotiate their roles in societies (Foley et al, 2018). However, economic independence is not the only goal of empowerment as several cases have shown that women continue to face socio-political issues with their participation in tourism (DHaz-Carriyn & Vizcaino, 2021; Duffy et al, 2015; Ishii, 2012).

*Social Empowerment.* While this aspect of empowerment is usually taken for granted, social empowerment includes women’s control of reproduction activities, improvement of societal institutions and laws, safety of women, among others (Jutting & Morrisson, 2005). Part and parcel of social empowerment is the presence of social cultures, laws, and institutions that promote women empowerment and gender equality (Vujko et al, 2019). Alongside these, social empowerment relates to feelings of social belongingness of women with their respective communities (Vukovic et al, 2021). Thus, women’s social status and support from their community are crucial in improving their self-perception (DHaz-Carriyn & Vizcaino, 2021; Su et al, 2020).

*Political Empowerment.* This translates to the inclusion of women in positions of power and authority, control and inclusion in decision-making processes, and access to political representation (Stanistreet et al, 2007). To an extent, political empowerment also entails the presence of supporting policies that enhance their standing in societies (Elshaer et al, 2021). That is, women have voice in tourism initiatives (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Boley & McGehee, 2014), as well as an outlet to share their concerns about tourism development. As emphasized by Mendelberg and Karpowitz (2016), the political participation of women is important in influencing existing norms and beliefs affecting an individual's empowerment.

*Psychological Empowerment.* Psychological empowerment includes personal feelings of self-confidence and ability to overcome any challenges (Zimmerman, 1990). That is, women develop positive self-perception, autonomy, and self-esteem through their participation in tourism activities. As noted by Su et al (2020), psychological empowerment is achieved through women's realization that their lives and goals are not only confined and defined by their families. This also means that women feel proud of what they do (Miettine, 2006) and that they feel happy about their involvement in tourism (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Pleno, 2006). Important in this pursuit is that individuals gain new knowledge and skills through tourism involvement that facilitate their own capacities as individuals (Scheyvens, 2000).

*P1 Women's tourism participation positively influence their empowerment*

*P1a Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the psychological empowerment of women.*

*P1b Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the social empowerment of women.*

*P1c Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the political empowerment of women.*

*P1d Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the economic empowerment of women.*

### **III. Women and Community Development in Tourism**

Arguably, without gender equality, inclusive and genuine development will not be achieved. As Klasen (2002) concluded, gender inequality negatively



impacts the economic development of countries specifically in terms of the development of human capital. Similarly, gender disparity impacts long-term growth of economies (Klasen & Lamanna, 2009). In the context of tourism development, empowerment is deemed as a facilitator of active engagement among community members including women. That is, empowerment is a crucial component of community development (Pig, 2002). As argued by Gyan and Mfofo-M'Carthy (2021), without women, inclusive community development may not be achieved. The same case is applied in the context of community development in tourism industries which is pursued through CBT initiatives (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010), a widely advocated tool that aims to facilitate community development with the local members. Women arguably play a significant role in these types of developments where they act as guardians of environmental conservation and preservation (Sebele, 2010), preservers of traditions within communities (Scheyvens, 2000), supporters of community autonomy (Bhattacharya & Banerjee, 2012), and contributors to the economic development of communities (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016). Women's substantial contribution to community development in tourism is reported in several areas including Malaysia (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2016), Tanzania (Mrema, 2015), Iran (Soroushmehr et al., 2012), among others.

*P2a Women's psychological empowerment has a positive influence on community development.*

*P2b Women's social empowerment has a positive influence on community development.*

*P2c Women's political empowerment has a positive influence on community development.*

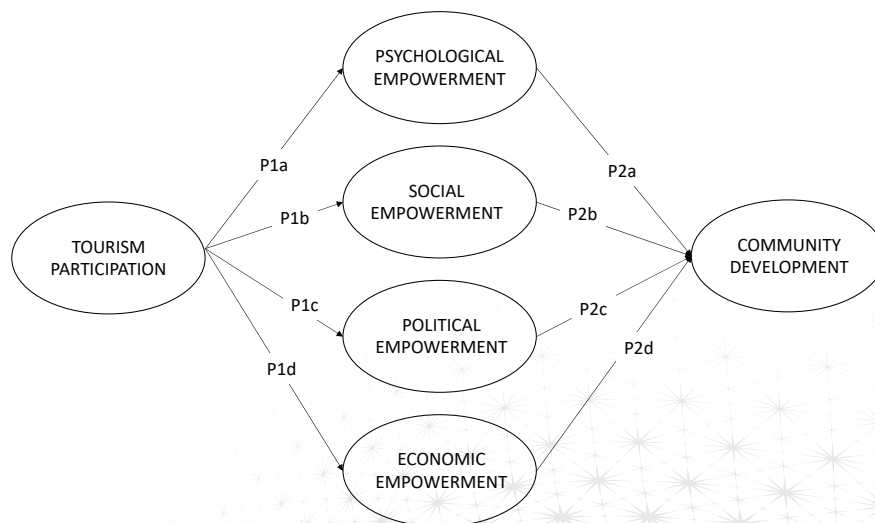
*P2d Women's economic empowerment has a positive influence on community development.*

The discussions emphasize the relationship between women's participation in tourism and empowerment, along with their contributions to community development across the globe. The present study therefore contributes to these existing discourses by presenting a conceptual model based on the identified propositions to establish the relationship between participation, empowerment, and community development.

### 3. Methodology

A systematic search of peer-reviewed articles was conducted using the key phrases: “women and tourism”, “gender and tourism”, “empowerment in tourism”, and “community development in tourism”. From these a total of 53 relevant articles were identified following several scholarly databases: Google Scholar, Taylor and Francis, ScienceDirect, and Emerald Publishing. Only articles published in English were considered. With a focus on scholarship that analytically contributed to the discussions on women in tourism, the researcher established the following protocols for selection on studies investigating the following themes: women’s experiences in tourism, women’s empowerment in tourism, community development in tourism, and gender experiences in tourism. Following these protocols, the researcher manually inspected the abstract and conclusions of the articles where only 33 articles were considered. Following this search, several themes were identified and will be discussed in this section. The propositions of the study were then culled from the discussions of the relevant studies.

### 4. Women Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development Model



*Figure 1. Women’s Participation, Empowerment, Community Development Model*

The relationship between the key variables of the study is then illustrated in **Figure 1**. “Tourism participation” is identified as the independent variable, “community development” as the study’s dependent variable, and the multi-dimensional conceptualization of “empowerment” identified as psychological, social, political, and economic empowerment, as mediating variable. These variables are then operationally defined in this study as follows:

- Participation – involvement of women as employees, self-employed, and entrepreneurs in Philippine tourism industry
- Empowerment – ability of women to gain agency, autonomy, and authority (Cole, 2018) measured through psychological, social, political, and economic achievements (Scheyvens, 1999)
- Community Development – holistic development of communities (i.e., psychological, social, political, and economic) gained through tourism

Informed by an extensive literature review on the topic, women’s participation in tourism yields different levels of empowerment. The literature also revealed the significance of empowerment in influencing the type of participation and involvement individuals are engaged in. Based on the framework proposed by Scheyvens (1999) on the multi-dimensional perspective of empowerment, this study adopts this approach while modifying it following the works of Abou-Shouk et al (2021) and Elshaer (2021). As suggested by Moswete and Lacey (2015), the dimensions of empowerment (i.e., psychological, social, political, and economic) can be achieved independently and may be overlapping. Following the propositions identified in the study, relevant studies were examined to identify their validity as shown in **Table 2**.

**Table 2. Supporting Literature on Women’s Participation and Tourism**

No.	Hypotheses	Author	Findings	Support/ Not Support/ Ambiguous
H <sub>1</sub>	Women’s tourism participation positively influence their empowerment			

<b>H<sub>1a</sub></b>	<b>Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the psychological empowerment of women.</b>	Alshareef & AlGassim (2021)	Against the backdrop of institutionalized gender norms in Saudi Arabia, women working in the industry remained optimistic that their social standing will improve through their continuous participation and exposure in tourism.	Support
		Moswete & Lacey (2015)	The community-based cultural tourism policy in a Safari in Botswana was found to enhance the psychological empowerment of women	Support
		Kunjuraman & Hussin (2016)	Ecotourism activities were found to develop women's self-esteem through their active participation in economic activities. Through their contribution in souvenir making and traditional cooking, they developed a sense of proud and confidence in relation their culture and traditions.	Support
		Lenao & Basupi (2016)	The ecotourism development in Botswana helps facilitate women's engagement in self-fulfilling activities which also allow them to have autonomy and self-determination.	Support
		Miettine (2006)	Women in Lappish communities were found to have developed their self-esteem by engaging in tourism through their entrepreneurial ventures and their interaction with tourists	Support
		Pleno (2006)	Through the continues interaction of women with other members of their community and visitors, found to have improved self-perception and self-confidence, along with other skills that they did not previously possess.	Support
		Tucker (2007)	As tourism developed in Göreme, Turkey, women were found to be actively negotiating "to find a place themselves" (p.101) in tourism industry.	Support
		Garcia-Ramon et al (1995)	While rural farm tourism did not provide women financial independence, women were found to be more proud of the work that they do, especially in terms of the external interactions they receive from tourism activities.	Support

		Castelberg-Koulma (1991)	Women's agritourism cooperatives in Greece contributed to their increased confidence which allowed them to establish business relationships with those outside their own communities.	Support
<b>H<sub>1b</sub></b>	<b>Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the social empowerment of women.</b>	Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Women's participation in tourism activities in Arab countries were found to be critical in obtaining community cohesion.	Support
		Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino (2021)	Beyond economic means, empowerment entails an affective and emotional component where the perception from families and communities affect women's perception of their work and themselves.	Not support
		Elshaer et al (2021)	Women were found to feel to be unsupported and less connected with their communities when they got involved in tourism activities. Arguably, this is due to the existing cultural challenges faced by working women in Saudi Arabia	Not support
		Vukovic et al (2021)	The presence of self-help groups within communities facilitate women's social empowerment through the improvement of their social statuses and self-perception	Support
		Su et al (2020)	Women engaged in embroidery tourism were found to have broadened their social circles thereby enhancing their status within their own communities.	Support
		Moswete & Lacey (2015)	The community-based cultural tourism policy in a Safari in Botswana was found to enhance the social empowerment of women	Support
		Duffy et al (2015)	Women's participation in the tourism industry of Dominican Republic (DR) posed a social conflicts where women-men roles are still being negotiated.	Ambiguous
		Tran & Walter (2014)	Women in North Vietnam received social approval even support from their husbands who took their reproductive work.	Support



		Pleno (2006)	Women engaged in ecotourism in Bohol, Philippines were found to have developed relational skills that were not present before.	Support
		Scheyvens (1999)	Women's involvement in tourism is significant in developing social cohesion among communities	Support
		Castelberg-Koulma (1991)	Through their participation in tourism, women had the opportunity to establish relationship with outsiders and their own community members on their "own terms" (p.215)	Support
H <sub>1c</sub>	<b>Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the political empowerment of women.</b>	Alshareef & AlGassim (2021)	Women in the tourism and hospitality sector of Saudi Arabia remained constrained by the existing societal norms in the country. Women working in the government such as the Ministry of Tourism were deemed more acceptable than those who worked in the private sector. Despite this, women's influence in larger political spaces remain limited.	Not supported
		Elshaer et al (2021)	Women in Saudi Arabia were found to be political empowered through their ability and involvement in the decision-making processes involved in tourism development. In the same manner, these women felt supported by their government and policy-makers.	Support
		Wardhani & Susilowati (2021)	The women involved in tourism activities in Yogyakarta, Indonesia have low level of political empowerment since women remained unaware of the significance of their opinions and insights on tourism development. Despite given avenues and opportunities to participate, it was noted that women opt not to voice out their thoughts regarding tourism development. Similarly, the over-all management of tourism still relies on men.	Not support
		Su et al (2020)	In the case of rural women engaged in embroidery tourism in China, it was found that at an individual level women did not exhibit intentions to be involved in political matters. However it was noticed that through women's contributions, women leaders have emerged and their voices are being sought after in decision-making processes.	Ambiguous

		Caparros (2018)	Despite women's active participation in tourism in Ladakh, India, they were found to be attending some political events such as village meetings but rarely participate in them. Women were found to lack the confidence required for them to voice out their concerns in such gatherings.	Not support
		Kunjuraman & Hussin (2016)	Ecotourism activities in Sabah, Malaysia found that women have the capacity to participate in decision-making activities in relation to the development of their homestay program.	Support
		Tran & Walter (2014)	Women involved in community-based ecotourism were found to have increased decision-making power and have taken new leadership roles in local political spaces	Support
		Pleno (2006)	Through ecotourism activities in Bohol, Philippines, women were given opportunities to take up leadership roles and to become involved in the decision-making processes concerning tourism development.	Support
		Kelkar (2004)	Women in Mosuo communities in China who were involved in ecotourism development were found to have less political power and with little involvement in political and decision-making processes	Not support
H <sub>1d</sub>	<b>Women's tourism participation has a positive influence on the economic empowerment of women.</b>	McCall & Mearns (2021)	Women involved in community-based tourism initiative in West Cape, South Africa were found to gain significant economic benefits, which also influenced their social status in their communities.	Support
		Casado-Diaz et al (2020)	Women are still subjected to occupations that are generally considered low-skilled, low-paid, with little supervisory role.	Not support
		Nassani et al (2019)	In conducting a quantitative analysis of panel data across 24 European economies, it was found that tourism induced women's economic empowerment	Not support

		Bakas et al (2018)	Women remain to suffer from gender wage gap given persisting societal issues that economically benefit more men than women.	Support
		Kunjuraman & Hussin (2016)	Ecotourism activities, specifically homestay operation, contributed to women's economic empowerment where they received income from their participation.	Support
		Lenao & Basupi (2016)	If managed effectively, tourism can help monetize women's socially ascribed responsibilities and roles to income generating activities	Support
		Moswete & Lacey (2015)	The community-based cultural tourism policy in a Safari in Botswana was found to enhance the economic empowerment of women	Support
		Acharya & Halpenny (2013)	Homestay tourism can facilitate women's economic empowerment through the provision of financial income and assets.	Support
		Tucker (2007)	Women who have received income from tourism in Göreme, Turkey found to have a stronger sense of independence because their earnings and spending capacities, which made them less dependent on their husbands.	Support
		Kelkar (2004)	Women involved in ecotourism development in Yunnan, China were found to receive increased income	Support
H <sub>2</sub>	Women's empowerment positively influence community development			
H <sub>2a</sub>	<b>Women's psychological empowerment has a positive influence on community development.</b>	Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Women's empowerment was found to have a strong positive effect on tourism development in Egypt, Oman, and United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Support
		Strzelecka et al (2017)	The psychological empowerment of tourism stakeholders proved to be the primary precursor of community's active involvement and support for sustainable tourism development.	Support

		Boley et al (2014)	The psychological empowerment of women positively contributed to the community's members perception of their culture and traditions as expressed through their involvement in tourism activities.	Support
		Scheyvens (2007)	Women's psychological empowerment facilitates their participation in community development	Support
H <sub>2b</sub>	<b>Women's social empowerment has a positive influence on community development.</b>	Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Women's empowerment was found to have a strong positive effect on tourism development in Egypt, Oman, and United Arab Emirates (UAE)	Support
		Elshaer et al (2021)	The social empowerment of women was found to fully mediate sustainable tourism development in Saudi Arabia which suggests that without women feeling socially empowered, sustainable tourism development cannot be achieved	Support
		Vukovic et al (2021)	To facilitate women empowerment, they require the support of local tourism stakeholders. Thus, their social empowerment further supports economic empowerment.	Support
		Tran & Walter (2014)	Women's empowerment contributed to their increased community involvement by giving them opportunities to be part of decision-making processes	Support
		Boley et al (2015)	Social empowerment is a critical factor affecting resident's positive outlook and attitude towards sustainable tourism development.	Support
H <sub>2c</sub>	<b>Women's political empowerment has a positive influence on community development.</b>	Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Women's empowerment was found to have a strong positive effect on tourism development in Egypt, Oman, and United Arab Emirates (UAE) specifically through their involvement in the decision-making processes concerning tourism development.	Support
		Elshaer et al (2021)	The political empowerment of women in Saudi Arabia in terms of their involvement in the decision-making concerning tourism contributed to the community's development	Support

		Tran & Walter (2014)	Women's active participation in decision-making processes allowed to become more involved in community development	Support
H <sub>2d</sub>	<b>Women's economic empowerment has a positive influence on community development.</b>	Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Women's empowerment was found to have a strong positive effect on tourism development in Egypt, Oman, and United Arab Emirates (UAE). Women's economic empowerment through their entrepreneurial activities could help proliferate tourism enterprises that further support community and societal development.	Support
		Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino (2021)	Despite the perceived benefits of women involved in tourism, the negative perception of their own families and communities heavily influence the decision of women to participate in tourism.	Not support
		Vukovic et al (2021)	Women's economic empowerment readily affects the economic development of a tourism destination through their involvement in employment and entrepreneurial activities.	Support
		European Institute for Gender Equality (2016)	The empowerment of women could facilitate the economic empowerment of communities they belong in.	Support
		Ishii (2012)	Women's increased economic independence resulted to gender antagonism where their male counterparts were found to use narcotics and alcohol	Not support

Following the examination of the existing literature against the propositions of the study, several themes may be observed:

In investigating the positive influence of women's participation to their empowerment, the literature surveyed suggest that their participation positively influence their psychological and economic empowerment, while their social and political empowerment remain to be limited. As suggested by several studies (Alshareef & AlGassim, 2021; Kunjuraman & Hussin, 2016; Moswete & Lacey, 2015; Pleno, 2006; Tucker, 2007) women's participation in tourism improves their psychological well-being where they were found to gain self-esteem, self-determination, autonomy, sense of



pride, confidence, and optimism through their engagement in the industry. Similarly, studies suggest that women gained economic empowerment through tourism specifically by providing women with financial income and assets. On the other hand, studies (Bakas et al, 2018; Casado-Diaz et al, 2020; UNWTO, 2020) pointed out that women are usually employed in lower-skilled and lower paid occupations with less supervisory responsibility. Furthermore, other studies (Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino, 2021; Elshaer et al, 2021; Duffy et al, 2015) showed that despite the economic income offered by tourism, women remain constrained by the expectations, traditions, and culture within communities and societies. The similar case is observed where women were found to have very little involvement in decision-making and political processes in their communities (Alshareef & AlGassim, 2021; Caparros, 2018; Kelkar, 2004). In investigating the influence of women's empowerment to community development, the studies surveyed suggest that women's psychological, social, and political empowerment contribute to community development, while their economic empowerment tend to pose challenge to established culture and traditions in communities. As Diaz-Carrion and Vizcaino (2021) and Ishii (2012) noted, women's economic independence resulted to increased antagonism and negative perceptions towards them

## 5. Conclusion

In advancing the inquiry about women's participation in tourism and its impact on their empowerment and community development, this study addressed the question "what is the impact of women's participation on their empowerment and their contribution to community development in tourism?" The findings from this study suggest that women's experience in participating in tourism varies depending on the context to which they belong in. That is, their level of empowerment and its impact on community development differ from one context to another as suggested by Aghazamani and Hunt (2017), and that each dimension of empowerment is interrelated but independent from each other (Moswete & Lacey, 2015).

More specifically, as revealed by the conduct of a literature review, studies suggest that women's participation in tourism positively influences their psychological and economic empowerment. That is, women are found to gain positive psychological and economic benefits from their engagement in tourism activities. On the other hand, the impact of their participation on

their social and political empowerment remains questionable as suggested by Tajeddini et al (2017) that point out the constraints posed by existing traditions and cultures that hinder women's social and political participation. In line with community development, studies have shown that women's psychological, social, and political empowerment positively contributes to community development, where women's psychological well-being, social and political engagement positively influences community development. On the other hand, Ishii (2012) and Tran and Walter (2014) suggested that women's economic empowerment lead to increased antagonism and negative perception towards women in some communities. As a result, its contribution to community development remains questionable.

Given the complexity of this investigation, this study only serves as an initial investigation on the relationship between women's participation, empowerment, community development in tourism. While the study remains limited to conducting a literature review to prove the proposition of the study, future studies may validate these findings through other data collection techniques borrowing from both qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Future studies may assist in revealing the experiences of women in other contexts, localities, and regions that are deemed under-researched such as the cases in the developing countries.

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