

**Women's Participation, Empowerment, and Community
Development in Tourism Areas in the Philippines**

By

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August 2024

Dissertation Presented to the Higher Degree Committee of Ritsumeikan Asia
Pacific University in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Asia Pacific Studies

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

“It takes a village to raise a child,” states a renowned African proverb that properly sums up my pursuit of a Doctor in Philosophy (PhD) degree. Simply put, I would not be able to achieve this without the help of the most supportive, generous, and caring individuals I have crossed paths with on this journey. Firstly, I would like to thank my supervisor, Professor Kazem Vafadari, who first took a chance on me and my ability to pursue a PhD. Through his expertise, patience, trust, and support, I was able to complete my dissertation. I am also equally grateful to my family from the Asian Institute of Management- Dr. Andrew L. Tan Center for Tourism (AIM-ALT CFT)—to Dr. John Paolo Rivera whose mentorship and inspiration became the foundation of who I am as a researcher, a professional, and a doctoral student, to Dr. Maria Cherry Lyn Rodolfo whose expertise and constant support improved my work, and to Sec. Jesli Lapus, Pres. Nani Roxas, and Prof. Milette Zamora whose presence inspired me to continue the work that I am doing. I would also like to extend my gratitude to the professors at the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University (APU) specifically, Professors Michael Cortez, Pajaree Ackaradejruangsri, and Lailani Alcantara, whose support and trust I valued the most. To the patient and supportive examiners of this dissertation, Professors Jafar Jafari and Yotsumoto Yukio, whose insights helped improve my current and future research.

I am indebted to the generosity of the Ryoichi Sasakawa Young Leaders Fellowship Fund (Sylff) and the Philippine Institute of Development Studies – Philippine APEC Study Center Network (PIDS PASCN) whose support allowed me to conduct my research in the Philippines. To the APU research grant whose support allowed me to start my initial fieldwork in the Philippines, I am equally grateful.

The conduct of this research would not be possible without all the informants, participants, and experts whose time, opinions, expertise, and experiences on tourism and women’s empowerment informed this research.

To my friends, colleagues, and classmates, whose love, care, and encouragement are very much appreciated.

Last but not the least, I would not be where I am today without the love, patience, and inspiration from my family—mommy, Popsie, dada, mama Fhe, Tushing, Didi, Chantal, and Chanelle. My love for my best friend for life, Azu, and my beloved furry friends Katkat, Max, and Shishi whose existence became my stress reliever.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	Asian Development Bank
APEC	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CBT	Community-Based Tourism
CEDAW	Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPP	Communist Party of the Philippines
CSW	Commission on the Status of Women
GABRIELA	General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
ILO	International Labor Organization
LGU	Local Government Unit
NGO	Non-government organization
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
PPP	Public-Private Partnerships
UN MDGs	UN Millennium Development Goals
UN SDGs	United Nations Sustainable Development Goals
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization (renamed to UN Tourism in 2023)
WCED	World Commission on Environment and Development
WID	Women in development
WTTC	World Travel & Tourism Council

Women's Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development in Tourism Areas in the Philippines

Eylla Laire M. Gutierrez

ABSTRACT

Based on the literature review, a growing interest in women and their involvement in developmental outcomes has been observed across industries and stakeholder groups. Within the tourism industry, the role, status, and involvement of women in its management and development has been an emerging topic of discourse. For years now, the industry has been recognized for the economic opportunities it provides to women compared to other sectors. This is evidenced by the current dominance of women in the tourism workforce across regions. Despite this, issues relating to their participation in the industry remain. The existing literature suggests that women are often involved in informal, lower-paid, and unskilled jobs, with low representation in key decision-making and political positions. On top of this, several structural constraints concerning gender stereotypes, roles, and expectations were also observed to hinder their development and empowerment. Against this backdrop, this research investigates how women's participation in tourism can facilitate their empowerment and contribute to community development in tourism areas in the Philippines.

Underpinned by the assumption that women can be active partners and agents of developmental initiatives, this research specifically looks at the case of women in select tourism destinations in the Philippines, namely: Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan. The Philippines proves to be an interesting case given its renowned status of being the top Asian country in world gender equality rankings. This research extends existing Empowerment and Community Development theories adopted in the fields of sociology, psychology, and development studies to look at the relationship between women's participation in the industry, their achievement of empowerment, and their contribution to community development. The study further suggests that women's empowerment is critical in translating their participation in tourism to influence community development. Positioned as a descriptive study, this research utilizes qualitative interviews of women entrepreneurs, self-employed, and private and public employees in tourism-related enterprises and establishments.

The insights from the interviews were analyzed alongside reviews of relevant documents, reports, and articles on the topic, and was validated through a workshop with experts in the field and industry. The key findings from the research provide insights into women's role in tourism and community development, their level of empowerment, and the key issues and constraints they face while working in the industry. In terms of women's participation, their work in tourism was found to be generally acceptable by their families and communities given their dependence on the income generated by tourism. Their nature of work was found to remain influenced by gender expectations where women are concentrated in sales, marketing, and administrative work, while also taking on jobs that were deemed extensions of their domestic and care work (i.e., food preparation, entertainment, guest relations, among others). A shift, however, is also observable where women are slowly taking up jobs that were traditionally dominated by men (i.e., tour guiding). Thus, the influence of gender relations on their work highly depends on the nature of their activity—where gender relations were seen as less influential in community-level activities than in established formal tourism-related establishments.

In terms of empowerment, women were found to be psychologically and politically empowered by their participation in tourism, whereas their economic empowerment greatly depended on the presence of tourism activities. Their social empowerment remains complex since they were found to have enhanced external empowerment (i.e., improved social status), but with limited internal empowerment (i.e., within their households and families). Through this research, women's empowerment is redefined to women's psychological, social, political, and economic aspects that go beyond oneself but extend to their ability to contribute to community development. This is shown by the experiences examined in this research where women were found to engage in work that benefits not only their well-being but also their community's well-being.

Some of the key constraints women face include the following: existing gender-based household structure and domestic responsibilities, societal expectations on women's marriage and conception, the gender-pay gap, glass ceiling, among other issues. The findings of this study contribute to the growing literature on gender and tourism, while providing evidence-based insights to inform policies promoting women's empowerment and their participation and contribution to community development initiatives.

Keywords: Women, Participation, Empowerment, Development, Gender, Tourism

Chapter 1: Introduction

1.1. Background of the Study

Based on the literature, interest in the role of women in developmental initiatives has been growing over the years. This is evidenced by the increasing number of bilateral aid focusing on women's empowerment and gender equality where an average of USD 48.7 billion is allotted per year from 2017-2018 (OECD DAC Network on Gender Equality, 2020). The same interest is observable across industries and sectors from businesses, and the public sector, to academe, including tourism. Within tourism, determining the role of women in the industry has long been part of the development discourse due to their dominance in the industry's workforce across regions. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) specifically dedicated goal five (SDG5) to gender equality and empowering women and girls to support their equal participation in developmental objectives without discrimination. Women's empowerment and participation are also underscored in other related SDGs including SDG 8 which emphasizes decent employment for all, and SDG 10 which aims to reduce inequality of all forms, among others. Since women make up the majority of the tourism workforce globally, where 59% of people employed in tourism are women (United Nations World Tourism Organization [UNWTO], 2019), several initiatives and programs have been curated to support their equal participation and representation in the industry including the Women in Tourism Empowerment Programme (WITEP) by the UNWTO (renamed to UN Tourism in 2023) (2011) which calls for women's active participation in decision-making and leadership positions on tourism activities, alongside other activities, the UNWTO Center Stage Project launched in 2023, among others. However, implementing these initiatives in specific contexts (i.e., various economies and localities) proves to be more challenging. As suggested by Ahl and Marlow (2012) and Pécot et al (2024), there exists a limited approach toward women's empowerment which is underpinned by perspectives on women's deficits that need to be adjusted through policy and developmental interventions. That is, women's empowerment is seen merely from the perspective of women as beneficiaries and members of vulnerable groups that are subjects of developmental initiatives. Within the tourism industry, debates on the industry's impact on women remain inconclusive and thus requiring further exploration (Munar et al, 2015).

For one Momsen and Nakata (2010) suggested that tourism creates gendered impacts that vary depending on an individual's role in the industry. Tourism is perceived as a sector that allows women to progress and become empowered given its flexible and dynamic nature (Ateljevic, 2008). Studies also point out the contribution of tourism in addressing issues of gender inequality in communities across the globe (Je et al, 2021). For years now, the industry has been lauded for the economic opportunities it offers to women compared to other sectors. Arguably, the industry continues to provide better opportunities for women's participation in the workforce, entrepreneurship, and leadership than other sectors of the economy (Fruman & Twining-Ward, 2017)—consequently enhancing both women's empowerment and gender equality in societies (Boley & MccGhee, 2014; Boley et al, 2017).

On the contrary, Tucker and Boonabaana (2012) noted that tourism remains a highly gendered industry where traditional gender roles are maintained. All tourism processes from construction to consumption proves to be gendered (Kinnaird & Hall, 1994). In practice, women's dominant role in tourism workforce do not necessarily entail their equality in the industry (Cole, 2018; Moreno Alarcón & Cañada Mullor, 2018). Despite the number of women involved in tourism, formal recognition of their work status remains questionable (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Cukier, 2002; Gutierrez, 2024a). As stressed by Swain (2002), the existing rhetoric on women's participation in the industry is often overstated. In practice, women are primarily engaged in lower-paid and unskilled jobs, perform a large amount of unpaid work in enterprises and family businesses, and with low representation in key decision-making positions both in the public and private sectors in the industry (UNWTO, 2020). In recognizing these realities, it is also important to acknowledge the absence of concrete plans and guidelines on gender equality in the sector, and the persistence of the gender gap in tourism policy at the international, national, and local levels (Ferguson, 2018). Thus, it is crucial to look at the quality of their involvement and participation in the industry in terms of the types of work they are engaged in, the social relations affecting their work, and their own perception of themselves, among others.

As pointed out by Cole (2006a), participation does not always lead to empowerment. Beyond providing economic opportunities for women through participation, empowerment extends to psychological, social, and political aspects as Scheyvens (2000) suggested, and entails the satisfaction of three As of agency, autonomy, and authority as Cole (2018) identified. Thus, it is crucial to look at the extent to which women's participation in tourism activities lead to their

empowerment. Well beyond these conceptualizations, this study acknowledges that the pursuit of empowerment through participation does not come in a “one-size-fits-all recipe” (Cole, 2018, p. 3). As Feng (2013) noted, it is important to contextualize gender analysis in a specific locality to better understand the gender dynamics involved in tourism activities. Thus, it is important to look at the context of women’s participation in a specific setting, which is in this case the Philippines, the top Asian country known for its efforts in closing the gender gap (Mathkar, 2019; Tomacruz, 2018).

The Philippine tourism industry was considered one of the top contributors to the country’s gross domestic product (GDP) for more than three decades now. Tourism was considered a tool supporting the country’s economic growth and development (Jafari, 2002). Following the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) outbreak in 2020, tourism activities were put to a halt given the various restrictions imposed to contain the virus. As a result, Philippine tourism suffered from a general decline in both domestic and international tourism activities and receipts. Tourism revenues from domestic travel decreased by 61% accounting for 43.1 million domestic trips, while international travel decreased by 83% or 1.48 million foreign tourist arrivals. This resulted to a decrease of 17.5% in employment equivalent to 4.7 million unemployed Filipinos (Bengzon, 2021). Arguably, the impact of COVID-19 to poor and disadvantaged communities and individuals are exacerbated (Awad & Konn, 2020; Basuil et al, 2020). At present, the industry suggests a gradual and sustained recovery with an increased share to the economy at 6.2 percent and employing 5.35 million Filipinos in 2022 (Philippine Statistics Authority [PSA], 2023). According to the Global Gender Gap Report (Crotti et al, 2021), the Philippines is consistently ranking as one of the most gender-equal countries, closing approximately 80% of its overall gender gap concerning economic participation and opportunity, educational attainment, health and survival, and political empowerment (Crismundo, 2021). However, despite the country’s laudable efforts, women were found to be in a more disadvantageous position than their male counterparts. Within the tourism industry, for example, women were found to dominate the informal tourism sector in most destinations in the country (Carlos et al, 2023). Moreso, their conditions were found to be worsened due to the pandemic (Basuil et al, 2020).

Due to COVID-19 restrictions, about 6.6 Filipino women working in the informal economy have lost their jobs and their ability to earn an income to support themselves. Women who are also in the formal sector are considered vulnerable given their prevalence in service industries such as

tourism and hospitality. For women at home, Filipino women face the burden of increased unpaid care work with family members requiring more attention (Awad & Konn, 2020). Lockdown measures also increased women's vulnerability to domestic abuse, where one in four women has experienced domestic violence due to limited mobility options (Basuil, et al, 2020). Filipino women affected by the pandemic are expected to suffer from bleak job prospects where some of them may opt to take lower-skilled and lower-paid jobs (Gutierrez, cited in Businessworld, 2021). In cases such as the Philippines where women are believed to have a better status compared to its neighboring countries, Ladol (2013) pointed out that it is dangerous to assume that gender inequalities do not exist and that equality is mainstreamed.

In pursuing women empowerment in the development discourses, recent studies have pointed out the significance of context-specific and empirical studies on women's experiences that can contribute to a better understanding how women operate in tourism communities (Bolles, 1997; Chant, 1996; Cole, 2018; Caparros, 2018; Díaz-Carrión & Vizcaino, 2021; Feng, 2013; Gutierrez, 2024a; Gutierrez & Vafadari, 2023; Zhang & Zhang, 2020). In the Philippines, while studies on tourism development have proliferated over the years, few studies (Chant, 1996; Dulnuan & Mondiguang, 2000; Pleno, 2006; Gumba, 2020; Gutierrez, 2024a; Gutierrez & Vafadari, 2023) have empirically examined the extent to which women's participation in tourism activities has contributed to their empowerment, and how women have contributed to community development in tourism areas. The dearth of studies on this subject makes it difficult to know the extent to which women are involved in tourism developments, the benefits they enjoy as they participate in the industry, and the challenges limiting their active participation in their communities.

Against this backdrop, this study will investigate women's participation in tourism in the Philippines. This research builds on the earlier questions posed by Eger et al (2021) on how gender matters in the context of tourism. More specifically, the study aims to determine how women's participation can facilitate community development in tourism areas. In doing so, the study aims to examine whether tourism participation contributes to the empowerment of women by looking at their experiences within their communities. Empowerment in this study is understood from a multi-dimensional perspective as used by Boley and McGhee (2014) and Elshaer et al (2021), underpinned by the Empowerment-Participation model proposed by Gutierrez (2023). By undertaking a gender perspective in tackling tourism research, this research contributes to determining ways in which women can act as active agents facilitating community development

in tourism communities in the country. This study illustrates that examining women's experiences can facilitate a better understanding of how they can become partners and agents facilitating development within their communities and in the larger tourism industry.

Tourism Participation

The recent estimates of UNWTO suggests that majority of people employed in tourism are women. Women approximately comprise 59% of the tourism workforce, dominating the accommodation sector at 61% and travel and tour operators at 64% (UNWTO, 2019). Majority of this increased participation is driven by their participation in tourism industries of developing countries (Cave & Kilic, 2010). Despite their increased participation in the industry, however, women were found to be more affected by issues relating to seasonality, part-time work, job rotation that typically characterizes jobs in the industry (Costa et al, 2011). Women were also found to suffer from gender issues relating to gender pay gap, where they earn lower wages than their peers for the same type of job (Zhang & Zhang, 2021). In terms of entrepreneurial activities, there were a smaller number of women entrepreneurs than men in the industry (Butkouskaya et al, 2020) as they face issues relating to access to finance (Rinaldi & Salerno, 2020) as they remain to be perceived as secondary income earners (Gumba, 2020). Women are also observed to be underrepresented in leadership and senior positions in public spheres such as tourism industries (UNWTO, 2019). In some cases where women are able to participate in the workforce, they often suffer from balancing the multiple gender-assigned work that take up a substantial amount of their time, thus constraining their involvement in economic activities (Carvalho et al, 2018; Freund & Hernandez-Maskivker, 2021; Keizer & Komter, 2015). This is especially prevalent in societies where care and house work are predominantly assigned to women. Due to the prevailing notions on gender and traditional gender roles existing in communities, women remain excluded for some occupations and positions (Sinclair, 1997). As argued by Wesely and Gaarder (2004), this mindset continues to prevail since women have been taught that the domestic and private spaces are their domain, with little to no encouragement to their presence in public and economic spaces.

Despite being recognized as key actors in tourism industries, the extent and nature of women's involvement prove contentious. While studies have suggested the value of tourism in facilitating gender equality, evidence of issues and constraints on women's equal and active participation in the industry remain palpable. Thus, it is important to understand how women participate, what

kinds of work and positions they occupy, and what barriers to participation persist, among others (Ramirez et al, 2020). As pointed out by Movono and Dahles (2017), the theoretical assumption that women's participation and involvement in tourism relate to empowerment is flawed. In practice, participation does not always result in empowerment. As further supported by Cole (2006a), the end goal of participation is empowerment, where individuals and communities become "active agents of change" (p.97).

Empowerment

Empowerment in the context of tourism has been widely discussed alongside the concept of participation. As suggested by Rachmawati (2020), underpinning the perceived benefits of tourism participation is the assumption that it naturally results to empowerment. However, this remains a contestable assumption (Cole & Morgan, 2010; Cole, 2018; Movono & Dahles, 2017). Empowerment, in this sense, requires renewed and further examination for better understanding.

Over the years, the term "empowerment" has been conceptualized in a variety of ways. UNWTO (2019), for example, defined women empowerment as gaining control over their own respective lives. This suggests that for empowerment to accrue, the playing field in terms of access to capabilities and resources must be leveled off, to ensure that they have the agency to exercise their rights and resources, and to make their own decisions and opportunities. Part and parcel of this are efforts to build self-esteem and awareness while transforming structures and institutions in the process to address systemic issues of gender inequality and discrimination. Rowlands (1995), in further examining the conceptualization of empowerment, suggested that it involves a 'power to', 'power from within', and 'undoing negative social constructions so that people come to see themselves as having the capacity and the right to act and influence decisions' (p. 101). Finally, Kabeer (1999) defined empowerment as "the expansion in people's ability to make strategic life choices where this ability was previously denied to them"(p. 437).

Given its complexity, Caparros (2018) suggested that empowerment can be distinguished as a process of transforming disempowering situations to where individuals are given the choice and agency to decide their lives for themselves. That is, empowerment is both a means and an end (Moosa, 2012). Empowerment therefore necessitates challenging existing norms and assumptions in communities and societies (Cole, 2018; Caparros, 2018)—including those that limit women's

capacities and capabilities such as existing patriarchal norms, gender stereotypes and expectations, among others.

In operationalizing empowerment, Boley and McGhee (2014) and Boley et al (2015) suggested a multi-dimensional approach that applies Scheyvens (1999) four aspects of empowerment, namely: political, social, economic, and psychological. While studies have also assumed that empowerment is largely economic, Malhotra et al (2002) suggested these dimensions of empowerment are independent of each other (i.e., economic empowerment does not necessarily and automatically lead to social or psychological empowerment, and vice versa). The multi-dimensional perspective on empowerment is described below:

Psychological Empowerment. It is understood in terms of feelings of self-determination, meaning, impact, agency, competence, and self-esteem (Cole, 2018; Scheyvens, 1999; Seibert et al, 2011; Thomas & Velthouse, 1990). It is focused on the self-perception of individuals and their ability to influence and make decisions for themselves. Psychological empowerment thereby manifests through self-reliance which allows individuals to influence their own roles and responsibilities while seeking further capacity skills.

Social Empowerment: It may be understood in terms of the following: culture and social practices (Bayeh, 2016), an individual's relationship with their communities and societies (Boley & McGehee, 2014), and one's relationship with their own families (Caparros, 2018). This suggests that cultural and social practices have a collective impact on an individual's relations and roles in societies. Social empowerment also refers to individuals having the capacity to determine their own paths to success and opportunities for growth against the backdrop of societal cultures, norms, and institutions that surround them (Mosedale, 2005), hence their ability to negotiate (and re-negotiate) their roles in communities and societies (Foley et al, 2018).

Political Empowerment: Political intervention and representation remains crucial in ensuring that women are genuinely involved and heard in political processes. Political empowerment suggests that it is only when women are organized that they can influence the existing social norms and fabrics that tend to restrain them (Caparros, 2018; Carlos et al, 2023). Empowerment therefore involves the process where individuals perceive themselves worthy of occupying decision-making positions whether in public or private spheres (Rowlands, 1997). It is defined as the ability of women to accelerate their potential by allowing their voices

to be heard while also changing the systems in which they are (Sundström et al, 2017). This further entails the representation of individuals within communities and their ability to influence the outcomes of the development process (Scheyvens, 2000).

Economic Empowerment: Economic empowerment, while understood synonymously as empowerment in general, entails both access to finances and independence of people to control their own economic resources (Caparros, 2018). In this case, economic empowerment is conditioned, to an extent, by their psychological, social, and politically empowerment (McMillan et al, 2011).

Given these multi-faceted and diverse ways to understand empowerment, it is crucial to look beyond financial and economic approaches to measuring empowerment. Further examination is important in comprehending empowerment as women's ability to influence themselves and their communities and environments. As argued by Elshaer et al (2021), without women's empowerment, sustainable tourism development cannot be achieved. This suggests that more than just women's participation, women need to be empowered to be fully contribute effectively to community development.

Community Development

In the case of tourism, community development is readily understood in terms of Community-Based Tourism (CBT) initiatives which as Dunn (2007) suggested, offers an opportunity to promote multi-dimensional empowerment for individuals and communities. Beyond this conceptualization, community development is generally understood as the improvement of the community members' quality of life (Gil Arroyo et al, 2019). As Scheyvens (1998) suggested, discourses concerning community development in tourism and CBTs often neglect gender concerns in the guise of its perceived trickle down effects to community members. Part and parcel of community development is therefore ensuring that development trickles down to local community stakeholders including women (Scheyvens, 2000). This entails women's integration into development efforts as active partners and agents of developmental initiatives (Mehra, 1993).

1.2. Research Problem and Objectives

Against this background, this research aims to conduct a descriptive study that examines the role of women in community development in tourism areas in the Philippines to address the research question: **“How can women’s participation in tourism facilitate community development?”**

In doing so, the study also aims to address the sub-questions including:

- What are the existing international, regional, and national frameworks influencing women’s involvement in the industry?
- How are women involved in tourism in the Philippines ?
- Does the participation of women in tourism result in their empowerment?
- What are the challenges women encounter in participating in tourism?
- What is the impact of women’s empowerment on community development in tourism areas?

More specifically, this study would like to answer the following objectives:

- To identify the existing frameworks that influence women’s participation in the tourism industry;
- To understand how and in what ways women participate in tourism activities.
- To examine how tourism participation contributes to the empowerment of women;
- To identify the barriers and opportunities for women’s participation in tourism;
- To determine ways on how women can become active agents who can facilitate community development in tourism areas.

1.3. Significance of the Study

This research explores the linkages between the concepts of Women’s Participation, Empowerment, Community Development, and Tourism. In doing so, the research contributes to the existing literature on the topic, while providing insights to inform policy decisions concerning women’s empowerment in tourism. This research is therefore significant following its contributions:

Theoretical Significance. This research output contributes to the existing scientific discussions on the following grounds: first, theoretically and conceptually, this research expands understanding of the concept of empowerment alongside its relations with the concepts of participation and community development. By expanding the theoretical models forwarded by Elshaer et al (2021), Gutierrez (2023), Munar (2017), and Scheyvens (1999; 2000), this research advances existing knowledge about these concepts and constructs by localizing them on the context of tourism environments in the Philippines. As suggested by Momsen (2003), Cole (2018), and Gutierrez and Vafadari (2023), promoting participation does not always improve gender conditions nor result in empowerment. Thus, a better understanding of women’s experiences—specifically in terms of their involvement in economic activities in tourism industries is necessary. Similarly, the insights from this research extend understanding of community development by integrating facets of women’s empowerment and gender equality as part of its objectives. That is, this research challenges existing conceptualizations and definitions of empowerment by accounting for the context and environment where women operate (i.e., the tourism industry).

Second, this research bridges theoretical insights and the realities of women’s empowerment by examining the context of their involvement in the tourism industry of the Philippines. A case study tackling the experience of women in the Philippines is underpinned by an understanding that women should not be treated as a homogenous group, instead their experiences vary from each other (Mooney, 2018). This is crucial given the limited information available on women working in the tourism industry in developing economies. As noted by Movono and Dahles (2017), the literature discussing the gap between participation and empowerment remains scant with limited views on how the various dimensions of empowerment work within local and diverse contexts. Thus, this research builds on and fills this gap. Furthermore, Gutierrez and Vafadari (2023) and Gutierrez (2024a) noted the dearth of studies examining women’s experiences in Philippine tourism which proves critical in better understanding how women are influenced and can influence their environment. Thus, this research uses the existing literature as the springboard to contribute to both local and international discussions on women and tourism.

Practical Significance. While contributing to scientific and academic discussions on the subject, the findings of this study provide information in relation to the promotion of women’s

empowerment across industries. This study takes off from existing discourses suggesting a paradigm shift in the role of women in developmental initiatives—from the seminal work of Scott (1979) which emphasizes the value of examining the experiences of women to effectively participate in developmental efforts. Walter (2011) and Pécot et al (2024) suggested, women should be seen as active partners and agents of development, instead of beneficiaries and recipients of developmental outcomes. This is underpinned by the inclusion of gender equality in the SDGs suggests the significance of incorporating gender equality in the prospects of tourism development (Alarcón & Cole, 2019). That is, policies relating to women should be geared towards empowering them to facilitate and enable development. As suggested by Alarcón and Cole (2019), despite the growing interest and increasing number of research on the subject of women and tourism, a dearth of gender-sensitive policies in tourism remains palpable. Thus, by exploring their involvement and participation in tourism industries, this research provides insights into the ways women’s capacity and ability can be harnessed to contribute to a variety of development agendas. It is by understanding what roles women play in tourism industries that can they be better mobilized to further developmental initiatives and policies.

Ultimately, the insights from this research may assist in informing policies to promote gender-sensitive initiatives, projects, and policies that can provide equal benefits and opportunities to individuals regardless of gender (Walter, 2011). The findings of this study would be of interest to government officials, policy-makers, and other advocates supporting women’s participation in tourism development in the Philippines. Findings from this research can therefore contribute to a better understanding of how women are impacted by, cope with, and perceive risk associated with tourism development. The information on this can then contribute to gender-equitable tourism development policies and initiatives.

1.4. Scope of the Study

While this study intends to provide a comprehensive discussion on the role of women in community development in tourism areas in the Philippines, several parameters delimit this research:

First, due to time and sampling constraints, this research only focuses on select tourism destinations in the Philippines. More specifically, this research focused on the top three tourist destinations in the country, namely: Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan. Across these destinations,

a variety of tourism products and services, alongside the diversity of social, institutional, political, and economic structures can be found. Thus, a variety (and commonality) of women's experiences may be expected. Due to these constraints, the study is primarily focused on the experiences of middle-class majority women in the country. The study will not be able to cover the experiences of women belonging to the informal sector and in ethnic minorities.

Second, the selected sampling design (i.e., purposive and snowball sampling design) adopted in this study limits the generalizations that can be made on women's experiences in tourism destinations in the Philippines. That is, the insights derived from the analyses cannot be generalized as a homogenous and unified experience of women across the tourism industry or the Philippines. This is supported by the precautions provided by Cole (2018) and Mooney (2018) concerning the danger of perceiving women as a homogenous group of individuals with uniform experiences, insights, motivations, and attitudes.

Third, due to the lack of accessible and reliable secondary data on the subject and the infancy of literature on women in Philippine tourism (Gutierrez, 2024a; Gutierrez & Vafadari, 2023), descriptive qualitative research was utilized. In-depth interviews were used to collect primary qualitative information on the topic. Following the nature and the objectives of this research, women from across fields and nature of involvement have been interviewed: members of the Local Government Unit (LGU), tourism officers, community organizers, members of community associations, entrepreneurs, self-employed, among other individuals. In considering the limits imposed by the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, some of the interviews were conducted remotely via online conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Google Meet, alongside email exchanges, among others. The insights from the interviews were then complemented by conducting a document review of relevant documents including industry and government reports, and news articles, among others. Furthermore, other data/information regarding women in Philippine tourism that examined in this study may be limited due to resource scarcity and access restrictions.

1.5. Structure of the Study

The dissertation is composed of eight chapters as illustrated in Figure 1. The study is structured accordingly: the first chapter provides a brief overview of the background of the research study along with the key concepts adopted in the study. The research problem, objectives, and

significance of conducting the study are also discussed in the same chapter. The second chapter then provides a review of the existing literature in relation to the key concepts identified in the study, namely: participation, empowerment, and community development. Chapter three discusses the framework of the study which depicts the relationships of the variables of interest used in the study. Chapter four outlines the research methodology used in the study including the over-all research strategy, data collection design, and data analysis. Chapters five, six, and seven discusses the main themes emerging from the data collection process conducted including: (a) the international, regional and domestic environment for women in tourism, (b) contextualizing women and tourism in the Philippines, and (c) Women’s experiences in Philippine tourism. Chapter eight concludes the dissertation with a summary of findings, research contribution, and limitations and directions for future study.

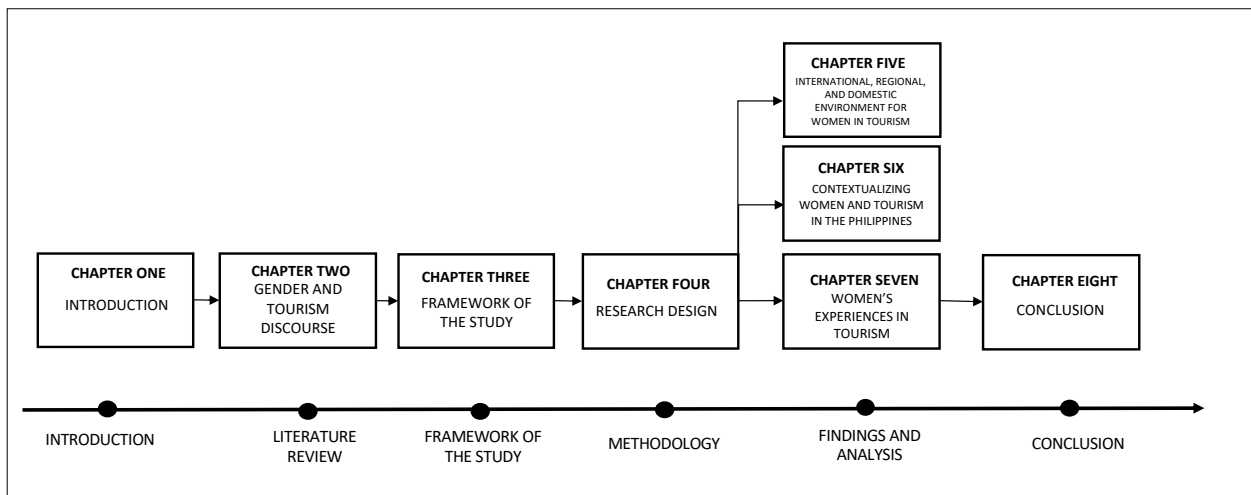


Figure 1. Dissertation Flow Chart

Source: Author

Chapter 2: Review of Related Literature

This chapter outlines a review of the existing literature discussing the key concepts of this study, namely: participation, empowerment, and community development. This chapter will then be divided into three sub-parts: the first part will focus on examining the literature on women's participation in tourism, women's empowerment, and community development. The second part will then discuss the existing literature on Philippine tourism in relation to women. Based on the findings from the previous parts, the final part will elaborate on the research gap identified in this study.

2.1. Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development

2.1.1. Women's Participation in Tourism

Participation in tourism development

Tourism participation has been widely understood alongside community participation as emphasized in the seminal work of Murphy (1985). In this sense, tourism is defined in a more relational aspect as Hunziker and Krapf (1942) (cited from Vanhove 2011, p.1), referred to as a “sum of relations and phenomena resulting from travel and stay of non-residents...” Tourism is therefore seen as a relational interaction between guests (i.e., outsiders, tourists) and hosts (i.e., insiders, local community). Following this, participation in this view is understood in terms of the involvement of local community members in decision-making processes (Roberts, 2011). Underpinning this is an understanding that *outsiders* such as experts and non-residents are not the most reliable sources of community priorities and goals. Arguably, it is the local residents themselves who can and should decide on how and whether tourism development will accrue (Murphy, 1985). Participation therefore entails recognition of the value of local knowledge in development planning that can only be provided by the local members themselves (Healey, 1998). Crucial to participation therefore is acquiring knowledge about tourism and the impacts its development may have on themselves and their communities (Sofield, 2003). Beyond tourism planning, participation has been also widely justified in Swarbrooke (1999)'s Doxey's Irridex Model which emphasized the value of host-visitor relations. In this model, local members as hosts are deemed critical in affecting the over-all experience of the tourists. It is understood that the hosts play a significant role not only in creating positive experiences, but also in minimizing the

negative impacts of tourism development. In his perspective, residents, including women, are deemed critical actors in ensuring successful and effective tourism development plans (Boley and McGehee, 2014). In following this logical principle, local participation has been widely acknowledged following the promotion of a *bottom-up approach* to development. As emphasized by the Brundtland Report (World Commission on Environment and Development [WCED], 1987) and the Agenda 21 for the Travel and Tourism Industry, this approach proves to be a more democratic form of development compared to traditional top-down approaches. Since then, international organizations along with governments across the globe, including those from developing economies, have adopted this model and followed suit.

Despite these efforts, however, disenfranchised members of local communities remain to be in disadvantageous positions, including women. As several authors have argued, participation do not readily result to absolute and unequivocal benefits to tourism development (Arnstein, 1969; Haywood, 1988; Hall & Jenkins, 1995). As pointed out by Mensah (2017), the existing bottom-up approaches were proven ineffective to mobilize community members as it failed to inform and involve women in community planning. In these cases, participation approaches have failed to account for the complexity of the participation process, community dynamics, and differences among community members. As Tosun (2000) have pointed out, participation is political in nature where power differentials exist within communities. Societal and institutional context also influence participation outcomes (Roberts, 2011), which may vary again depending on which communities are involved given their heterogenous nature (Cole, 2006b). In addition, the heterogeneity of the members that compose communities—individuals with diverse priorities, goals, and motivations also influence their participation in tourism. Taking off from these discourses, Ramirez et al (2020) noted that women remain to be disadvantaged, and still invisible in industries. Despite efforts of pursuing local participation, a closer look at realities may suggest otherwise. Therefore, it is crucial to take a closer look at the dynamics of participation within communities, specifically in the context of women who are often viewed as marginalized and less powerful members of communities (Nimble, 2019).

Women participation in Tourism

Over the years, women's presence in the tourism industry has been growing along with their increased economic participation (World Travel & Tourism Council [WTTC], 2019). Because of

this, the discussion on the role of women in tourism have grown comprehensive from solely focusing on the themes of sex tourism (Chant, 1996), gender pay-gap (Bolles, 1997), among others, to a critical analyses of their participation in the industry (Cole, 2018; Figueroa-Domecq et al, 2015). Issues regarding the quality of their participation and the type of involvement they are engaged in continue to surface (Rasul & Hoque, 2020). At the industry level, some of the key challenges to women’s participation in the industry include discriminatory practices and laws, along with women’s under-representation in professional jobs and formal tourism sector (World Bank, 2017). Arguably, perspectives on “*adding women into the development mix*” (Walter, 2011, p. 162) were no longer enough to address these existing barriers that exacerbate inequalities between men and women’s engagement in tourism. Similarly, issues resulting from existing institutional, societal, and cultural norms prove highly influential to women’s participation in the industry (Ahl & Marlow, 2012; Zhang & Zhang, 2020). At an individual level, it is important to recognize that variations in the experiences of women exist (Scott, 1997). Thus, tourism should not be glorified as a *one-size-fits-all* solution in addressing issues faced by women in the industry.

In examining the complexity of women’s participation in tourism, several studies have been reviewed and summarized in **Table 1**. Three general categories were identified namely: studies that provide a general perspective into women’s participation in the tourism industry, studies explicitly relating women’s participation in tourism to their empowerment, and studies that investigate tourism’s impact on gender equality. Following these categories, the literature was arranged according to the date of publication.

Table 1. Summary of Existing Studies on Women and Tourism

Category	Author/s	Focus	Findings	Challenges and Opportunities for Women	Methodology		Case/Research Locale
					Qualitative	Quantitative	
Women's Participation and impact to empowerment	Pécot et al (2024)	Examined the relationship between social innovation and empowerment on women entrepreneurs	Women can create social change through their engagement in tourism entrepreneurship	Women can create trickle-down impacts on their communities and stakeholders through tourism-led entrepreneurial activities	In-depth semi-structured interviews of 32 women tourism entrepreneurs		Women entrepreneurs in Ecuador and Mexico
	Abou-Shouk et al (2021)	Investigation of the influence of women's empowerment in the tourism development of Arab countries through the lens of women's perceptions of their work in the industry	Findings suggest that perceptions of women's work and entrepreneurial ventures significantly affect women's empowerment in tourism.	The persistence of conservative traditions and norms remain a challenge in fostering women empowerment.		Surveyed 784 female students across three countries using partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM)	Cross-country study of three Arab countries: Egypt, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman
	Alshareef & AlGassim (2021)	Examined the impact of perceptions on the empowerment of women involved in the tourism and hospitality sector	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.	Strong societal traditions and norms continue to limit women's capacity to be actively involved in the sector. Despite this, women under study remained optimistic that		Online questionnaire on 306 Saudi women employed in the tourism and hospitality sector	Tourism employment in Saudi Arabia

			their standing in the industry is constantly improving.		
Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino (2021)	Examination of affective and emotional component of tourism development on women involved in rural tourism in Mexico	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.	Despite implementation of gender mainstreaming strategies, women remain to experience emotional and affective issues from their own families and communities.	Interviews with 49 women between 2015 to 2018, analyzed through qualitative content analysis; non-participant observation, and document review to complement the interviews	Rural tourism in Mexico
Elshaer et al (2021)	Examined the impact of women's empowerment on sustainable tourism development by using a multi-dimensional scale of empowerment (i.e., social, psychological, political)	Tourism is perceived to contribute in women's empowerment. Psychologically, women believed that tourism gave pride to their culture through their interactions with tourists. 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	While women were deemed psychologically and politically empowered, their social empowerment remains a challenge. Women were found to be less supported and connected with their own communities and the challenges	Self-administered survey of 1000 female employees in tourism industry. Common method variance and structural equation modeling (SEM) were used.	Women employees in the tourism industry of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

		psychological and political empowerment, women significantly influence sustainable tourism development.	posed by the existing social network, work place environment, gender diversity, and norms in communities and societies. Sustainable tourism development cannot be achieved without social empowerment of women.		
McCall & Mearns (2021)	Examined the positive impacts of community-based tourism on women empowerment through the identified domains of empowerment, including: social and economic empowerment	The economic empowerment brought about by tourism allowed women to be socially empowered—thereby actively contributing to the social cohesion of their community.		Utilized Feminist Perspective Paradigm (FFP) and life histories as methodologies through data gathering techniques: participant observation and semi-structured interviews	Community-based tourism in Western Cape, South Africa
Vukovic et al (2021)	Examined how women’s empowerment can facilitate entrepreneurship and tourism development	Support from self-help groups positively influences women’s empowerment. In further examining women’s empowerment, self-	The patriarchal arrangement in societies remain a challenge which necessitates a systematic	Questionnaire on 25 village settlements with 513 female respondents	Villages in Serbia

Whardani & Susilowati (2021)	Examined the drivers and barriers to women's empowerment in a beach tourism destination	employment was found to be its primary goal. Women were found to be empowered by tourism activities specifically in terms of their economic empowerment, followed by psychological, social, and political empowerment.	assessment of empowerment. Political empowerment remains at its lowest despite the economic, psychological, and social empowerment of women. Limiting factors for women's empowerment include low self-confidence, lacking skills, low human resources, and limited funds	Mixed method approach utilizing in-depth interviews of 48 women	from 2013 to 2019 Questionnaire following the Resident Empowerment through Tourism Scale (RETS)	Yogyakarta, Indonesia
Aghazamani et al (2020)	Explored the perceptions of women on their empowerment	Women's perception on empowerment given their occupation in the tourism industry	Women's perception of their empowerment is heavily dependent on the society's culture.	Phenomenological research using one-on-one in-depth, semi-structured interviews with 40 Iranian women		Ramsar, Iran
Su et al (2020)	Examined how cultural tourism can facilitate empowerment of rural women	Engagement of women in embroidery tourism facilitated their economic, social, psychological, and political empowerment		Qualitative case study on three field destinations using semi-structured interviews and focus group interviews with government officials, management staff		Cultural tourism in Ningxia, China

Nassani et al (2019)	Examined the long-run causal relationship between women empowerment and tourism development using a variety of financial intermediaries	Financial intermediaries were found to empower women through tourism development.	Proper regulations and policies could generate more economic benefits for women	of cooperatives, and rural women	Utilized econometric applications on panel data across 24 selected European countries from 1990-2015	European countries
Movono & Dahles (2017)	Examined the gender dimensions of community-based tourism development, specifically in determining the linkages between women empowerment and tourism employment and business in the community	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.	The case of an indigenous patriarchal community suggests that the concept of empowerment may take time to accrue. To improve these efforts, initiatives such as training and skills development may better equip community members.	Case study approach using ethnographic research using Fiji Vanua Research Framework (FVRF)		Tourism businesses in Fijian village
Kunjuraman & Hussin (2016)	Identified how ecotourism activities enhance women's empowerment	Ecotourism activities, specifically homestay operation, allowed women to enhance their psychological, social, political, and economic empowerment		Face-to-face in-depth interviews with women engaged in ecotourism activities; field observations		Ecotourism in Sabah, Malaysia

				Informants were asked about their involvement in ecotourism and the socio-economic benefits they received.	
Dunn (2007)	Determined how community-based tourism project can promote women empowerment by using the case of Loeled community	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.	To further enhance economic empowerment, capacity-building needs to be in place	Participant observation, informal interviews of both men and women (e.g., community members, teachers, government officials, and general public such as fishermen, housewives, etc.), literature review	Community-based tourism in Thailand
Miettine (2006)	Development of community empowerment and cultural tourism under a EUROTEx project funded by the European Union	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	Women remain limited by established cultures and traditions regarding gender	Interviews and participant observation	Lappish communities in Finland

		constant interaction with tourists enhanced their self-esteem and identity construction while becoming economically independent from the handicraft work they do.	roles existing in communities.		
Pleno (2006)	Examined the impact of ecotourism activities to women's empowerment	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	Women were found to be empowered socially and psychologically through their engagement in ecotourism. Social empowerment can therefore be achieved independently from the economic gains they receive from tourism.	Structured and open-ended individual interviews with 50 respondents from San Vicente and Cambuhat Bohol	Bohol, Philippines
Scheyvens (2000)	Examined both empowering and disempowering impacts of ecotourism participation for women	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	The challenge remains in translating women's participation from mere consultation to one where they can actively decide how development will be pursued. Thus, there is a need for	Literature review	Ecotourism ventures in Third World Countries

			ventures, economic benefits are unequally distributed to men over women where women have little to no control over its development.	gender-sensitive-planning and management in tourism development projects.			
Women's participation in the tourism industry	Nikjoo et al (2021)	Analysis of the experiences of all-women tours in Muslim majority countries	The presence of all-women tours allow women to be freed from existing gender roles and responsibilities assigned by their societies. The experience of women taking part in all-women tours boost their happiness by spending time with same-aged women. This experience gives women a temporary pass to escape from them to escape from stereotypical expectations of their husbands, families, and communities.	This raises questions on UNWTO's "rights to travel" for women in traditional societies where women are also entitled to enjoy travelling and not just as providers of service.	Employed constructive grounded theory through participant observation and interviews		All-women tours in Iran
	Nagar (2020)	Analyzed the representation of women managers within the hospitality industry in Maldives	Despite women's underrepresentation in management positions, their participation within the industry has been increasing. Even in an Islamic country such as Maldives where women traditionally occupy housework positions, the study found that more women are challenging gender-based work stereotypes and traditions.	Issues faced by women in the industry remain to be neglected	Content analysis of related magazine articles	Content analysis of related magazine articles	Maldives

Nutsugbodo & Mensah (2020)	Assessed the benefits and challenges to women's participation in ecotourism development	Ecotourism development was found to result to more environmental benefits that socio-cultural and economic benefits	In terms of perceived barriers to participation, women were found to struggle in determining whether their issues emerge from cultural or personal aspects, however, they were quick to point out that structural barriers challenge their participation in the industry.	Survey questionnaire of 169 women in four selected communities using cluster sampling technique	Ecotourism in Kakum Conservation Area, Ghana
Nutsugbodo et al (2020)	Examined women's level of participation in tourism development in Ghana using Tosun (1998)'s community participation model	Women were primarily involved in communal labor	While there are some areas where spontaneous participation was at work, coercive and induced participation were also found to operate in some areas. Thus, it was suggested that women be involved in efforts that increase their knowledge about tourism development.	Survey questionnaire of 169 women in four selected communities using cluster sampling technique	Ecotourism in Kakum Conservation Area, Ghana

Nimble (2019)	Analyzed women experiences of participation in state implemented community-based rural tourism development program and its impact on women's political empowerment	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.	Despite the provision of livelihood opportunities through tourism, women remained constrained by existing structural systems (e.g., caste system).	Oral histories, interviews, community profiling analyzed using feminist phenomenological framework	Rural tourism in Himachal Pradesh, India
Caparros (2018)	Explored the involvement and participation of women in non-traditional economic activities using a feminist approach	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.	Insecurities and vulnerability continue to play a significant role in limiting women's choices. Norms within their own families remain gender stereotypical (i.e., women in charge of domestic and care work).	Face to face semi-structured interviews and research observation of participants working at a female-operated travel company	Female-operated travel company in Ladakh, India
Foley et al (2018)	Examined women's role in the development of eco-trekking activities through the lens of Foucault's notions of power and Gidden's structuration perspective	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		Participatory research	Community-based ecotourism development in Papua New Guinea

Vizcaino Suarez (2018)	Explored the experiences of two women producers and vendors of pottery to assess local gender roles in a specific community.	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 remains under-represented in leadership positions that can also empower other women. Women were observed to continue suffering from issues of double burden. Thus, policies that assist them in managing reproductive work must also be in place.	Using feminist interpretive methodology: Ethnographic research including participant observation, document review, and formal and informal interview	Women artisans in Metepec, Mexico
Panta & Thapa (2017)	Explored the opportunities and challenges faced by women entrepreneurs	Women were found to have increased self-confidence, acquired economic income, and enhanced decision-making capacities in their families	Rural Nepal's patriarchal system still inhibits the capacities of women involved in tourism	Qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews and focus group discussions with women entrepreneurs involved in accommodation enterprises	Entrepreneurship in Bardia National Park, Nepal
Tajeddini et al (2017)	Examined strategic decisions and entrepreneurial characteristics of female tourism entrepreneurs in Bali	Several factors were found to influence women entrepreneurs in Bali including gender traditions, marital status, religion, ethnicity, among others. Women's religious, ethnic	Despite being entrepreneurs, women are still "expected to prioritize their roles as wives, mothers, and	Purposeful sampling method of in-depth interviews over a six-month period. A total of nine (9) women	Tourism entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia

		and social networks provide both moral and financial support for women to establish their own enterprises.	homemakers” (p.57)	entrepreneurs were investigated.	
Lenao & Basupi (2016)	Exemplified how ecotourism development can be used to advance women empowerment	Ecotourism development posed an effect on both the empowerment and disempowerment of women	Gender neutral tourism development policies pose challenges and missed opportunities. Thus, the political and institutional context surrounding tourism development remain essential to promote women empowerment.	Literature review analysis utilizing social exchange theory	Ecotourism in Botswana
Duffy et al (2015)	Explored how tourism employment challenged or reinforced gender norms and ideologies (machismo-marianismo)	Tourism employment impacts the economic and social empowerment of women, however, issues pertaining to systemic gender issues prevail.	Despite the economic and social independence gained from tourism, women still face the challenge of negotiating their gender roles in societies.	58 Semi-structured individual and group interviews of residents in 12 coastal communities	Dominican Republic

Moswete & Lacey (2015)	Impact of community-based cultural tourism policy on women and community empowerment	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.	Lack of financial support, low levels of education, low earnings, and centralized control and management of tourism sites	Fifteen semi-structured interviews with male and female informants in the villages. Utilized purposive and snowball sampling methods to identify participants.	Safari Tourism in Botswana
Tran & Walter (2014)	Examined the impact of community-based ecotourism project in gender roles	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	Interpretive case study using Longwe's empowerment framework; Fieldwork was conducted by using in-depth semi-structured interviews, participant observation, and document analysis	Community-based ecotourism in North Vietnam
Gentry (2007)	Examined the employment experiences of women working for mass tourism businesses	Tourism employment in the select areas are exploiting traditional gender-based issues on employment (i.e., housewifization of labor, low	Opportunities to challenge existing traditional norms include women's increased social interaction,	Anthropological research methods (participant observation and semi-structured interviews)	Women workers in non-mass tourism businesses in Belize

			wages, sex-based segregation)	household decision-making, business ownership, among others were found to be present		
	Stronza (2005)	Examined the case of community-based ecotourism lodge	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.	Women, despite taking increased work responsibility through tourism, were found to have increased political power and greater involvement in community affairs	Anthropological fieldwork	Community-based ecolodge in Peruvian Amazon
	Bras & Dahles (1998)	Examined the impact of tourism on the employment of opportunities of women in the informal sector	The regulations imposed by the government on tourism activities affected women differently: for entrepreneurs, their businesses have been formalized through policies, while some women also exploited new market niche.	On the contrary, women in the informal sector of tourism did not benefit in the implemented tourism policies. Tourism was found to further reinforce gender divisions in labor.	Case study approach	Women entrepreneurs in Bali, Indonesia
Tourism and Gender Equality	Acharya & Halpenny (2013)	Determine how homestay tourism can assist in address gender inequalities	Homestays as a unique tourism opportunity for women and in promoting gender equality.	Women remains a heterogenous group with a majority considered to be economically disadvantaged and	Community -based action research using ethnographic observations and semi-structured interviews	Barpal, Western Nepal

			have lower education levels. Thus, in furthering women empowerment through homestays, there is a need to increase capacity-building and skills development measures among women.		
Feng (2013)	Examined the changes in gender work following the growth of tourism activities in the community	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	The increased flexibility of women did not result to their empowerment but instead reflected the reinforcement of existing gender ideology of men's superiority	Ethnographic case	Fenghuang County, Rural China
Ishii (2012)	Examined the impact of tourism in local minority community	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.			Statistical analysis examining residual income from tourism and other variables Akha, Thailand
Cave & Kilic (2010)	Examined the extent of gender segregation (i.e., vertical and horizontal) between	Women were found to be working in lower level tasks and are considered lower-paid than men	Women were found to fill positions that are traditionally	Pilot survey with specific hotel groups	Anatalya, Turkey

	men and women in tourism-related enterprises		gender-specific (i.e., extensions of their domestic work)		
Ferguson (2010)	Examined the construction of gender in the case of tourism-based microenterprises in Honduras	The identified project focused in Copan, Honduras, while aimed at involving women through microenterprises, remained problematic.	Despite efforts of integrating indigenous women in tourism, women's participation is considered "highly controlled and monitored" (p.20). Capacity-building and skills training must also be incorporated to assist women's participation.	Qualitative approach analyzing policy documents, conducting interviews with policy-makers, and case study	Tourism-based microenterprises in Copan, Honduras
Schellhorn (2010)	Reported on the findings of a long-term research on tourism strategies in Lombok, Indonesia	Local women were found to be disadvantaged given their lack of access to economic opportunities given cultural and societal constraints	Women remain underrepresented in tourism activities in the area. While they make up the majority in accommodation establishments, they are usually acting as helpers of their family members instead of formal employees	Fieldwork conducted between 2002 and 2006 using census survey	Sasak village, Lombok, Indonesia

Shakeela et al (2010)	Explored the participation of women in Maldivian tourism industry, specifically in terms of exploring the impact of religion to women participation	Religion plays a significant role in influencing the participation of women in tourism.	Government policy remains problematic in terms of managing religious expectations and the needs for tourism industry development	In-depth interview with tourism educators, focus group discussion with local community group representatives	Questionnaire of resort managers	Tourism industry in Maldives
Tucker (2007)	Discussed how the conceptualization of gender situates against the backdrop of tourism-related work	The existing boundaries and gender ideologies on male dominance of Turkish tourism industry have been altered over years where women have learned to negotiate their positions and place in the industry.	Existing cultural norms on the role of men and women in tourism are gradual changing. However, an age gap among women have been observed where younger women were found to be more active in negotiating their positions and roles in the industry and wider society.	Longitudinal research utilizing ethnographic research from 1995 to 2005.		Göreme in central Turkey
Kelkar (2004)	Explores the impact of tourism to gender relations	Through their involvement in ecotourism development, women were found to benefit economically from increased income by engaging in entrepreneurial ventures, however they were also	Ecotourism development in the communities influenced the gender roles in the communities— women engaging	Focus group discussions and individual interviews from men and women from the		Mosuo communities around Lugu Lake, Yunnan, China

		found to have less political involvement and power over decision-making processes	in productive work, while men engage in reproductive work	community and tourists in the area	
Zhonghua (2001)	Examined the effects of forest policy devolution in matrilineal communities		Altered gender roles benefitted men's status within households and communities over women where men's knowledge in natural resource management was being valued greater than women's skills. As a result, men's decision-making power within households reinforced.	Fieldwork from 13 July to 06 August 1999	Mosuo communities around Lugu Lake, Yunnan, China
Scott (1997)	Examined the gender perspectives of a developing tourism industry where women were found to play a marginal role	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.	Despite their increasing role in Northern Cyprus' tourism industry, management of tourism still largely dependent on men. Tourism furthered existing stereotypical roles of men and	Participant observation, semi-structured and open-ended interviews with men and women employed in tourism industry	Girne, Northern Cyprus

Garcia-Ramon et al (1995)	Analyzed the role of women in farm tourism, specifically against the backdrop of restructuring processes in rural tourism	Farm tourism provides an alternative for women which allows them to balance their domestic work with tourism work.	women where women took charge of extending their domestic roles. Women's traditional gender role (i.e., domestic work) that is being used for their participation in rural tourism enterprises. However, this posed issues on recognizing the professionalism of women's domestic work.	Qualitative research using interviews with 28 respondents	Farm tourism in Catalonia and Galicia, Spain
Wilkinson & Pratiwi (1995)	Examined gender roles and interactions in a traditional fishing village using gender analysis approach	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.	Tourism development in the community has found to have little to no regard about the impact it has on gender relations, most especially to women.	Interviews through purposive sampling, and participant observation	Java fishing village, Indonesia
Castelberg-Koulma (1991)	Evaluated the implications of women's agri-tourism	Women engaged in co-operatives have benefitted in tourism through the income	Policymakers need to be engaged in	Interviews with women employed in tourism industry	Ambelakia co-operatives in Greece

	co-operatives to women	they receive from their work and improved public position in their communities and larger society.	ensuring that women are able to take part in economic activities in the industry.		
Levy & Lerch (1991)	Examined the implications of tourism employment on gender roles at home and workplace	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.	Government programs must be geared towards providing women with increased flexibility to support their economic and domestic work.	Interviews with 53 and 80 women tourism workers in 10 accommodation establishments and other establishments	Tourism workers in Barbados

From these, a variety of themes and factors affecting women's participation in tourism are discussed below:

The economic benefits gained by women from participating in tourism activities do not completely resolve issues of gender discrimination and inequalities that are entrenched in societies and communities. As noted by Alarcón and Cole (2019), providing work for women do not solve inherent issues in the system and industry. For one, Wilkinson and Pratiwi (1995) noted that women's participation in tourism activities had little to no impact on gender relations. The seminal work of Kinnaird and Hall (1994) also argued that tourism processes including gender relations are mere reflections of existing norms, culture, and politics in societies. Gender stereotypical norms and institutions, for example, affect women's roles in households and communities. Díaz-Carrión & Vizcaino (2021) found that despite women's economic empowerment in undertaking tourism activities, the lack of support from their families and communities discourage them from further engaging in productive work since patriarchal norms suggest that women should only be engaged in domestic and household work. This was also observed by Caparros (2018) in which the author found women to have increased external empowerment (i.e., relations outside their households), but limited internal empowerment (i.e., within their homes) as dictated by established gender stereotypes. In cases such as these, tourism is believed to have no impact on gender relations or even worse, reinforce patriarchal structures in societies (Bras & Dahles, 1998; Zhonghua, 2001). Elite dominance in development processes have also been observed to affect women's participation in the industry. Elite and individuals who have access to greater economic resources were found to dominate discussions on community development. As pointed out by Tran and Walter (2014) and Knight and Cottrell (2016), elite interests within communities are more likely to prevail over the interests of marginalized groups including women. Without broadening the perspectives of participation in terms of the financial and economic benefits it provide to women, issues discussed above will continue to hamper efforts to promote women's empowerment and gender equality.

The experience of women participating in tourism vary. Scott (1997) argued that women's experience in tourism differ because women themselves are heterogenous in nature. For one, Castelberg-Koulma (1991) suggested that their experience may vary depending on the professional setting and type of tourism work they are involved in. For women working in family businesses, they are often engaged in work that is considered an extension of their *designated* domestic roles.

As Garcia-Ramon et al (1995) noted in the case of women involved in farm tourism in Spain, women were tasked to undertake jobs such as lodging managers, guest relations officers, cooks among others, without economic compensation. Women are treated as helpers of family businesses instead of formal employees given the work that they do (Schellhorn, 2010). The experience also varies for women engaged in informal work (Carlos et al, 2023). Women who are mostly employed in the informal sector such as in the production and selling of souvenirs, provision of services such as hair braiding and massages were found to be more vulnerable to job insecurity (i.e., job seasonality, policy changes, demand fluctuations) (Bras & Dahles, 1998; Kempadoo, 1999). Women are often engaged in work that are considered *menial* and *non-professional*. The same case is observed by Arisanty et al (2017) on women working floating markets. Despite their significance in the over-all tourism operations—from farming, hospitality work, to trading of goods, they were mainly involved in operational work with little to no representation in managerial positions. On the other hand, women entrepreneurs in the industry were found to gain more benefits from their participation than those employed (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Bras & Dahles, 1998; Kelkar, 2004; Panta & Thapa, 2017; Vukovic et al, 2021).

Gender division of work limit women's capacities. Women's involvement and participation in tourism work are restricted by established gender roles and stereotypes (Díaz-Carrion & Vizcaino, 2020; Dulnuan & Mondiguing, 2000; Moswete & Lacey, 2015; Nimble, 2019). As noted by Momsen (2010), women are often found in hospitality work (e.g., guest relations officer, cooks etc.) given their natural caring skills and domestic management capacities that are believed to be inherent in them. Scott (1997), for example, noted that women are often engaged in tourism activities with an expectation that their domestic and care work will be extended to tourism businesses. As a result, they are often engaged in operational and communal labor (Arisanty et al, 2017; Nutsugbodo et al, 2020), as well as informal work (Bras & Dahles, 1998; Kempadoo, 1999). In some communities, men's knowledge and skills were also deemed more valuable than their women counterparts (Zhonghua, 2001). Part and parcel of this issue boils down to the discrimination between reproductive and productive work—where the former is culturally the sole responsibility of women, and the latter should be undertaken by men. As a result, women's economic participation aggravate their situations with additional *burdens*—from issues of “double burden” (i.e., undertaking both reproductive and productive labor), where men remain unwilling to take on reproductive labor (Sinclair, 1997) and even worse, a “triple burden” where women

carry responsibilities in terms of reproductive, productive, and community work (Moser, 1993). In some communities, women working outside their households have become the *expectation rather than an exception* given their husbands' inability to provide sufficient income to support their families (Bras & Dahles, 1998; Duffy et al, 2015). As a result, women end up with a 'double workload' by taking responsibility of both productive and reproductive labor (Chant, 1996; Ferguson, 2011). In most communities, men remain to be unwilling to take on domestic work underpinned by the belief that they are traditionally designated as women's work (Feng, 2013).

Empowerment can only be achieved if both men and women strive for equality. Without the cooperation of men, issues in relation to gender discrimination may continue to affect women. Zhonghua (2001), for example, noted that despite efforts to enhance women's social standing in communities through tourism, men's power within household and communities were found to be reinforced given women's pre-occupation with economic work. In some other cases, the increased involvement of women in tourism have resulted to men's intimidation and women antagonism—expressed through men's increase use of alcohol and narcotics and violence against women (Ishii, 2012; Tran & Walter, 2014). Echoing Munar (2017), men should be seen as partners for achieving the goals of equality.

Despite these issues, there have been cases where tourism is seen as a tool that provide benefits to women (Elshaer et al., 2021; Foley et al, 2018; Kelkar, 2004; Kunjuruman & Hussin, 2016; Lenao & Basupi, 2016; McCall & Mearns, 2021; Miettine, 2006; Movono & Dahles, 2017; Scheyvens, 2000; Stronza, 2005; Pleno, 2006; Vizcaino-Suarez, 2018). Zhang and Zhang (2020) found that in using dynamic panel data analysis technique on variables including education, economy, and employment, tourism positively impacts gender equality especially in Southeast Asian economies. In examining the case of women involved in community-based tourism in Madre de Dios, Peru, Stronza (2005) found that while men were engaged in ecotourism business, women were given the opportunity to take over men's work which include attending to their work in managing their farms (i.e., selling produce, attending meetings, etc.). Men's increased involvement in tourism thereby allowed women to take charge of economic activities that were previously afforded solely by men. Women also had increased responsibilities at home where they gained greater control. While this appeared as an additional work for women, they were found to have increased decision-making power and greater control in community affairs. This is also exhibited in the case examined by Su et al (2020), for example, although women in the Hui community in

China obtained low social status where the community expects them to stay at home, embroidery tourism allowed them to improve their family and social status by providing them their own income, developing their career, and widening their social circles without deviating from the constructs of them not leaving their homes. Self-employed women were found to benefit the most from tourism (Moswete & Lacey, 2015). In the case of women in community-based tourism in Bohol, Philippines, Pleno (2006) found that women have benefitted greatly from their involvement in tourism activities. Although their economic income did not increase significantly, they were found to have developed skills, knowledge, and self-confidence through their engagement in tourism. In response to this, men were found to take on reproductive work, while women became more engaged in social and political affairs. In a project aimed at empowering women in Nepal through tourism, women were found to have better quality life given their increased skills and knowledge about tour guiding which allowed them to receive increased income and wider social networks within communities. As a result, women were found to be more confident with themselves (Jackson, 2010). Foley et al (2018) noted that through the establishment of tourism microenterprises, women in Kokoda, Papua New Guinea were able to negotiate their roles in their respective households and communities. In supporting women's participation in tourism, Moswete & Lacey (2015) found that the male members of the community became flexible in undertaking domestic work to support women.

This section of this literature review suggests that not all forms of tourism activities facilitate women's empowerment (Cole, 2018; Scheyvens, 2000). In fact, the relationship between women's participation in tourism is more complex and dynamic than is expected. While others have pointed at increasing women's capacities through education and altering institutions to facilitate women's empowerment (Acharya & Halpenny, 2013; Levy & Lerch, 1991; Shakeela et al, 2010; Tran & Walter, 2014), other cases such as those by Schellhorn (2010) suggest that even with trainings aimed at empowering women through ecotour guiding, men were still found to continue dominating tour guiding activities leaving women unemployed. While assuming that men's flexibility in undertaking domestic work will resolve these issues, Kelkar (2004) noted that men's willingness to engage in both productive and reproductive roles further increased their political power within communities thereby hampering efforts to enhance women's decision-making capacities. As a result, some of these engagements appear superficial with very little value in improving women's outlook and perspective towards themselves and the possible contributions

they can offer towards community development. The next section will further elaborate the ways in which tourism participation *can be* linked with empowerment.

2.1.2. Women empowerment and tourism participation

Empowerment as a developmental objective has been a widely accepted construct that influenced development policies across the globe specifically directed to marginalized members of communities and societies (Sen, 1999), including women. More than economic benefits, greater agency entails access to health, political rights, freedom from oppressive cultural and institutional norms, among others (Walter, 2011). The key aspect of empowerment therefore is women's ability and capacity to make choices for themselves (Kabeer, 1999). This relates to having a sense of freedom where women are freed from gender roles, burdens of dependency, and expectations from society, among others (Moswete & Lacey, 2015). The goal of empowerment, therefore is for individuals to exercise their own capacities to take control of their lives, decisions, and resources to affect their own lives (Briedenhann & Ramchander, 2006). In the long run, Floro (1995) suggested that women empowerment assists in the realization of gender equality. That is, women empowerment exponentially results to increased women engagement—where women's involvement in leadership and entrepreneurial ventures facilitates women activism by supporting and investing in other women as well (Calas et al., 2009).

These conceptualizations therefore suggest that empowerment refers to a long and tedious processes that facilitate the elevation of women's socio, economic, psychological, and political status in societies (Lenao & Basupi, 2016). Empowerment is therefore a “negotiated process” (Movono & Dahles, 2017, p.10) that requires interactions, consultations, and adjustments among members of community. For women empowerment to accrue, stakeholders must understand “how and why women need to be empowered” (Datta & Gailey, 2012, cited in Vukovic et al, 2021, p. 4)—where women are recognized as “critical constituency within the local communities needing empowerment” (Lenao & Basupi, 2016, p. 56). Without a sense of ownership and foundational skills, knowledge and capitals, participation in tourism will not allow women to fully control tourism development (Scheyvens, 2000).

Moving beyond conceptualizations of empowerment along the lines of political and control over decision-making processes, Scheyvens (1999) offered a multi-faceted perspective on measuring analyzing through an empowerment framework which defined empowerment in terms of four key aspects of psychological, social, political, and economic empowerment. These

dimensions of empowerment are not interdependent from each other, and can be achieved independently (Moswete & Lacey, 2015), and may even be overlapping at times (Jutting & Morrisson, 2005; Scheyvens, 1999).

Several studies investigating women's participation in tourism and their impact on empowerment have been conducted. **Table 2** provides an overview of these studies, specifically by determining how their involvement in tourism contributed to each dimension of empowerment.

Table 2. Summary of literature on the relationship among tourism participation, empowerment, and community development

Impact of tourism participation on empowerment	Author	Findings	Support/Not Support/Ambiguous
Women’s tourism participation and its positive influence on their psychological empowerment	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 pride 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 tourists, 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

Women's tourism participation and its positive influence on their social empowerment	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	
Women's tourism participation and its positive influence on their political empowerment	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.	Not supported

	Despite this, women's influence in larger political spaces remain limited.	
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
Whardani & 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

Women's tourism participation and its positive influence on their economic empowerment	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
	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	Support
	McCall & Mearns (2021)	Examined the positive impacts of community-based tourism on women empowerment through the identified domains of empowerment, including: social and economic empowerment	The economic empowerment brought about by tourism allowed women to be socially empowered—thereby actively contributing to the social cohesion of their community.
	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
	Duffy et al (2015)	Despite providing economic opportunities for women, women's participation in the tourism industry of DR was deemed as an expectation instead of an exception.	Not 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
Women's psychological empowerment and its positive influence on community development	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
Women's social empowerment and its positive influence on community development	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
Women's political empowerment and its positive	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	Support

influence on community development	Elshaer et al (2021)	(UAE) specifically through their involvement in the decision-making processes concerning tourism development. 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
Women's economic empowerment and its positive influence on community development	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

A discussion of each dimensions of empowerment is provided below:

Economic Empowerment. Women empowerment is readily understood as the ability for women to gain control over their own life, which is usually understood in terms of financial assets (Soroushmehr et al, 2012). As indicated in numerous studies, tourism can economically empower women by providing them economic and business opportunities that are critical in women's independence and in supporting their families (Gil Arroyo et al, 2019; Moswete & Lacey, 2015; Whardani & Susilowati, 2021). In the case of community-based tourism initiative in Western Cape, South Africa, women's economic empowerment was found to facilitate their social inclusion and community acceptance (McCall & Mearns, 2021). Similarly, Su et al (2020) found that women engaged in cultural tourism gained substantial increase in personal income which also improved the economic conditions of their families. As Foley et al (2018) noted, it is through women's economic empowerment that they are able to negotiate their roles in societies. As a result, their increased income also meant enhanced decision-making capacities within their own households (Panta & Thapa, 2017). The same findings were observed by Movono & Dahles (2017) in suggesting that women who were economically empowered also became socially, psychologically, and politically empowered. On the other hand, other studies have also shown that despite economic independence brought about by tourism activities, women still face challenges in negotiating their roles in societies (Duffy et al, 2015), as observed in situations where women suffer from antagonism from their husbands (Ishii, 2012), emotional burdens from their families and communities (Díaz-Carrión & Vizcaino, 2021). Thus, other dimensions of empowerment must be observed.

Psychological Empowerment. In this perspective, empowerment is rooted on women's self-perception and sense of identity resulting to feelings of autonomy, self-esteem, and a sense of social belonging (Osirim, 2001). Part and parcel of improving women's psychological state is a realization that their lives are no longer confined to their family, but with other aspects that allow women to interact with other individuals as well (Sun & Liao, 2016, cited in Su et al 2020). This is exhibited in the cases by Kunjuruman and Hussin (2016) and Elshaer et al (2021) who found that the interaction of women with other individuals including outside tourists allowed them to develop a sense of pride, self-confidence, and self-esteem. Pleno (2006) also noted that even with little economic benefits, women's involvement in community-based ecotourism activities allowed them to live happy lives where they were found to be content and proud of what they do. Miettime

(2006) found that through their involvement in tourism, women were able to construct their own independent identities as expressed by the work that they do. Against existing socio-political constraints, women were found to have increased self-awareness, autonomy, and agency through their engagement in tourism (Knight & Cottrell, 2014). Critical to psychological empowerment is women's self-perception and self-assessment through their participation in tourism activities (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021). As Alshareef & AlGassim (2021) noted, amidst strong 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. Tourism provided women an opportunity to negotiate their roles in societies and challenge existing gender beliefs.

Social Empowerment. As Sun and Liao (2016) cited in Su et al (2020) suggested, women's social status is underpinned by their psychological empowerment or their enhanced self-esteem and self-recognition. In relation to this, societal cultures along with rules, social norms, laws influence behavioral patterns which then determine the perceptions on gender (Vujko et al, 2019). In this perspective, social empowerment relates to women's feeling of social belongingness with their community. Part and parcel of this is the importance of what Vukovic et al (2021) identified as self-help groups in the form of strong linkages between women and other local tourism stakeholders. Castelberg-Koulma (1991) found that women engaged in tourism cooperatives facilitated their improved public positions within communities. This includes the presence of social policies that encourages the participation of women in economic activities through employment or entrepreneurship (Godwyn, 2009; Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016). Women's communal motivations are critical in influencing their respective personal goals, as Dasig (2020) pointed out, "the stronger the women's identification with their goals...the strong their commitment is" (p.15). This was observed by Scheyvens (1999) where women's involvement in tourism was found to contribute significantly in developing social cohesion among other community members. As exhibited in the case of women involved in rural tourism in Mexico, Díaz-Carrión & Vizcaino (2021) emphasized the impact that communities have on women's perception of themselves. The same is observed by Elshaer et al (2021) in noting that despite women's psychological, political, and economic empowerment through tourism, they were found to be less supported and connected with their own communities. Thus, the engagement of other community members therefore enhance women's self-perception which then encouraged them to further engage in tourism development initiatives (Vukovic et al, 2021).

Political Empowerment. Political empowerment predicates women's inclusion in positions of authority and power where they have access to political representation, control over decision-making processes (Scheyvens, 1999). Empowerment in this perspective is understood in terms of their ability to be involved in the decision-making processes through the support of policy-makers and policies (Elshaer et al, 2021). However, unlike the other dimensions of empowerment, political empowerment reveals to be least noticeable in women involved in tourism. While advancements have been made as evidenced by the emergence of women leaders in communities, women's occupation of political spaces remain in its early stages (Su et al, 2020). Existing cultures and norms in communities and societies heavily influence gender dynamics in tourism activities. In terms of women's involvement in decision-making processes, the cases in highly patriarchal communities show that women have difficulty in being active in political processes (Alshareef & AlGassim, 2021; Caparros, 2018; Kelkar, 2004; Whardani & Susilowati, 2021). Despite this, tourism was found to provide women opportunities to take part in political spaces which were traditionally limited to their male counterparts (Su et al, 2020). In other cases, despite having little to no participation in decision-making processes, women have been found to have increased social capital and status within their own communities (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Pleno, 2006; Su et al, 2020; Scheyvens, 1999). Despite this, however, Mendelberg and Karpowitz (2016) emphasized that political participation of women is critical in influencing existing societal norms and beliefs that affect an individual's empowerment.

Empowerment is considered part and parcel of sustainable development (Boley et al, 2017; Cole, 2018; Strzelecka et al, 2017). For years now, the conceptualization of empowerment has been understood alongside discourses on how tourism can help facilitate development (Scheyvens & van der Watt, 2021; Sofield, 2003). Empowerment, in this perspective, is seen as a crucial component of community development (Pigg, 2002). Boley and McGehee (2014) suggested that women's empowerment can facilitate the sustainable tourism development since empowerment serves as a form of community involvement in the development of gender equality. As Alarcón and Cole (2019) emphasized, sustainable tourism cannot be achieved without achieving gender equality and women empowerment. In linking women empowerment, community development, and gender equality in tourism, Ruhanen et al (2015) noted the significance of empowerment and gender equality in achieving sustainable tourism development which satisfies the economic, social, and environmental aspects of development.

2.1.3. Community development and Community-based tourism (CBT) development

The sustained growth of tourism industries across the globe resulted to increased pressures on communities in various destinations (Wearing, 2001). Issues on communities' involvement and level of participation in tourism development emerged, resulting to a call for discourses on participation or community participation (Stiefel & Wolfe, 1994). The conceptualization of CBT can be traced back in the early 1970s where alternative development approaches and initiatives were being developed (Karim et al, 2012). CBTs have been introduced as a mechanism to ensure community participation in planning, implementing, and monitoring of tourism development (Björk, 2000). Through increased community participation in tourism industries, the benefits generated by tourism activities are expected to trickle down to the marginalized and underrepresented community members thereby promoting a more sustainable form of tourism development (Connell & Lowe, 1997). CBT is perceived as a strategy promoting community development in tourism areas (Baktygulov & Raeva, 2010). It is a widely advocated tool facilitating community development in areas where economic development activities prove limited (Le et al, 2012).

As several studies have pointed out, the theory and practice in CBTs tend to be mismatched (Goodwin & Santilli, 2009; Scheyvens, 2000). Arguably, due to the differentiated definitions and conceptualizations of CBT, scholars have noted several criticisms on its application (Mayaka et al, 2012). Community-based approaches to tourism development continue to face issues in relation to power differentials within communities (Bianchi, 2003). Taylor (1995) suggested that existing approaches merely sought for shallow means of participation without necessarily giving fair representation to members of the community. To an extent, efforts to facilitate community participation leads to unintended consequences which further cause conflict within its members (Hall & Jenkins, 1995). As Blackstock (2005) summarized, simplified conceptualizations of CBT approach often fail to account for the heterogenous nature of communities, discriminating power structures, and lack of systematic processes to facilitate community development. Beyond mere community involvement, CBTs have evolved to account for the perspectives of the marginalized members of communities (Jealous, 1998) including women.

The existing discourse on CBTs have focused primarily on examining communities' participation on the industry, consequently how this can result to or from their empowerment

(Addison, 1996; Cole, 2006b; Getz & Jamal, 1994; Taylor, 1995). A dearth of studies undertaking a critical analyses of women's participation in CBT has been noted (Dunn, 2007; Scheyvens, 1999).

Women Empowerment and Community Development

Women's contribution to development in community-based tourism initiatives have been documented in several studies. In fact, the strong link between the role played by local tourism stakeholders and women empowerment in tourism has been reported in many regions, such as Iran (Soroushmehr et al., 2012), Tanzania (Mrema, 2015), Malaysia (Kunjuraman and Hussin, 2016), or in wider context such as "the third world" countries (Scheyvens, 2000) or European states (Nassani et al., 2019). In terms of environmental aspects, Sebele (2010) argued that women-based tourism development is important in pursuing sustainable management given their roles in leading efforts on resource management and natural environment conservation (Agarwal, 2009). As shown in the case of women engaged in ecotourism activities, Pleno (2006) noted that women have gained environmental consciousness which influenced their community members. Women as mothers have been observed to play a significant role in nurturing children with a sense of care for the environment and society (Ram-Bidesi, 2015). In terms of cultural and heritage activities, Scheyvens (2000) pointed out the critical role of women in preserving traditions within communities. Similarly, Bhattacharya and Banerjee (2012) noted the importance of women's empowerment in supporting the autonomy of communities. Economically, women were also found to improve economic conditions in communities (European Institute for Gender Equality, 2016) as they gain more employment and entrepreneurial opportunities. Vukovic et al (2021) and Abou-Shouk et al (2021) found that women engaged in tourism entrepreneurship were able to contribute to their individual economic empowerment thereby improving the economic status of their families and their larger community. Socially, women's ability to negotiate their roles in societies have also shown to improve gender identities in some communities where men have actively supported women's participation in tourism (Garcia Ramon et al, 1995; Stronza, 2005; Tucker, 2007). The case of rural tourism development in Spain in the 1990s emphasized the crucial role of women in establishing tourism activities. As suggested, without women, "rural agricultural families could not readily take on a new enterprise" (Garcia-Ramon et al, 1995, p.278).

2.2. Discourses on Women and Community Development in the Philippines

The seminal work of Chant (1996) provided a comparison between the experiences of the Philippines and Mexico which serves as a seminal work providing a rich overview of women's participation in tourism in the country. According to the author, women in Philippine tourism were bound in labor niches which were considered subordinate positions following societal gender constructions—women as secondary income earners and primary persons in charge of domestic work. Historically, this resulted to women being commodified in the prevalence of sex tourism in the country in the early 1970s. Despite this, Zhang and Zhang (2020) noted that the Philippines has the highest gender equality index in Asia despite being a mainstream Catholic country. Women's presence in other industries have also been noted in several studies including those listed herein.

Women's contribution to environmental conservation evolves from the broader debates about eco-feminist theory arguing the relationship between the exploitation of nature and women in societies. As a result, women are seen as natural stewards of environmental protection (Jumawan-Dadang, 2015). Arguably, women's involvement in environmental protection is primarily influenced by their vulnerability to climactic conditions, which Gabriel and Mangahas (2017) and Graziano et al (2018) argued directly impact them. Gabriel et al (2020) found that the conservation works primarily done by the indigenous women of Kalanguya in Nueva Ecija include overseeing the protection of sites that were deemed critical to the survival of the community. In other tribes, such as the Dumagat, women were found to be heavily dependent on male-dominated decision-making institutions that facilitate the conservation of forest in their communities. The differences in women's role in environmental protection, just like in tourism, is found to be heavily influenced by societal and community perceptions on gender roles. Graziano et al (2018) found that women played a unique role in climate change adaptation in coastal communities in the Philippines. Yet, the authors warned about generalizations in the involvement of women in conservation work—women in some communities were found to be less-connected to marine environment conservation. In examining the experiences of women leaders in community-based coastal resource management, Dasig (2020) found that women were able to negotiate and sustain their active participation in traditionally patriarchal systems. Women found that their participation in resource management empowered them psychologically, socially, political, and economically. As a result, they were also able to influence the community's sense of pride and self-worth. In

terms of cultural and heritage conservation, women were found to be the primary stakeholders in preserving vernacular memories and cultural heritage such as “pamamaklad”¹. Over the years, however, women participation in these practices declined as younger generations focused on their career development outside their local communities (Pelayo et al, 2020). In Albuquerque, Bohol, women were found to be the main potters while men only provide them assistance (Yankowski, 2019). For those involved in seaweed farming industry in Zamboanga Peninsula, despite women’s significant contribution to farming activities, they were not paid for their work as it is considered a family venture (Ramirez et al, 2020). In examining farm household decision making, Maligalig et al (2021) found that women have approximately 48% decision-making power compared to men, arguably, this is consistent with reports suggesting the country’s achievements in closing gender gaps across industries. According to the authors, women can increase their bargaining power by enhancing their knowledge and gaining new information. While women’s contribution to agrarian peri-urban households proves significant, Angeles and Hill (2009) noted that women remain challenged by existing discriminatory economic policies and community arrangements. While women have grown flexible and now able to share the burden of economic work, men appear to be less willing to take responsibility of sharing domestic work. The same authors also noted that men were found to prefer being unemployed instead of taking lower paid “women’s jobs.” Similarly, in indigenous communities such as the Aetas, Lontoc (2020) found that women undertake substantial work in the management and production of resources for their families and communities. Women were found to be the keepers of indigenous knowledge within communities. In contributing to the development of indigenous communities, the author noted the ability of indigenous women to negotiate their roles in integrating themselves and their communities in mainstream society.

While the discourses on women and development initiatives have been growing, only few studies were conducted to examine the relationship between women and tourism in the country despite the former’s prevalence in the industry. Dulnuan and Mondiguing (2000) found that tourism development in Sagada reinforced existing gender division of labor where women were involved in work that were seen as an extension of the reproductive work such as managing lodging

¹A traditional method of fishing which primarily involves women “scooping of fish in an enclosed area” (Pelayo et al, 2020, p.66).

houses and restaurants, etc. Also observed in this case is the presence of elite members, who regardless of their gender, tend to dominate tourism activities and decision-making processes in relation to tourism development. Tourism was also found to exacerbate the conditions of women involved in farming, who took additional agricultural work and domestic work in compensating for the work left by their husbands engaged in tourism-related activities. Similarly, Pleno (2006) found that women were psychologically, socially, and politically empowered by their participation in ecotourism. Through their engagement in ecotourism activities, women were found to develop environmental consciousness which influenced their own families and communities. Yet, issues in relation to income sufficiency and negative attitude of their husbands persisted. In examining the entrepreneurial engagements of women in tourism areas in the Philippines, Gumba (2020) found that women were engaged in small enterprises such as variety store, eatery, souvenir shops, and others which were highly dependent on tourism activities within their province. Without necessary referring to empowerment models and frameworks, the author noted that women took pride of their small businesses which allowed them to promote their way of life and culture. Economically, women were provided with extra income, yet they still face issues with access to credit as they were discriminated as “secondary income earners” (Gumba, 2020, p.358). Despite women’s ability to enter the labor force, reproductive work remains their sole responsibility.

Besides the discussed literature related to the subject of women’s participation in tourism and empowerment, very little has been done to comprehensively examine the experience of women working in Philippine tourism industry.

2.3. Research Gap

The nexus between women and tourism has been the subject of ongoing debates for years now. As early as the works of Levy and Lerch (1991) and Castelberg-Koulma (1991) that examined the impact of tourism on women and gender roles, the conversation has evolved to encompass the dynamism and complexity of women’s experiences in being involved in tourism activities. Along with the noticeable growth on the number of women participating in tourism industries, it is no surprise that interest on the topic have resurfaced in the recent years.

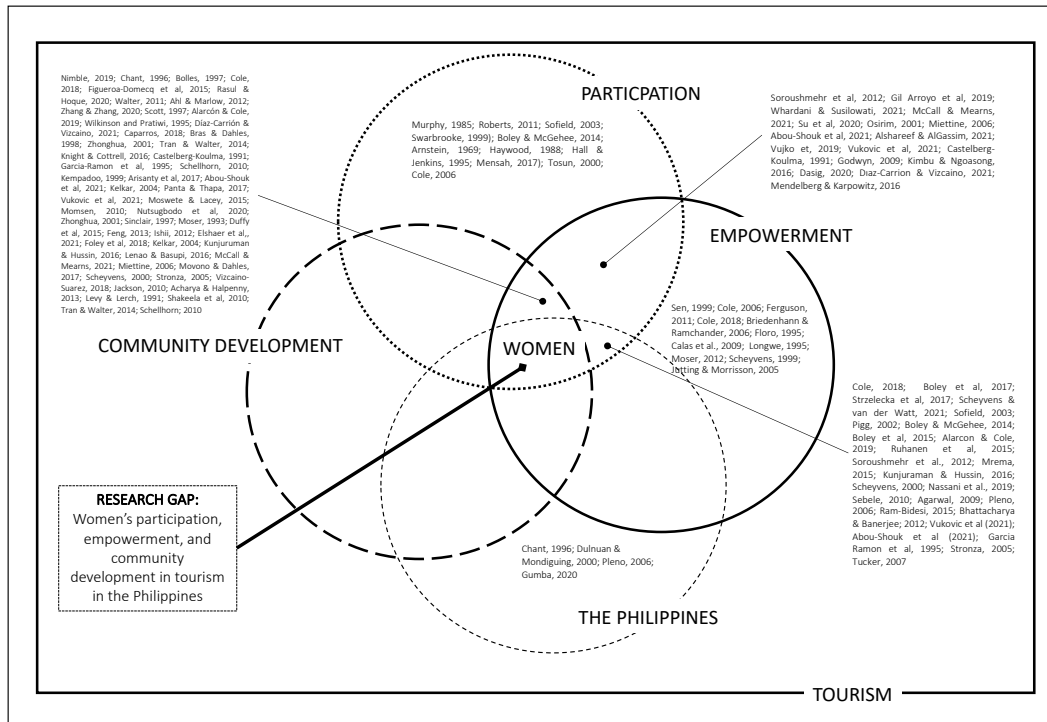


Figure 2. Literature Map
Source: Author

As seen in Figure 2, the review on the related literature conducted in this study reveals the following about the subject of the study: first, despite the plethora of studies on tourism and women, there is still a need to include gender lens and analysis in examining their role in the development of the industry (Ferguson & Alarcón, 2015; Radović-Marković & Živanović, 2019; Harding, 1993). Beyond analyzing the impact of tourism on women, Dunn (2007), Scheyvens (1999), and Wilkinson and Pratiwi (1999) noted the lack of studies undertaking a critical analyses of women's participation in tourism development. To date, Nutsugbodo et al (2020) suggested that little is known about the benefits and barriers to women's effective participation in tourism. Second, studies show that there is still little attention given to women's participation tourism development activities in the global south (Stronza & Gordillo, 2008; Walter, 2011), specifically in the Southeast Asian region. Consequently, this has created a knowledge gap on how women's participation influence tourism and community development, and how their level of participation impacts their wellbeing. Third, the most relevant and closest work resembling the objective of this study is by Pleno (2006) in examining the impact of a community-based ecotourism development on women's empowerment in Bohol, Philippines. While this study partially addressed some voids

in establishing the relationship between tourism participation and women empowerment, the work by Pleno (2006) has yet to establish the practical implication of women's empowerment to their contribution in community vis-à-vis tourism development in the country. In fact, there is a dearth of literature examining the role of women's empowerment to their contribution to community development in the context of tourism.

Based on these findings, it is crucial to conduct a study examines the relationship between the concepts of participation, empowerment, and community development in practical contexts. Specifically, by examining the experience of women involved in tourism in the Philippines, the top Asian country in promoting gender equality. The conduct of this study shows a potential in delivering significant findings that may enhance the understanding of how women can actively participate in contributing to community development in developing economies such as the Philippines.

Chapter 3: Framework of the Study

This chapter presents the framework that will guide the conduct of this study. A proposed conceptual framework in determining how women participation can facilitate community development in tourism areas will be presented. In this chapter, the framework will be discussed in detail with emphasis on its significance and role in this research. The framework that will be adopted are aligned with the existing literature on tourism participation and women empowerment (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Alshareef & AlGassim, 2021; Castelberg-Koulma, 1991; Dasig, 2020; Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino, 2021; Gil Arroyo et al, 2019; Godwyn, 2009; Kimbu & Ngoasong, 2016; Mendelberg & Karpowitz, 2016; McCall & Mearns, 2021; Soroushmehr et al, 2012; Su et al, 2020; Osirim, 200; Vujko et, 2019; Vukovic et al, 2021; Wardhani & Susilowati, 2021). While these studies have determined the impact of tourism participation to women's empowerment, none of these have accounted for the link among participation, women's empowerment, and community development. This chapter will be divided into three (3) sections: the first section will provide a description of the key concepts—Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development; the second section will discuss the conceptual framework supporting the relationship among the key concepts of the study while operationalizing the concepts for testing; finally, the theoretical framework is discussed.

3.1. Describing the Concepts: Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development

3.1.1. Participation

As discussed in the previous chapter, participation has been widely understood as a concept that is synonymous to the promotion of community participation and local members' involvement in tourism development processes (Healey, 1998; Murphy, 1985; Roberts, 2011; Sofield, 2003). In the context of tourism, participation is justified in providing effective developmental plans for tourism (Boley & McGehee, 2014), ensuring quality tourism products and services for tourists (Swarbrooke, 1999), managing and minimizing the negative impacts of tourism development (Fiorino, 1990), balancing the benefits of tourism to involved stakeholders, (Tosun & Timothy, 2003) and in facilitating the sustainable development of tourism in communities (Byrd et al, 2009).

Participation is defined in a variety of ways depending on the context to which it is applied to. From a public administration perspective, France (1998) defined participation as a “process of

empowerment”(p.228) that facilitates local people’s involvement in the planning, decision-making, and implementation of development initiatives (Slocum & Thomas-Slayter, 1995). That is, through participation, implementation of projects and initiatives may be deemed more effective (Darier et al, 1999). Timothy (1999) further differentiated participation into two perspectives: first, local people’s participation in decision making, and second, their participation in acquiring the benefits from tourism activities. In a developmental perspective, participation also benefits the people being involved by allowing them to improve an understanding of their role within their communities, while offering a potential to increase their skills and knowledge (Marzuki et al, 2012). While participation has been widely advocated, participation in developing economies prove to be difficult (Marzuki et al, 2012; Tosun, 2000). In most cases promoting participation cause conflict within communities (Bramwell, 2010; Wells, 1982). Stakeholders’ exclusion from planning and participatory processes continue to prevail (Tosun, 1998). To ensure that benefits accrue, a fair representation of stakeholders must be ensured (Bramwell & Sharman, 2000).

Participation further suggests a process of constant engagement. As suggested by Arnstein (1969) in her participation typology, participation follows a systematic process that engage citizen from one type of involvement to another (i.e., from non-participation, tokenism, and citizen power). A critical part of participation is the locals’ education and understanding of their rights and privileges prior to involvement to ensure their effective participation. Similarly, Tosun (2000)’s community participation model suggested that participation may vary depending on their level of independence from an external entity. The model proposes three types of participation: coercive, induced, and spontaneous participation—the lowest level of coercive participation, individuals have no power over tourism development with very shallow engagements in promotional activities, induced participation where individuals have a say in tourism development but have no power in controlling decisions made by authority, and finally to spontaneous participation where individuals have the power and control to make decisions about the tourism development process (Tosun, 2006). Participation, in this sense, should be viewed as an opportunity to establish “*new social bargaining tables*” (Haywood, 1988, p.108) for local people, including women, can contribute in. As Marzuki et al (2012) noted, participation allows “communities to share their visions for future development”(p.6).

3.1.2. Empowerment

Many scholars argue that a key component of sustainable tourism is its ability to contribute to community empowerment (Cole, 2006b; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014; Sofield, 2003). Power and empowerment have also been identified as critical success factors for CBT projects (Simons & de Groot, 2015). Empowerment may be defined as ‘a process, a mechanism by which people, organizations, and communities gain mastery over their affairs’ (Rappaport, 1987, p. 122). Empowerment is therefore aimed at enabling individuals, or groups, to exert control over factors that affect their lives (Scheyvens, 1999). Empowerment has become a vital construct for understanding the development of individuals, and communities alike (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995).

Empowerment, in this view, goes beyond providing economic opportunities for women, instead a multi-faceted perspective proves more comprehensive (Cole, 2018; Ferguson, 2011; Scheyvens, 2000). As Cole (2018) suggested, empowerment should encompass three As: agency, autonomy, and authority. Empowerment means greater agency for individuals that entails political rights, access to health, among others (Walter, 2011), and increased freedom from discriminating institutions, systems, cultures (Moswete & Lacey, 2015). For women, this entails their ability and capacity to make choices for themselves (Briedenhann & Ramchander, 2006; Kabeer, 1999). As scholars have noted, empowerment requires a “negotiated process” (Movono & Dahles, 2017, p.10) which requires constant interaction between and among community members. Key to achieving empowerment include the development of skills, knowledge and capital that further capacitate women to participate effectively and efficiently in developmental processes (Scheyvens, 2000).

In recognizing the importance of empowerment, several scholarly works have been dedicated to better understanding its concept. Longwe (1995)’s Women’s Empowerment Framework further bridged the concept of gender equality and empowerment of women by suggesting five levels of increasing equality and empowerment—from welfare, access, conscientization, and control. In using this approach, women’s empowerment move from satisfying practical needs (i.e., welfare and access) to providing their strategic needs (i.e., conscientization, participation, and control) (Moser, 2012). Scheyvens (1999) further explored the conceptualization of empowerment in relation to ecotourism development by proposing a framework highlighting the various dimensions of empowerment. The framework has been widely

adopted in several studies examining the implications of tourism development to the empowerment of individuals and communities (Colton & Whitney-Squire, 2010). From these combined perspectives, empowerment goes beyond the process of gaining control over development, but instead offers opportunities to support “contemporary and traditional ways of life” (Colton & Whitney-Squire, 2010, p. 267) within communities.

3.1.3. Community Development

As Jugmohan and Giampiccoli (2017) suggested, CBT must be “viewed through a community development lens or perspective” (p.54). While initial prospects of creating CBTs include objectives of economic development for communities, prospects for community development must go beyond these objectives and must include aspects of forming and re-forming institutions and systems that support other aspects of growth (Bell, 1999; Cornell & Kalt, 1998). As Hettne (1995) suggested, (community) development “involves structural transformation” (p.15) encompassing not only economic structures but political, social, and cultural aspects as well. Beyond economic development (i.e., job creation, income generation), community development is understood in terms of making progress—progress “with reference to values and goals that differ under different political and social systems” (Sanders, 1970, p.24). This perspective further suggests that development is highly dependent on context to which communities find themselves in. As Mair & Reid (2007) suggested, community development may be a result of tourism activities through a restructuring process that requires social transformation, empowerment, learning, collaboration, with an end goal of development that is not only for tourists but also for the residents and local people themselves. Thus, community development goes beyond short-term economic outcomes, instead focusing on long-term goals that improve community’s welfare and well-being. Similarly, CBT is also deemed as an effective tool to promote sustainable tourism development (Simons & de Groot, 2015).

In elaborating community development, Bell (1999) argued that focus must be made on *relationships* rather than a sense of *place*. That is, community development must also ensure community wellness where its members maintain a healthy and balanced relationship with each other, its surrounding nature, and its culture. This definition is viewed in relation with Kretzmann and McKnight (1996) who suggested that an Asset-Based Community Development approach must be used to encompass the value of capacity-building and local assets in developing

communities. The conceptualization of CBT fostering community development should break existing “dependency patterns and facilitate holistic development of disadvantaged community/individuals” (Giampiccoli & Saayman, 2014, p. 3).

Part and parcel of the discourses on CBT accounts for the necessity of empowerment. Sin and Minca (2014) pointed out that a debate on whether CBT empower locals still prevail. One school of thought argues for the significance of empowerment of community members to achieving community development. As scholars have argued, empowerment of community members, including women, is critical in ensuring their contribution to the development of tourism ventures (Dolezal, 2013; Ramos & Prideaux, 2018; Stone, 2015). Yet, the link between empowerment and community development through CBT remain limited (Joo et al, 2020). The existing literature suggests a two-way relationship between the two: the first suggests that empowerment is a requirement for effective community participation in CBT (Cole, 2006b; Mair & Reid, 2007; Scheyvens, 2000), on the other hand, empowerment is seen as the ultimate objective of pursuing CBTs (Ramos & Prideaux, 2014). Similarly, Colton and Whitney-Squire (2010) noted that community development is largely driven by the level of community members’ empowerment. As Reid and van Dreunen (1996) suggested, “community development is a process of empowerment and transformation” (p. 49).

3.2. Conceptual Framework

This sub-section illustrates the framework which describes the key concepts of the study. As exemplified by several scholarly works, different types of involvement and participation in tourism yield different levels of empowerment (Bras & Dahles, 1998; Castelberg-Koulma, 1991; Kelkar, 2004; Panta & Thapa, 2017; Scott, 1997). Similarly, scholars have also argued the importance of empowerment in influencing the type and level of participation and involvement an individual is engaged in (Scheyvens, 1999, 2000). This suggests that *participation* as a concept refers to a “*process of empowerment*” (France, 1998, p.228) that engages individuals and members of communities with the goal of improving their capacities and capabilities.

In furthering this, Scheyvens (1999) proposed a conceptual framework for determining the impacts of ecotourism initiatives on local communities through four dimensions of empowerment, namely: economic, psychological, social, and political. As suggested by this framework, empowerment is not solely dependent on economic assets but other forms of empowerment as well.

The author further characterized each dimension by listing “signs of empowerment and disempowerment” (p.247). According to this framework, local people need to be empowered for them to effectively contribute to tourism development. This entails engagement through education, skills training, and capacity-building to make them understand what the implications of tourism mean to their lives as a community. As suggested by Moswete and Lacey (2015), these dimensions of empowerment can be achieved independently from each other and may even be overlapping in (Jutting & Morrisson, 2005; Scheyvens, 1999). While this framework was not necessarily applied to women, several studies have already adopted and modified the framework to better understand the dynamics between tourism and gender (Abou-Shouk et al, 2021; Elshaer et al, 2021; Jutting & Morrisson, 2005; Moswete & Lacey, 2015). Following this, a conceptual framework (Figure 3), adopted from Gutierrez and Vafadari (2022), is utilized to illustrate the relationship between the key concepts of the study: women’s participation, empowerment, and community development.

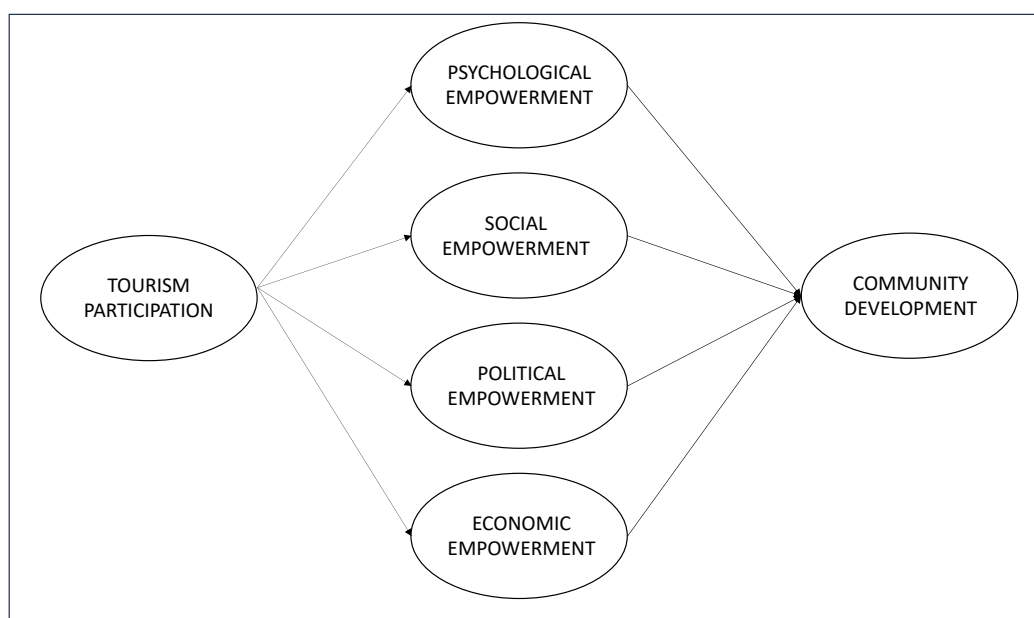


Figure 3. Conceptual Framework
Source: Gutierrez & Vafadari (2022)

Following the proposed conceptual framework, the key concepts are operationalized and defined 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

As suggested in the previous chapter, these concepts are critical in examining “*how women participation can facilitate community development in tourism areas.*” Following the baseline studies on *participation* (Arnstein, 1969; Byrd et al, 2009; Fiorino, 1990; Healey, 1998; Murphy, 1985; Roberts, 2011; Sofield, 2003; Tosun, 2000), *empowerment* (Cole, 2006b; Ramos & Prideaux, 2014; Sofield, 2003; Scheyvens, 1999), *community development* (Bell, 1999; Cornell & Kalt, 1998; Mair & Reid, 2007), the framework proposes the link between the concepts under study (Elshaer et al, 2021).

3.3. Theoretical Framework

This sub-section illustrates the theory that underpins the conduct of this study. Given the research questions and the key concepts of interest in this study, four theories have been identified to support its conduct: Theory of Participation, Empowerment, Community Development, and Tourism Development. The theories combined serve as the foundation that establishes the relationship among the key concepts of this study: participation, empowerment, and community development within the context of tourism. The theories discussed in this section are teleological in nature—thus charting actions towards a goal instead of explaining how a certain phenomenon occurs while predicting outcomes on these bases (Bhattacharya, 2004). That is, each theory described in this section provides the purpose, methods, and tools to achieve a specific social order of participation, empowerment, community development, and tourism development. The theoretical framework supporting this study is illustrated in Figure 4.

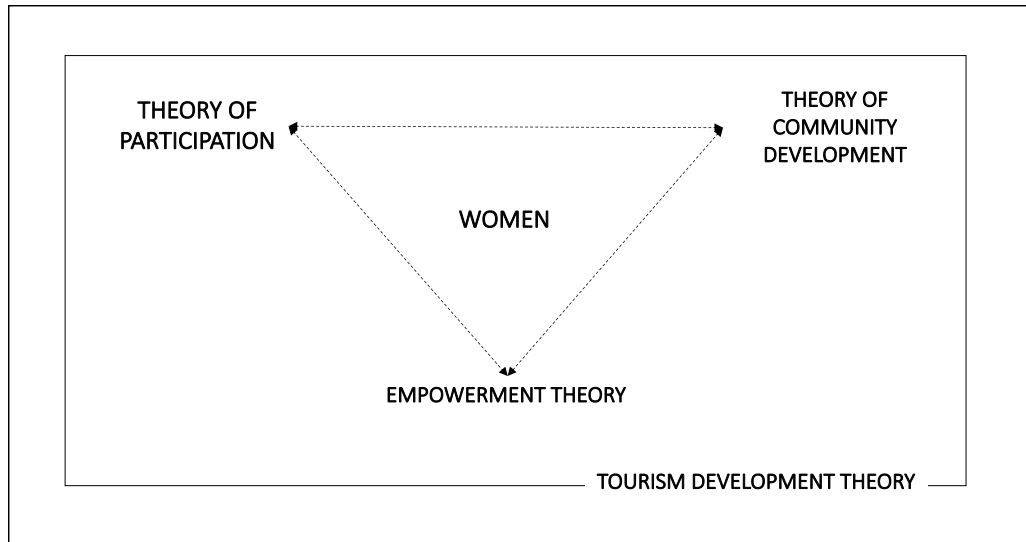


Figure 4. Theoretical Framework
Source: Author's own

3.3.1. Theory of Participation

In its theoretical underpinning, participation “*stems from the failure of conventional economic models of post-war years to benefit the majority of the third world’s population*” (Marsden & Oakley, 1982, p. 187)—that is, because of discontent with existing economic models, participation emerged in relation to dependency theory. Known to be a buzzword in developmental initiatives, the term ‘participation’ became a flexible concept used to refer to anything that involves people in processes (Cornwall, 2008). In its most basic sense, it is understood as inclusion or the ability of a person to take part in an activity or in the production of meanings (Bhattacharya, 2004)—from problem definition to the implementation of solutions. Participation, in this study, is therefore understood in response to mechanisms countering exclusion and repression in communities and societies (i.e., based on language, silencing, de-legitimizing of culture and religion, segregation based on economic capacity, among others).

The conceptualization of participation is the involvement of individuals and their ability to express themselves freely—to be heard and acknowledged (Cornwall, 2008). Going beyond mere involvement in economic opportunities (i.e., labor or work), participation should translate to having a voice that can influence decision-making processes at the family, community, societal, and political dimensions. As White (1997) suggested, an individual’s participation is driven by different interests and motivations. Thus, an in-depth investigation on what drives participation and why participation is taking place in a specific community or society should be conducted.

Participation in this perspective can therefore aid in identifying conflicting ideas to different individuals (Cornwall, 2008).

Enabling and facilitating participation requires the presence of “*invited spaces and opportunities*” (Cornwall, 2008, pp. 275), whether obligated following institutional laws or rooted from private initiatives, that allow individuals to freely be involved in the processes. Arguably, such spaces can be created by individuals themselves (i.e., even those who came from diverse racial, gender, socio-economic backgrounds). Such spaces were found to be more essential for groups who are considered marginalized or with little to no power or voice in societies (i.e., women). Part and parcel of facilitating participation are efforts from above and below— institutional modifications and political will from above and strategies to build collective pressure from below (Gaventa & Valderrama, 1998). Participation entails multiple processes that require time, resources, and persistence. In doing so can it result to empowerment (Cornwall, 2008). It is equally important to acknowledge that non-participation in processes may result from various factors. The most common assumption is that individuals cannot take part in an initiative (i.e., as dictated by societal structures, norms, cultures, etc.). In some cases, non-participation may also be a result of *self-exclusion* (Cornwall, 2008, p. 279) that is associated with individuals who lack self-confidence (i.e., their contribution will not be taken seriously) or motivation (i.e., there is no point in being involved).

3.3.2. Theory of Empowerment

Empowerment theory serves that clarifies both the processes and outcomes that is associated with an individual, community, or population’s struggles. The theory suggests a link between individual with the larger community where they can become active in community activities that facilitate the improvement of their own lives and that of their community (Zimmerman, 2000). Empowerment theory, rooted originally from community psychology, suggests that individuals can take responsibility of their life situations. As opposed to political power, empowerment may be viewed as social power which allows individuals to facilitate or hinder decision-making without necessarily being the authoritative figure (i.e., as is in power) (Speer & Hughey, 1995). The theory of empowerment suggests that structures, systems, processes, and actions may be empowering, and the outcome of these result in a level of being empowered (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995). Theoretically, empowerment presents a model for examining the processes and systems that affect the influence and control of a person over their decisions, which

then affect their lives (Perkins & Zimmerman, 1995; Zimmerman, 2000). In applying the theory to tourism, Aghazamani and Hunt (2017) suggested that empowerment can be defined as a “a multi-dimensional, 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.335).

Given its scope, it suggests the following:

Empowerment is context specific. As a concept, Rappaport (1984) and Zimmerman (2000) suggested that empowerment cannot be easily captured by a single standard as it may mean differently for individuals in various contexts—how one person defines empowerment may be different for another.

Distinguishing empowering processes and empowered outcomes. Empowering processes involves systems that allow individuals to develop their skills with the objective of becoming independent decision-makers and problem-solvers. At an individual level, this may mean a person’s involvement in community activities and the management of community resources. Meanwhile, empowered outcomes involves examining the impacts of the increased independence or control of an individual to his/her own life—may involve acquired control, skills, and behavior.

Empowerment as a continuous process. As Mechanic (1991) cited in Zimmerman (2000) suggested, empowerment can be viewed as a process that allows individuals to have the ability to establish the relationship between their self-determined life outcomes and efforts—to identify their goals while also understanding how these goals can be achieved. As suggested by Zimmerman (1990), empowerment is not an inherent trait, instead is developed and earned through an ongoing process.

Empowerment as a multi-level and multi-stakeholder process. The theory suggests that processes that empowerment works in multi-levels of analyses that involves not only individuals but organizations, and communities who work towards gaining control over their own lives (Rappaport, 1984). In this perspective, empowerment theory requires levels of analysis—from individual, community/organizational, to the general population—all of which are deemed “mutually interdependent and are both a cause and consequence of each other” (Zimmerman, 2000, p.46). Thus, the theory suggests that an individual’s empowerment readily affects the organization, community, and population to which it belongs. In following this logic, empowering women is believed to support the empowerment of the community.

Empowerment requires interaction with others. As suggested by the Cornell Empowerment Group (1989), empowerment and community development are closely linked where the former involves an intentional processes that is focused on the local community—its efforts to practice caring, mutual respect, critical reflection, and participation that uplift the lives of its community members. Empowerment in this sense requires involvement and participation in activities that allow individuals to achieve their goals (Zimmerman, 2000). By adhering to the empowerment theory, community members are perceived to have an active role in the processes involved in empowerment. In this perspective, participation is considered one of the essential components of empowerment.

Critical Analysis on Empowerment Theory. While the theory does not provide remedy to all problems across contexts, and to an extent may be difficult to measure, it remains a useful construct in promoting developmental outcomes—where empowerment results in some other outcome. As others argued (i.e., Bhattacharya, 2004), empowerment is a means to achieve agency or autonomy.

3.3.3. Theory of Community Development

In theory, the concept of community development is rooted from United Kingdom and United States as an effort to assist the social needs of the urban poor at the height of industrialization (Stöhr, 1988). Years later, the application of its principles to other countries such as developing economies prove to become problematic—with issues on translating and transitioning to other contexts (Abbott, 1995). As a result, a theory on community development is not readily available (Bhattacharya, 2004).

This gap is further aggravated by the existing inconsistent and unclear definitions of what community development means and what it entails. For example, Christenson and Robinson (1989) both defined it as a loosely defined group of concepts whose definition is largely defined by the community developers practicing it. Arguably, the “relative” definitions are owed to the complexity of defining “community”—as a representation of individual’s social relations (Tönnies, 2002), as an engagement between local populations within a spatial proximity (Christenson & Robinson, 1989), as a social bond between people who are not necessarily in proximity (Bradshaw, 2009), among others. Over the years, these definitions have evolved into an agreement that as the

world changes, the conceptualization of community goes beyond the limits of space and proximity (Bhattacharya, 2004, 1995; Bradshaw, 2009).

Given the complexity on both its conceptualization and theorization, Bhattacharya (2004) proposed that for an endeavor to qualify as community development, it should satisfy two conditions—first, a well-defined methodology and purpose for achieving it must be made (i.e., the goal and method of achieving the goal should be clearly identified), and second, its goals and methods should be universal in that it is applicable in various social formations (e.g., both rural and urban areas, post or pre-industrial societies, among others). In the context of this study, community development is defined as the pursuit of social relations characterized by the presence of both solidarity and agency (Bhattacharya, 1995). Community is characterized as a quality of social relations that is believed to be inherent in all communities—that is a feeling of solidarity or a shared identity. Development, on the other hand, refers to its main goal of agency or one’s capacity to be independent. By adopting this approach, one can discuss extensively the ways in which solidarity and agency erode and how can they be reconstructed. An example of which could be the agency-threatening presence of patriarchal societies which rob women of their agency and their possible contributions to community development.

As suggested by Bhattacharya (2004), the main purpose of community development is the promotion and achievement of agency and solidarity. Human agency or autonomy, in this perspective, is defined as the capacity of individuals to create, reproduce, change, decide, and live their lives according to their own preferences (Giddens, 1984). Solidarity, on the other hand, entails the possession of a shared identity and norms of individuals in a community. In this conceptualization, community development is observed to emerge following the erosion of both agency and solidarity—from the rise of capitalism (Polanyi, 1944) to the formation of nation state or building of nation state (Anderson, 1983), among others. In this perspective, community development is defined in terms of the achievement of both solidarity and agency.

Community development is closely linked with community empowerment where its comprising individuals can control and manage activities that improve the community life. That is, the community is comprised of members that are both empowered and empowering (Zimmerman, 2004, p. 54). In this perspective, community development is underpinned by the presence of opportunity of individuals to solve their problems, utilize their knowledge and resources to solve them. It is only by being empowered can individuals reaffirm their agency and

solidarity in communities. Self-help predicated the belief that people themselves are the only able individuals who can and should solve their problems. Felt-needs, on the other hand, refers to the voice and ability of individuals to identify what is considered a priority and a relevant problem to them—thus limiting outside intervention. In relating to the previous theories on participation and empowerment, the theory of community development deems individuals as agents who can decide how development within their area can be achieved (Freire, 1973). The theory of community development is underpinned by the principles of participation, self-help, and felt needs (Bhattacharya, 2004, p. 21). As discussed above, participation requires both self-help or independence and an affirmation about being needed and demanded. Through participation, development may be achieved by and for the individuals themselves.

3.3.4. Theory of Tourism Development

Tourism and development theory has been widely used in the existing literature suggesting the primacy of tourism as a strategy to promote development across destinations (Telfer, 2015). Arguably, tourism research emerged in relation to tourism's function as a tool for development, conducted mostly by development planners and economists (Graburn & Jafari, 1991). In its early years, mass tourism was generally believed to create a multiplier effect that stimulates local development and economy. Yet, the presence of economic leakages and low multiplier effects resulted to planners questioning its actual benefits to development (de Kadt, 1979). As a result, sustainability became an alternative tourism development paradigm promoting the importance of environmental protection alongside tourism activities (Telfer, 2015). Since then, tourism development has been understood as a means to achieve a variety of developmental goals and objectives (Telfer, 2002). For one, tourism is perceived as a development strategy facilitating modernization through technology transfer (i.e., Western values incorporated to transform rural and traditional societies) (Sharpley, 2003; Telfer, 2015). To an extent, tourism in this perspective is consumed as an end product that values status differentiation among societies. On the other hand, tourism development can be perceived alongside dependency theories which suggest that tourism destinations in developing countries as peripheries that provide benefits to the developed countries. That is, the core-periphery relationships in tourism leave developing countries with little to no control over how tourism industry is developed (Britton, 1991). Following the tenets of neoliberalism, tourism is treated as an export industry that is funded by several international aid

agencies (Hawkins & Mann, 2007). As a result, tourism development has been closely linked with structural adjustment lending programs that reduced the control of government over tourism development, while emphasizing the value of private sector in tourism development (Dieke, 1995). Finally, tourism development has been understood in relation to alternative development paradigms including alternative tourism. In this perspective, alternative tourism is understood as tourism that accounts not only for the economic aspects of tourism activities, but also the environmental, social, and community values allowing both guests and hosts to share meaningful interaction and experiences (Smith & Eadington, 1992). Arguably, this paradigm focuses on community-based tourism, empowerment of communities, indigenous participation, the role of women, among others (Telfer, 2002). Against these theoretical underpinnings is the introduction of post-development theory in tourism arguing that concept of development is a paradox in itself—established Western conceptualization of development is destructive (Sharpley, 2009). At its core, post-development tourism perspective focuses on the value of community involvement in development. To date, tourism development theory has evolved alongside the global development goals that aim to forge strong partnerships between public and private sector with the goal of promoting a multi-stakeholder approach. That is, the important questions to be answered by tourism development initiatives is “by whom and for whom” is development for (Telfer, 2015, p. 73).

The move toward examining the broader implications of tourism on women’s empowerment and contribution to community development is a significant shift in both theory and practice. Supporting this shift has been a dependence on other scholarly and theoretical perspectives including feminist theories, gender studies, post-structural lenses, among others which are generally not utilized in tourism studies. Underpinned by this growing scholarly trend, this study provides an analytical lens through which to examine the broader implications of tourism on women, consequently its contributions to community development.

Chapter 4: Research Design

This chapter outlines and describes the methodology and procedure for data collection that will be adopted in this study. The research design employed in the study will be first discussed, followed by a discussion on the research procedure. A section on the limitations and validation process is also discussed.

4.1. Methodology

4.1.1. Descriptive Research

Given the nature of this research and in addressing the primary question of “*How can women’s participation in tourism facilitate community development?*,” the study is positioned as a descriptive qualitative research.

Descriptive research is used to describe the characteristics of individuals or certain groups by observing and documenting a situation as it naturally occurs (Siedlecki, 2020). As Dulock (1993) suggested, descriptive research is used to systematically and accurately describe someone (i.e., individual, group, community) or something (i.e., phenomena, characteristics) of interest. As it is interested in a specific group or phenomenon, the participants in a descriptive study are selected purposively as they are found to possess the characteristics or information that the research is focused on. The descriptions made of a certain individual or phenomenon primarily report the *what, that, or how* of facts but not the *why* (Krishnarao, 1961). Similarly, descriptive research is useful in cases where a phenomenon or subject is considered emerging or lesser known. In using this approach, exploring the relationships among specific variables of interest without manipulation is done. In this approach, however, generalizations cannot be made given that the generated data can be subjected to multiple interpretations (Dulock, 1993).

Within the field of tourism, descriptive research has been widely used. The work of Fennell and Nowaczek (2003), for example, examined the values and attitudes of Polish, Canadian, and American ecotourists. In using this approach, the authors were able to provide a perspective on the characteristics of the subjects of the research alongside their selected variables (i.e., attitudes and values). The work of Özel (2015), on the one hand, used a descriptive approach to survey the kid-friendly practices that hotels in Turkey utilize with the goal of marketing children as players in the tourism industry. A descriptive approach was also used in research areas considered understudied

such as in the work of Akis and Warner (1994) which examined the attitudes of tourism players in Northern Cyprus which was then an underdeveloped industry.

As evidenced by the existing literature, there is a dearth of studies that investigate the experiences of women in the Philippines, alongside the variables of interest of the study (i.e., participation, empowerment, and community development). Hence, a descriptive research approach was adopted. Alongside the changes occurring over time, the themes on women in tourism thus require further exploration (Mason et al, 2010). For these reasons, the study is therefore positioned to explore an under-researched topic on women's participation in Philippine tourism. As this research is considered one of the few studies that aim to examine the relationship among tourism participation, women empowerment, and community development, it is crucial for the researcher to collect first-hand information from the various stakeholder groups that will be consulted following the study's conceptual framework.

4.1.2. Qualitative Research

Qualitative research, as noted by Klenke (2016), is a crucial method for conducting an in-depth analysis of a social phenomenon in a specific context or setting. Thus, a focus on the how of the subject matter at hand is made (Adams et al, 2007), requiring a constant interaction of the researcher with the stakeholders and their surrounding environment (Agee, 2009; Edwards & Holland, 2013; Jain, 2021). The qualitative approach yields a comprehensive understanding of gender issues within specific communities using small sample sizes and communities as points of reference. This approach further provides an understanding of the subject of interest from the perspective of the participants themselves. In doing so, the study acknowledges that the interaction and relationship between the key concepts of this study is a “result of (various) interactions and interpretations” (Phillimore & Goodson, 2004, p. 4). Thus, this approach was used to in understand the multiple perspectives of stakeholders that are of equal validity (Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). As suggested by Walle (1997), it is important to consider whether the subjects or concepts under study has an “empirically verifiable definition” (p.525) such as the case in defining *empowerment* which may vary depending on the social context. Thus, a qualitative approach may assist in providing a “meaningful consideration of the social context” (Walle, 1997, p. 525) of the subject at hand. As emphasized by Keyton (2006), the effectiveness of qualitative research is highly dependent on the quality of the research questions being asked. Thus, properly framing the questions alongside the

identified research problem is crucial. Compared to conducting quantitative analysis, the qualitative approach relies on coherence, credibility, and transferability of results or insights (Auerbach & Silverstein, 2003).

Given this study's research question and objectives, qualitative research offers an understanding of the social dimensions of tourism activities. In the context of this study, qualitative research was used to examine the institutional and policy settings surrounding women's participation in tourism. To do this, three stakeholder groups knowledgeable on this aspect were consulted including participants in the government (national, provincial, and local units), non-government organizations and community organizers, and academics or researchers considered experts on tourism development and women.

4.1.3. Method of Analysis

This research is positioned as a descriptive study that adopts a constructivist approach following the implementation of a qualitative research approach (Mason et al, 2010). This research is underpinned by existing literature on the topic which primarily utilized a qualitative approach including, but not limited to, the works of the following: Pécot et al (2024), Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino (2021), McCall & Mearns (2021), Nikjoo et al (2021), Aghazamani et al (2020), Su et al (2020), Caparros (2018), Vizcaino Suarez (2018), Moswete & Lacey (2015), among other studies. As emphasized in these studies, given the relative newness of the phenomenon and the need to obtain in-depth knowledge on the topic, a qualitative approach is advised. To further ensure the comprehensiveness of the approach, this study also utilized a triangulation approach where multiple methods of qualitative techniques from varied data sources. As suggested by Patton (1999), this approach is used to test the validity of the implemented qualitative research strategy by testing the convergence and similarity of information obtained from various sources. The methodological approach used in the study is presented in Figure 5.

Following the methodological approach adopted in this study, triangulation of data sources from qualitative sources was applied where one data source helped determine the research questions to be asked for the other method (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 2009; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016): where the conduct of the systematic literature review assisted the conduct of the document reviews, and where the document reviews assisted in the identification of the participants for the interviews alongside the interview questions. From this approach, validation from external reviewers (i.e., experts in the field) was sought through a validation workshop conducted after the analysis and

initial results were prepared. The suggestions and insights from the workshop were then integrated into the contents of Chapters 5-7.

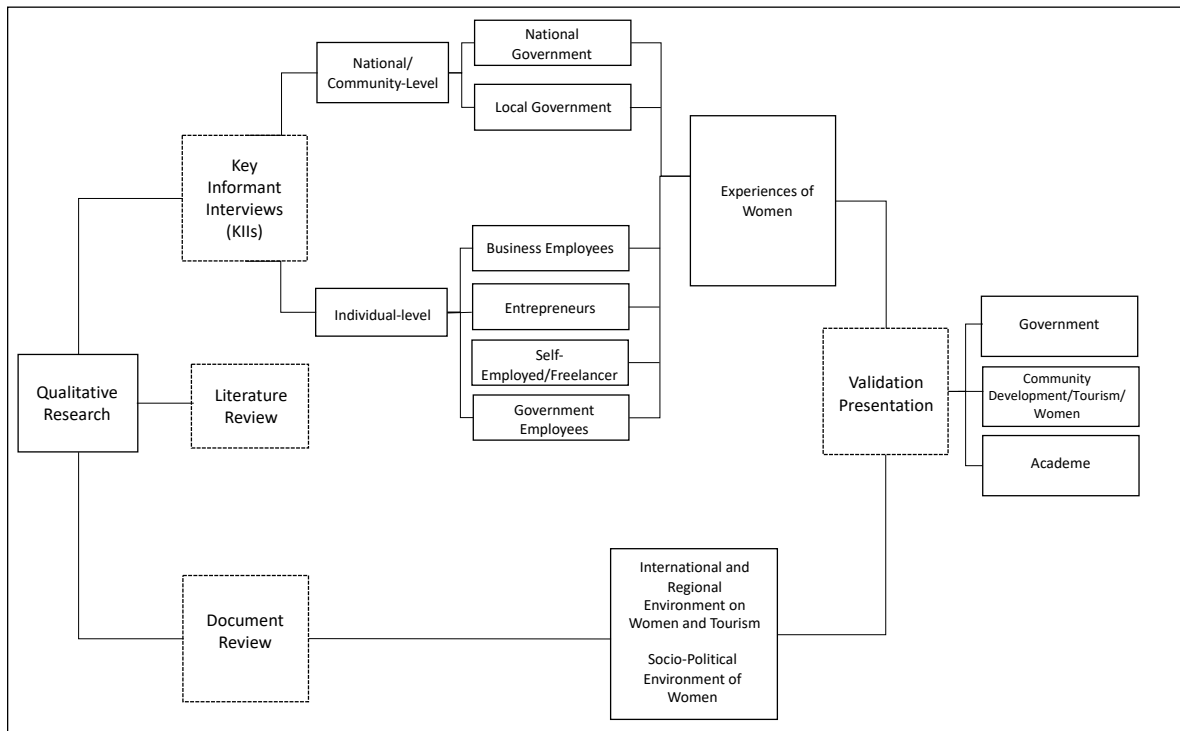


Figure 5. Methodological Approach
Source: Author's own

4.1.3.1. Document Review

For the purposes of this study, a document review was conducted as a process of systematically collecting, documenting, analyzing, interpreting, and organizing pertinent documents on the subject at hand (Bretschneider et al, 2017). As an underused qualitative research tool (Morgan, 2022), document review is useful in analyzing pre-existing texts and written outputs that help provide background regarding a topic. Some of the documents being subjected to such analysis include journal articles, institutional reports, books, newspaper articles, among others (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016; Patton, 2015). Used in a qualitative manner, document review is designed to examine the latent or explicit meaning and context of the document or data under study (Braun & Clarke, 2013; Merriam & Tisdell, 2016). Document reviews can also be used as a tool in performing a triangulation strategy that helps establish the credibility of the data obtained from other data gathering techniques such as interviews, surveys, among others (Morgan, 2022). In doing so, the analyses made from the document review can confirm the findings from across data

sets in order to minimize possible biases (Bowen, 2009). Thus, for the purposes of this study, document review is used to complement the findings from the interviews conducted. For this research, the document review was utilized to assist in complementing and contextualizing the insights derived from conducting the interviews.

Moreover, as Merriam and Tisdell (2016), the conduct of document reviews is useful in cases where sensitive topics or issues are tackled, and where other methods of data collection (i.e., interviews, focus group discussions) might prove devoid of influence from the researcher. Creswell (2009) further supports this approach by suggesting that document analysis provides a biased-free perspective regarding a topic where inaccurate information from the participants themselves may strain the accuracy of the research's findings. Thus, given the nature of the study—women's experiences in being involved in tourism, a document review of existing literature proves useful. Guided by the review of literature conducted in the previous section and the conceptual and theoretical framework adopted in this study, several documents were considered for reviewing and analysis, namely: institutional reports (i.e., from NGOs, IOs, development organizations, international entities), official government documents, news articles, historical books, among others. To ensure the systematic conduct of document review, the following steps were followed: First, following the results of the systematic literature review conducted in the previous chapter, a list of key governing and regulatory bodies on women and tourism at the international, regional, and national levels was identified. Second, a range of keywords was generated following the literature review. Some of the keywords used included the following: "women," "development," "women's empowerment," "gender equality," "Filipino women," "Filipina," "Philippines," among others. Third, the documents were organized and compiled in a table that includes various details such as the author or source, date of publication, key contents, relevance to the subject, among others. Fourth, the list of documents was further screened. Only documents in English and Filipino languages were considered. Moreover, the geographical relevance of the documents to the global, Asia-Pacific, Southeast Asia, the Philippines, and the research locales (i.e., Metro Manila, Cebu, Palawan) was included in the review. Finally, the documents were analyzed manually and were examined following their explicit meaning.

4.1.3.2. Interview

Interviews are known as an interactive process of collecting data from a respondent or a set of respondents (Adler & Clark, 2014). As Jain (2021) suggested, this is due to the “personalized exchange of information” (p.544) that is part and parcel of the conduct of interviews. For conducting descriptive studies in particular, interviews are deemed as suitable starting points to get a better grasp of a relatively underexplored subject matter (Adams et al, 2007). In conducting the face-to-face interviews, the researcher prepared field notes that summarized the initial impressions before and after the interviews conducted. Before the conduct of the interviews, the respondents were informed of the aim and objectives of the research which were also written in the prepared informed consent form (**Appendix 1**). The participants were also informed of the scope and use of their information and how their personal details are secured and safeguarded all throughout the research process. Upon agreeing to be recorded and signing the informed consent form, the interviews were then conducted.

In analyzing the interview transcripts, a qualitative content analysis was conducted. Qualitative content analysis is a tool that systematically analyzes a substantial number of data, thereby following an inductive process of reasoning (Zhang & Wildermuth, 2009) that revolves around the use of codes. Content analysis therefore requires researchers to process and analyze a text following the themes that underpin them (Bell & Bryman, 2007). The coding process was conducted as follows:

First, codes were identified following the study’s research question and the themes revealed in the conduct of the systematic literature review.

Second, the codes were then clustered into concepts that reveal the contexts for each emerging theme.

Third, the clustered concepts are then generalized and further abstracted to propose a clearer image of the subject matter under investigation.

In presenting the results of the analysis, Jain (2021) suggested that content analysis requires a balance between interpretation and transparency—where readers are able to identify the researcher’s understanding of the texts (i.e., interpretation); and where the readers can clearly follow the thought process in the explanation (i.e., transparency).

4.1.3.3. Validation Workshop

In ensuring the validity and credibility of the findings obtained from the conduct of the document review and the interviews, a validation workshop was conducted. As Ørngreen and Levinsen (2017) forwarded, conducting a validation workshop acts as an iterative process that allow researchers to refine and validate the findings of their research. The conduct of validation workshops is gradually being adopted in various developmental projects with the goal of seeking stakeholder or expert opinion on the insights derived from the research. As suggested by Jain (2021), in order to ensure the credibility and validity of the findings derived from qualitative research, external reviewers or experts from the field may be consulted. Given the relative newness of the topic and the breadth of the research's scope, expert opinion on the findings were found to be essential in validating the results of the study.

To do so, a validation workshop was organized last 12 December 2024 in Manila, Philippines with the support of the Philippine Institute of Development Studies-Philippine-APEC Study Network Center (PIDS PASCN). The conduct of the workshop involved a range of stakeholders including economists, development practitioners, tourism professionals, and government officials. The workshop proceeded as follows: first, the list of attendees was invited through the PIDS PASCN network. The profile of the attendees can be viewed in **Appendix 2**. A total of 10 participants attended the workshop. Second, the researcher, together with the PIDS PASCN, selected a panel member who is dedicated to provide detailed critique on the findings of this study. Third, a copy of the dissertation and the summary of the study were provided to the participants in advance. Fourth, the researcher presented the study alongside its initial findings for about 30 minutes. This was followed by the detailed comments, suggestions, and insights from the panelist. The floor was then opened for comments and questions. The findings from the workshop were then organized and synthesized to form part of Chapter 8 where the rest of the findings from the conduct of the document reviews and interviews are integrated and triangulated. A copy of the notes and suggestions during the workshop is presented in **Appendix 3**.

4.2. Research Procedure

The research procedure that was adopted in this study is presented in Figure 6. The three-phased data collection process was carried out over eight months, from April to August 2022, then again from April to August 2023, and May to June 2024.

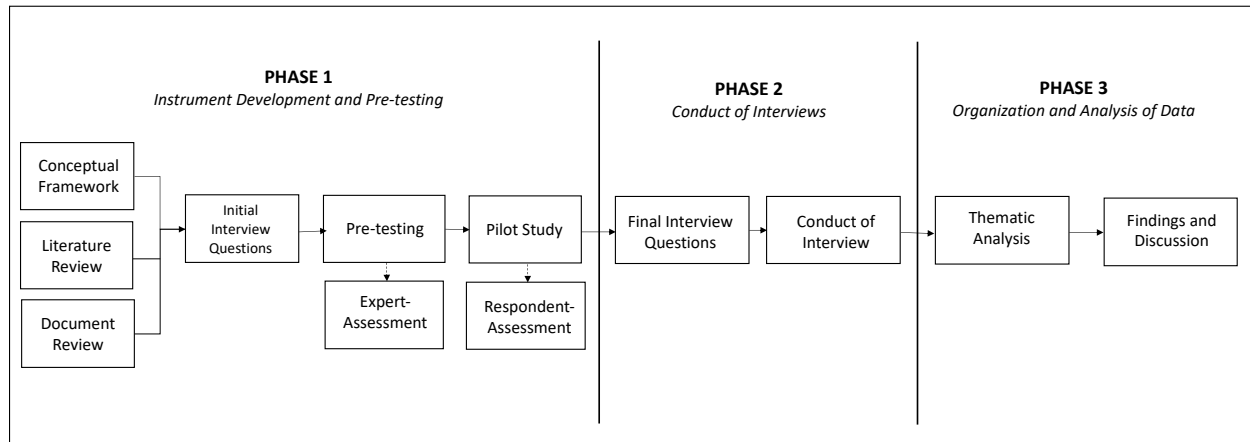


Figure 6. Research Procedure
Source: Author's own

Phase 1: Instrument Development, Pre-testing, and Pilot Study

The first phase of data collection involved the development of the interview instrument and its pilot testing.

Instrument Development

The initial interview questions included a mix of close-ended and open-ended questions focused on understanding the nature of women's participation in Philippine tourism at the industry and community level, the impact of women's participation on their empowerment, and their perceived contribution to community development in tourism areas in the country. The interview questions were adopted and modified from the existing literature, guided by the research questions and the conceptual framework identified in this study. There were a total of 17 questions—8 questions for national-level stakeholders and 9 questions for community-level stakeholders.

Pre-testing and Pilot Study

Pre-testing is an important step in the data collection process to “pinpoint problem areas, reduce measurement error, reduce respondent burden, determine whether or not respondents are

interpreting questions correctly, and ensure that the order of questions is not influencing the way a respondent answers” (Ruel et al, 2016, p.101). An expert-driven pre-test was conducted to allow experts in identifying any problems with the questions or the response options in the instrument (Presser & Blair, 1994). According to Jansen and Hak (2005) and Fowler and Fowler (1995), expert assessment of research instruments help determine whether the instrument reflects the constructs intended to be measured in the study. The experts were identified in the study based on their expertise in the field of Philippine tourism and women and tourism. The survey and interview instruments were sent to the experts via email. The email correspondences with experts were initially conducted from March to April 2022, the next phases of interviews also followed the same process. The interview and survey instruments were then modified based on the comments and feedback from the experts.

Following the pre-testing with experts in the field, a pilot study was used to rehearse the administration of the instruments prior to actual implementation. To ensure the validity and reliability of the instruments, the study tested the interview questions to at least 10% of the target sample population size—3 participants for the interview questions. The instruments were both piloted through online platforms (i.e., email exchanges for the interview questions) from April to May 2022. The participants for the pilot testing involved those who belong to the researcher’s personal network including participants—these include employees, entrepreneurs, and self-employed participants for the survey questionnaire, and government, NGO, and academics or researchers for the interview questions. Upon the completion of the pilot testing, final revisions on both instruments were made.

The final interview questions used in this study can be viewed in **Appendix 4**.

Phase 2: Conduct of Interviews

Interview

As suggested by Jain (2021), interviews are useful tools for obtaining a “broader understanding of how and why certain things happen and what are the opinions, motivations, interests, feelings of the people involved” (p.451). In most of these approaches, descriptive research requires one to interact with stakeholders and into the field where they operate (Koh et al,

2000). Thus, in following this approach, face-to-face interviews were also conducted whenever possible.

Interviews were conducted to gain in-depth information from the informants identified in the study. To ensure that the informants can freely speak their mind about the topic, the researcher utilized semi-structured interviews with open-ended questions. A set of standardized questions were used in probing the participants' understanding and reasoning on the subject at hand (Cullen et al, 2018). The interviews conducted were focused on the perceptions and knowledge of the informants about the Philippine society and tourism industry (Maliva, 2016). Interviews through video conferencing software (e.g., Zoom, Google Meets) and email interview were the strategies utilized by the researcher to interview participants in distant locations (Hanna, 2012).

In conducting the interviews, purposive sampling was utilized to select participants who have knowledge on the subject (Creswell, 2009) following the conduct of the literature review and document review. The participants were initially identified through the conduct of the document review. These include individuals who were considered to be knowledgeable or experts on the topic. These individuals included government officials and key officials of tourism-related associations working in the Philippine tourism industry.

In using this sampling strategy, the researcher assumes that the selected respondents have a significant perspective on the subject of the study (Mason, 2002). From the initial list of participants, the researcher utilized a snowball sampling approach where the previous participants recommended other participants who can be subjected to an interview.

In this study, the policy-makers and members of the national, provincial, and local government units were consulted. In the interviews, the informants were asked about their expert opinion and knowledge about the environment to which women in tourism operates in. The set of questions included in the interview were framed following the research questions and objectives identified in the study, along with the questions from various existing related studies (Dunn, 2007; Kelkar, 2004; Timothy, 2002; World Bank, 2021). More specifically, the questions were aimed at identifying the context to which women participate in the Philippines and in the respective research locales. The interviews were carried out over a three-month period, from May to July 2022.

Interviews through video conferencing software (e.g., Zoom, Google Meets) and email interview were the strategies utilized by the researcher to interview participants in distant locations (Hanna, 2012). Recordings and note-takings were conducted with the permission of the informants.

To preserve their anonymity, the interviewees were assigned with a code referring to the locality to which they belong. Upon the release of the COVID-19 protocols pertaining to travelling and physical contact along with the consent of the participants, the researcher proceeded with face-to-face interviews. The list of the interview participants are provided in Chapter 7.

In conducting the face-to-face interviews, the participants were initially contacted personally through emails, text messages, and social media messaging. The objectives of the research were then explained alongside the possible arrangements for conducting the interviews. Given the sensitivities and health hazards in conducting face-to-face interviews, the researcher provided the interviewees with two options for participating in the interviews: face-to-face or virtual. From there, the interview schedule and arrangements were fixed. A total of 15 individuals preferred to have their interviews done virtually, while 5 opted for a face-to-face interview.

On the day of the agreed schedule of interviews, the objectives and purpose of the research were explained elaborately, alongside the process by which their details and information will be used in the study. The participants were asked for their consent for audio recording and were asked to sign an informed consent form. Their anonymity was reassured. The interviews were conducted in both Filipino and English, depending on which language the participant was more comfortable with. Most of the participants, however, still preferred to use English as the medium of answering the questions. Each of the interviews lasted between 20-40 minutes. Given the nature of the interviews, the variation in the duration of the interviews was highly dependent on the personalities and willingness of the participants to disclose details about their answers.

Alongside the audio recording of the interviews, the researcher also made use of field notes and photos to document the first reflection or insights obtained from the process of collecting data (i.e., interviews). As suggested by Birks et al (2008) and Jain (2021), field notes are crucial sources of information about the immediate insights, observations, and thoughts of a researcher involved in fieldwork or an interview. This may come in the form of long and short notes, keywords, photos, or even drawings of researchers during the fieldwork (Montgomery & Bailey, 2007). During the data collection process, the researcher prepared field notes in the form of written records and photos taken during the field interviews conducted (Phillippi & Lauderdale, 2018). These were specifically done immediately after the recording of the interviews. The interview transcriptions were transcribed as is, given that the participants also responded in English (i.e., with some remarks in Filipino). The direct quotes in Filipino are also translated in English for the purposes

of this research. The transcriptions alongside the field notes were thus processed following qualitative content analysis (Kohlbacher, 2006). Upon the completion of each interview, the audio recordings were transcribed and the field notes were organized. It is important to note, however, that not all interviews had field notes presented in **Appendix 5**.

Phase 3: Organization and Analysis of Data

Interviews

The interview transcriptions were both in Filipino and English. Those in Filipino were translated in English. In ensuring the integrity of the analysis, the data obtained were reverted to the research participants for validation. The interview data were analyzed through qualitative thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2013). The analyses were conducted in three steps following Mkono et al (2023, p.8):

- “Initial Perusal”: By reading through the transcription, the researcher identified the main patterns emerging from the data. This is when the researcher takes notes or highlights the preliminary themes or codes describing the content of the transcription.
- “Coding”: This process involves generating initial codes to the data where labels are assigned to specific segments deemed relevant following the research questions and objectives identified in the study.
- “Synthesis”: The identified codes from the previous step were organized into themes that represent the interpretation of the codes vis-à-vis the data. This step is an iterative process where codes and themes are constantly re-organized.
- “Write-up”: This step required incorporating the identified themes to the existing literature and the research questions of the study.

4.3. Research Locales

The study investigated a total of three local tourism destinations in the Philippines which were identified as the top tourist destinations (i.e., defined by volume of tourist arrivals) in the country, namely: Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan which will further be elaborated in Chapter 6 in the discussion of the Philippine context. Housing the major air transportation hubs in the country, Metro Manila receives approximately 14 million tourists annually. Following these

number of tourist arrivals, Palawan and Cebu continue to contribute to domestic activities— Palawan receives over a million tourists (Fabro, 2020), meanwhile, Cebu receives 2 million tourists (Erram, 2022). Palawan is dubbed as the last ecological frontier, while Cebu is known as the premier heritage and culinary destination in the country. With diverse product offerings (i.e., ecotourism in Palawan and cultural tourism in Cebu) and contrasting historical representations of women, the two research locales offer a comprehensive image about the situation of women in select tourism communities in the Philippines.

Chapter 5: International, Regional, and Domestic Environment for Women in Tourism

This chapter is dedicated to elaborating the results of the *Document Review* conducted on the relevant international, regional, and national policies, initiatives, and programs in relation to women and their involvement in the tourism industry. More specifically, this section answers the first research sub-question identified in this research:

“What are the existing international, regional, and national frameworks influencing women’s involvement in the industry?”

In answering this, a document review for this section was conducted as follows:

- First, a list of key governing and regulatory bodies on women and tourism was identified. This included various organizations including the United Nations (UN) system (i.e., UN Women, UN World Tourism Organization), the International Labor Organization (ILO), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC), Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN), the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC), among others.
- Second, a range of keywords was generated following the conduct of a systematic literature review in the previous section. The keywords used in this section included the following: “women,” “development,” “women’s empowerment,” “gender equality,” alongside the names of the relevant organizations mentioned above.
- Third, the documents were organized according to their year of publication. Only reports and articles that were in English were considered. Similarly, Asia and Asia-Pacific related materials were only considered in conducting the review.
- Fourth, tables 3 and 4 were prepared to summarize the key points of the reports and articles about the documents that appeared from the search.
- Fifth, as summary and analyses were made following the summarized tables prepared.

The rest of the chapter is then organized as follows: a discussion on the international and regional policy settings about women's empowerment and gender equality was made, followed by a discussion on the relevant initiatives on women in tourism; finally, the key insights are enumerated at the end of the chapter.

5.1. International and Regional Policy Setting on Women

Prospects of integrating women at the forefront of developmental initiatives and discourses can be traced back to the very session of the Commission on the Status of Women (CSW) on Women Empowerment back in 1947 after its establishment in June of 1946 (UN Women, n.d.). Since then, the Commission worked on the promotion of women's rights and equality by setting up international conventions and standards aimed at modifying existing discriminatory legislative and institutional systems, while raising global awareness about women's issues and concerns (UN Women, 2019). These fundamental efforts continued to shape the international landscape promoting women's interests until the 1960s. In 1963, the UN General Assembly, with the aid of CSW, crafted the first Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women which recognized the existence of discriminatory acts and practices against women. While this proved to be a crucial step to further women's cause for equality, its impact proved limited since its implementation was deemed "*voluntary, and the level of response from Governments was low*" (UN Women, 2019, p.7).

In an attempt to raise global awareness of women's issues and concerns, 1975 was designated as the International Women's Year with the goal of reminding the "*the international community that discrimination against women, entrenched in law and deeply rooted cultural beliefs, was a persistent problem in much of the world*" (UN Women, 2019, p.7). In commemorating this momentous occasion, the first World Conference on Women was held in Mexico City in 1975. The conference initially convened many 133 government representatives alongside NGO representatives who attended a parallel forum, the International Women's Year Tribune. These activities culminated in the creation of guidelines for the advancement of women through 1985 (i.e., World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year). As such, various organizations have followed suit including the ILO in adopting the "Declaration of Equality of Opportunity and Treatment for Women Workers" among others.

Immediately following suit, ASEAN convened through the ASEAN Women Leaders Conference in 1975 which signified the region's commitment to the declarations made under the United Nations Decade for Women and the World Plan of Action from the Mexico conference which then paved the way for the implementation of the Declaration of ASEAN Women Leaders.

Following this conference, the UN General Assembly declared the period between 1975 to 1985 as the United Nations Decade for Women: Equality, Development, and Peace which marked a new chapter in the global efforts to promote women's advancement and empowerment across economies. The decade was dedicated to crafting policies and raising awareness about issues that constrain women's empowerment including gender violence, land ownership, and pay equity, among others (Vogelstein, 2017). Part and parcel of these efforts include initiatives from other international organizations such as the World Bank which released its first-ever publication highlighting the roles, challenges, and opportunities for women in developmental initiatives which has become the foundation of the Bank's commitment towards promoting gender equality and women's empowerment in 1979 (World Bank Group, n.d.). In 1980, the World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women was held in Copenhagen whose goal was to review the progress in implementing the objectives of the first conference with a primary focus on the three key aspects of education, health, and employment. The conference also paved the way for the creation of a Programme of Action which called for strong national measures in ensuring women's ability to control and own properties while enhancing their protection and safety. In 1983, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) adopted the "*Guiding Principles to Aid Agencies for Supporting the Role of Women in Development*" in line with the global movement promoting women in development (WID). Following this, OECD declared its commitment to promoting gender equality as a development objective and thus declared its integration towards development projects (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 1999). In 1985, another conference was organized in Nairobi to identify concrete strategies and measures aimed at overcoming the obstacles to attaining the UN Decade's goals.

Taking off from these international initiatives are efforts made at the regional level which aim to complement and reinforce the initiatives supporting women's empowerment and gender equality. Within the Southeast Asian region, ASEAN released the "*Declaration of the*

Advancement of Women in ASEAN Region” in 1988 which recognized women’s crucial role in supporting both economic and non-economic activities thus necessitating their inclusion in the larger ASEAN development prospects. This declaration also signaled ASEAN’s commitment to involving women in all of ASEAN’s aims, specifically by calling for their active participation as they comprise half of the region’s workforce.

These commitments were further complemented by the adoption of the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination (CEDAW) by the UN General Assembly in 1989. CEDAW solidified the global commitment to eliminate any forms of discrimination against women. Discrimination against women, in this sense, is defined as:

“..any distinction, exclusion or restriction made on the basis of sex which has the effect or purpose of impairing or nullifying the recognition, enjoyment or exercise by women, irrespective of their marital status, on a basis of equality of men and women, of human rights and fundamental freedoms in the political, economic, social, cultural, civil or any other field.” (CEDAW, Art. 1 Par. 1)

In an effort to eliminate discrimination, CEDAW enumerated initiatives that need to be undertaken by governments including the establishment of relevant public institutions to ensure women’s protection, to integrate principles of equality between men and women across legal systems, and to work towards the complete elimination of all acts of discrimination against women by individuals, organizations, enterprises, and governments. As emphasized by CEDAW, it is the only human rights treaty that recognizes and affirms the reproductive rights of women while acknowledging the impact of culture and traditions as factors influencing gender roles in communities, societies, and economies. As of 2017, CEDAW is considered to be the second most ratified UN human rights treaty with 189 parties (Vogelstein, 2017).

In 1993, the World Conference on Human Rights held in Vienna resulted in the Vienna Declaration and Plan of Action which substantiated women’s rights as part of human rights afforded to individuals regardless of gender and sex where:

“The human rights of women and of the girl-child are an inalienable, integral and indivisible part of universal human rights. The full and equal

participation of women in political, civil, economic, social and cultural life, at the national, regional and international levels, and the eradication of all forms of discrimination on grounds of sex are priority objectives of the international community.” (Art 1, Par 18, p. 4)

That is, violence against women has been integrated as part of the larger human rights discourse despite its “*private, non-state nature*” (UN Human Rights, 2013, par. 6). This declaration proves monumental in explicitly declaring gender-based violence, discrimination, harassment, and trafficking as a constraint to the promotion of human rights (UN Human Rights, 2013).

While these international conferences mainstreamed efforts to promote gender equality and women’s interests, the 1995 World Conference on Women held in Beijing was marked as a turning point in advancing the global agenda on gender equality. Building on the previous hallmark international and regional initiatives, the World Conference paved the way for putting gender equality issues at the heart of the global development agenda which demanded concrete actions and responses from governments across the globe through the adoption of the Beijing Declaration and the Platform for Action. The Beijing Declaration, since then, has become a cornerstone document in the advancement of women’s empowerment and the larger aims of promoting gender equality globally. In outlining 12 key areas of concern (i.e., women’s involvement with the economy, education, and environment, among other aspects), the initiatives outlined in the Beijing Declaration became the baseline for the review and appraisal sessions conducted onwards (UN Women, n.d.).

In the same year, the Optional Protocol to CEDAW was implemented in giving others the right to petition for women victims of discriminatory acts in following the communication process which “allows individual women, or groups of women, to submit claims of violations of rights protected under the Convention to the CEDAW Committee. An inquiry procedure enables the CEDAW Committee to initiate inquiries into situations of grave or systematic violations of women’s rights.” (UN Women, 2019, p. 14, par. 2).

In 1998, the Asian Development Bank (ADB) first adopted its Gender and Development (GAD) policy where gender mainstreaming became a critical strategy in promoting gender equality across the organization and its strategies. Through this, the agenda on gender equality

in Asia and the Pacific was set along five areas, namely: human development, economic empowerment, decision-making and leadership, resilience, and poverty reduction (Jalal, 2023).

In the same year, the Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) conducted its first Ministerial Meeting on Women with the theme: "Women in Economic Development and Cooperation in APEC" and sub-themes covering aspects of women's involvement in small and medium enterprises (SMEs), human resources development, and industrial science and technology. Following the agenda discussed during this meeting, a framework on women was prepared.

In the following year, 1999, APEC released the "Framework for Integration of Women in APEC" in the same year to declare its commitment to advancing women's well-being. The framework underpins the overall approach to integrating women in APEC processes and activities into three key elements namely: gender analysis, collection and use of sex-disaggregated data, and the involvement of women in APEC. Implementation strategies are also included in the framework. In doing so, the framework also acknowledges the contribution of women's unpaid work to the growth of economies (Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation [APEC], 1999).

In the same year, the OECD revised and refined its former approach to promoting women in development (WID) to one that encompasses a wider range of topics including economic well-being, social development, and environmental stability (Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development [OECD], 1999). This document thus extends its former stance on women's involvement in development, to one that recognizes the intersection of politics, human rights, poverty, education, health, and environment in the achievement of women's empowerment.

In the year 2000, a five-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action was conducted, titled: "Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development and Peace for the twenty-first century" which was solidified by the release of a political declaration that substantiates effort to implement the commitments made during the Beijing conference. Since then, gender mainstreaming has become part and parcel of developmental initiatives that cut across various initiatives and programs including discussions on sustainable development, environmental management (i.e., 2002 World Summit on Sustainable Development), and communication technologies (i.e., 2003 World Summit on Information Society). Arguably, discourses on

women in developmental initiatives first emerged in 1995 during the World Conference on Women in Beijing. This has progressed to its integration into the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs).

In the same year, the UN MDGs were signed during the Global Summit in New York where 149 world leaders committed to combating a range of global issues including those women face. More specifically, two goals were dedicated to women's cause, namely: "MDG 3: Promote gender equality and empower women" and "MDG 5: Improve maternal health" As Sen and Mukherjee (2017) and Fehling et al (2013) noted, the MDGs prove limited in capacity to promote women's empowerment given its narrow view which solely focused on aspects of health and education. MDG 3, for example, has only one target: "to eliminate gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and in all levels of education by 2015," primarily focused on a limited perspective on gender disparity—primary and secondary education. Meanwhile, MDG 5 has two targets, namely: "to reduce the maternal mortality ratio by 75 percent"; "to achieve universal access to reproductive health" which are both aimed at addressing issues on maternal health that endanger women globally. Thus, calls for a more comprehensive view of development and women's role in achieving them.

In 2001, the ILO launched the first-ever Participatory Gender Audit which integrated gender mainstreaming in auditing the processes, systems, policies, and operational protocols in place across individual, work unit, and organizational levels (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2009a). The audit system tackles 12 key factors including decision-making on gender mainstreaming, perception of achievement on gender equality, current issues and debates on gender, and information management on gender issues, among other aspects tackled through the conduct of participatory exercises (ILO, 2001).

Following the adoption of the UN MDGs, the 49th session of the CWS in 2005 conducted a ten-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action alongside the integration of UN MDGs 3 and 5 into the larger global agenda.

Within the ASEAN, the Vientiane Action Programme (2004-2010) was created in 2006 to recognize the need to establish an institutional mechanism to lead and oversee the efforts in the promotion of women's empowerment in ASEAN. Through this action plan, the ASEAN Commission was established thus creating the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC).

In 2007, the World Bank launched a Gender Action Plan (GAP) that enshrined “Gender Equality as Smart Economics” which aimed at furthering the aims of gender mainstreaming across “GAP sectors” (p.2) —economic sectors including agriculture and rural development, financial management, private sector development, economic policy, and public sector governance and infrastructure (World Bank, 2009).

In 2009, ILO further signified its commitment to promoting gender equality in the world of work and labor through its monumental discussion on “Gender equality at the heart of decent work.” The report tackled the prospect of gender equality and decent work alongside women’s access to employment, social protection, principles and rights, and social dialogue. A range of issues and constraints faced by women were also covered including aspects relating to domestic work, violence against women and girls, HIV and AIDS, decent childhood, supply chains, entrepreneurship migration, care economy, and migration among others (ILO, 2009b).

In 2010, the UN General Assembly established UN Women as an entity that is exclusively focused on the aims of promoting women’s empowerment and gender equality. UN Women assisted Member States in working towards strengthening global gender standards, norms, and projects into actual projects that impact the lives of women and girls.

In 2010, the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs) were launched by UN Women and UN Global Compact which are aimed at empowering women working and participating in the labor market. Primarily targeted to assist businesses in their operations, it also aims to inform governments on how to engage with businesses. There are a total of seven (7) principles that emphasize aspects including the equal treatment of men and women at work, women’s professional and capacity development, entrepreneurial development, effective monitoring and data collection, and ensuring health and safety, among others (Nature Friends International, 2015). Following these principles, what is being promoted is the “*equal treatment of women and men is not just the right thing to do – it is also good for business*” (UN Women, n.d., par. 3).

In 2012, the World Bank released its first World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development which emphasized the importance of integrating gender equality in both development and policy-making outcomes. Through this report, the Bank solidified the reasons why gender equality makes smart economic sense as reflected in their Gender Action Plan.

In the same year, ASEAN's first ministerial meeting on women focused on the theme: "Enhancing Gender Perspective and ASEAN Women's Partnership for Environmental Sustainability," recognized the progress of the ASEAN Committee on Women (ACW) in its commitment towards promoting women's empowerment while adopting the Vientiane Declaration on Strengthening Gender Perspective and ASEAN Women's Partnership for Environmental Sustainability which reflected the cross-section nature of the thrust in advancing women's empowerment.

In 2013, the "Gender Responsible Tourism" platform was launched alongside "The Six Pillars of Gender Responsible Tourism" (i.e., understanding challenges and opportunities faced by women; promoting their rights to equal pay, maternity leave, access to credit, secure working conditions, access to vocational training; elimination of women exploitation; capacity-building for women to be involved in decision-making processes) which focused on raising awareness of the quality and quantity of women's work in tourism, alongside the issues and constraints they face in being involved (Gender Responsible Tourism Association, n.d.). At the core of its approaches are communication platforms that illustrate real-life practices and cases where women are valued in their contributions to tourism activities (Nature Friends International, 2015).

In 2015, the established global developmental goals were re-examined during the UN Sustainable Development Summit, thus creating the UN Sustainable Development Goals (UN SDGs) for 2030. As opposed to the previous UN MDGs, the SDGs emphasized the value of gender equality and the empowerment of all women and girls at the core of its sustainable development perspectives with a total of 18 indicators. In alignment with the larger global agenda of the UN SDGs and the growing movement on enhancing women's statuses in societies, in 2015, ASEAN released two complementing declarations that solidified its commitment to these goals. First, the *ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children* acknowledged that women and children are disproportionately affected by human trafficking and thus created an action plan to address them. Second, the *ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women* which recognized the persistence of issues on women's safety and security within the region and thus declared the need to create a more proactive approach to addressing VAW in the region.

Meanwhile, in 2017, ASEAN released its *Declaration on the Gender-Responsive Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025* to demonstrate its commitment to gender mainstreaming towards attaining sustainable development. The declaration outlined ASEAN's commitment to enhancing the capacities of ASEAN Member States (AMS) in managing sex-disaggregated databases, collecting timely information, monitoring and evaluation, and promoting women's equal access to economic and political opportunities and platforms, among others.

In 2019, APEC launched the *La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth* which intensified the commitment of APEC in promoting women's empowerment within and outside its network. The proposed implementation strategy includes five key aspects including: strengthening women's workforce participation; supporting women's training and education; enhancing women's access to leadership and decision-making positions; promoting of women empowerment through improved access to finance, capital, and markets; improving method and process of data collection and analysis.

In 2022, UN Women assessed the progress of achieving SDG 5 on Gender Equality and found that the progress has been “*slow and insufficient... the world is currently not on track to achieve gender equality by 2030.*” (UN Women, 2024, par. 4). Progress has been found to be slowest across the following three indicators that were deemed crucial to attaining women's empowerment: comprehensive systems and public allocations for gender equality, decision-making on sexual and reproductive health, and equality on time spent on unpaid care and domestic work. Progress on the indicator measuring the proportion of seats occupied by women in local government is the sole index that has made considerable progress, while the remaining indicators suggest moderately far and insufficient (UN Women, 2024).

In the same year, ASEAN released its Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security in recognizing the role of women in the achievement of peace and security within the region. As a part of its Plan of Action, a whole-of-ASEAN approach was promoted.

Table 3. List of International and Regional Conferences, Programs, Initiatives on Women and Gender Equality

Year	Context	Conference/Programs/Initiatives	Focus	Outputs/Outcomes
1947	Global	Commission on the Status of Women's (CSW) first session on the empowerment of women and girls	Embodiment of UN's commitment in promoting gender equality and women's empowerment across the globe	CSW as the primary global intergovernmental body that is deemed responsible for the advancement of women's empowerment and their equality across economies
1963	Global	UN Declaration on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women	Acknowledgement that discrimination against women persists	Adoption of the Declaration in 1967 which inspired the legally binding convention on women's rights (i.e., CEDAW)
1975	Global	International Women's Year	Raise global awareness concerning the issues and challenges faced by women in the form of discriminatory actions from entrenched cultural and traditional beliefs	Establishment of the first World Conference on Women
1975	Global	First World Conference on Women (Mexico)	Celebration of International Women's Year; establishment of basic understanding on women's challenges, issues, constraints, and opportunities	World Plan of Action for the Implementation of the Objectives of the International Women's Year
1975	Regional (Southeast Asia)	First ASEAN Women Leaders Conference	The conference discussed the implementation of the UN International Decade for Women	Establishment of the ASEAN Sub-Committee on Women (ASW), also known as the ASEAN Ministerial Meeting on Women
1979	Global	World Bank Report on Women in Development: "Recognizing the 'Invisible' Woman in Development: The World Bank's Experience"	Integration of women's issues and challenges into the design of World Bank initiatives, projects, and programs	Inclusion of gender perspectives on World Bank's developmental projects in developing economies. Creation of "Proposed Bank Approach and Plan of Action" (World Bank's

1980	Global	World Conference of the United Nations Decade for Women (Copenhagen)	Education, health, employment of women	commitment towards the inclusion of women in development)
1983	Global	OECD's adoption of the "Guiding Principles to Aid Agencies for Supporting the Role of Women in Development"	Expressed commitment towards the global movement in promoting gender equality and women in development (WID)	Programme of Action (women's right to ownership and control of property; protection of women's rights to child custody, nationality, and inheritance)
1985	Global	World Conference to Review and Appraise the Achievements of the UN Decade for Women (Nairobi)	Establishment of implementable and concrete measures and initiatives to overcome the constraints faced by women	Basis of the revised document on "DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation."
1985	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	Asian Development Bank (ADB)'s adoption of "Policy on the Role of Women in Development"	First official ADB policy emphasizing the value of integrating women's empowerment and well-being in developmental initiatives	Nairobi Forward-Looking Strategies for the Advancement of Women
1988	Regional (Southeast Asia)	Declaration of the Advancement of Women in ASEAN Region	Women's active participation in both economic and non-economic activities; inclusion of gender perspective in ASEAN development	Political declaration promoting women's involvement in both socio-economic and political spheres
1993	Global	World Conference on Human Rights (Vienna)	Recognition of the human rights of women	Vienna Declaration and Programme of Action (VDPA) outlines the human rights of women in societies and economies globally
1995	Global	Fourth World Conference on Women (Beijing)	Outlined objectives and actions to promote the advancement of women and gender equality along 12 key areas	Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action Declared objective on women's equality with men in practice and in law

			including: education and training of women, among others.	
1998	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	Adoption of Gender and Development Policy of ADB	Adoption of gender mainstreaming as a strategy for promoting gender equality across the organization and in the projects they are engaged	Set the agenda on gender equality in Asia and the Pacific
1998	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	APEC's First Ministerial on Women	The theme on: "Women in Economic Development and Cooperation in APEC" focused on the integration of women in the larger APEC agenda	Resulted in the creation of the Framework for Integration of Women in APEC
1999	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	APEC's Framework for Integration of Women in APEC	Outlines the concrete actions and implementation strategies in the integration of women in APEC	
1999	Global	DAC Guidelines for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Development Co-operation	Revised version of its former WID principle to include a more comprehensive perspective on gender equality and women's empowerment	
1999	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC)'s Framework for the Integration of Women in APEC	Signified APEC Leader's recognition of gender as a cross-cutting theme across APEC activities	
2000	Global	Optional Protocol to CEDAW	Implemented the right to petition for women victims of discrimination	
2000	Global	Women 2000: Gender Equality, Development, and Peace for the Twenty-First Century (New York)	Five-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action	Beijing + 5: Political declaration and commitments to implementing the set objectives from the Beijing Declaration
2000	Global	UN Millennium Declaration	Committed world leaders to combat hunger, disease, illiteracy, environmental degradation, poverty, and discrimination against women	8 Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set for 2015. Two goals were dedicated to women's cause: women empowerment and gender equality; maternal health

2001	Global	ILO's launching of Participatory Gender Audit	Proposed an auditing scheme on how gender mainstreaming can be implemented at the individual, work unit, and organizational levels	Introduction of the audit system within ILO, the entire UN system, and the world of work
2005	Global	49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women	A ten-year review and appraisal of the Beijing Platform for Action in line with the achievement of the MDGs	
2006	Regional (ASEAN)	Vientiane Action Programme (2004-2010)	Recognized the need to identify an institutional mechanism to oversee and lead efforts towards promoting women's empowerment in ASEAN	Establishment of ASEAN Commission, and the creation of the ASEAN Commission on the Promotion and Protection of the Rights of Women and Children (ACWC)
2007	Global	World Bank's Gender Action Plan (GAP)	Promotes gender mainstreaming in a wide range of economic sectors including agriculture, financial management, and public and private sectors, among others.	Released the mantra suggesting that Gender Equality as Smart Economics
2009	Global	ILO's International Labor Conference on "Gender equality at the heart of decent work"	Solidified ILO's stance in supporting gender equality and women's empowerment at the core of its operations and in	
2010	Global	49th session of the Commission on the Status of Women	Fifteen-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action	
2010	Global	Establishment of UN Women	Established an entity dedicated to promoting and advancing women's empowerment and gender equality	
2010	Global	UN Women and UN Global Compact's Women's Empowerment Principles (WEPs)	Subtitled as "Equality Means Business," the principles were launched to guide businesses on how to empower women	

			in communities, workplaces, and the marketplace.	
2012	Global	World Bank's World Development Report on Gender Equality and Development	Emphasis on the value of gender equality in both policymaking and development outcomes	A paradigm shift suggesting that gender equality connotes smart economics
2012	Regional (Southeast Asia)	ASEAN First Ministerial Meeting on Women	Following the theme: "Enhancing Gender Perspective and ASEAN Women's Partnership for Environmental Sustainability," information and experience exchange regarding the facilitation of women's advancement in terms of participation, skills, and knowledge	Adoption of the Vientiane Declaration on Strengthening Gender Perspective and ASEAN Women's Partnership for Environmental Sustainability
2015	Global	59th session of the Commission on the Status of Women	Twenty-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action following the post-2015 global development agenda	
2015	Global	UN Sustainable Development Summit (New York)	Recognized the need for comprehensive financing for development by adopting a new sustainable development agenda in relation to the climate change agreement	Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) outlining 17 new goals, including a dedicated component on women's empowerment and gender equality, to be achieved by 2030.
2015	Regional (Southeast Asia)	ASEAN Convention against Trafficking in Persons especially Women and Children	Acknowledgment of women falling victim in cases of human trafficking in the region	Action plan on anti-human trafficking
2015	Regional (Southeast Asia)	ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on the Elimination of Violence against Women	Recognition of the prevailing challenge in ensuring women's safety and security in ASEAN	Declaration promoting a more proactive approach to address concerns pertaining to Violence against Women (VAW)
2017	Regional (Southeast Asia)	ASEAN Declaration on the Gender-Responsive Implementation of the ASEAN Community Vision 2025	Recognition of the value on the value of women's empowerment in attaining sustainable development	Outlined commitment in a range of efforts including the following: monitoring and evaluation of the gender sensitivity of

				policies and commitments, gender mainstreaming efforts, collection of sex-disaggregated data, women's access in decision-making and leadership positions, men's involvement in promoting gender equality, among others.
2018	Regional (ASEAN)	ASEAN Gender and Development Forum on Tourism	With a theme: "Advancing Tourism with Women," the forum had two objectives, namely: institutionalization of GAD in tourism activities, and the formulation of the ASEAN GAD Framework in Tourism	ASEAN GAD Framework in Tourism
2019	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	La Serena Roadmap for Women and Inclusive Growth	Provides a framework for promoting women's empowerment in the Asia Pacific region while accounting for the negative and disproportionate impact of the pandemic on women	
2020	Global	64th session of the Commission on the Status of Women	Twenty five-year review of the Beijing Platform for Action following the post-2015 global development agenda; adopted	Adoption of a political declaration to further the implementation of the Beijing Declaration
2021	Regional (Southeast Asia)	ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management	Recognition on the value of gender-sensitive initiatives in promoting disaster management in ASEAN	ASEAN Regional Framework on Protection, Gender, and Inclusion in Disaster Management 2021-2025
2022	Regional (Southeast Asia)	ASEAN Regional Plan of Action on Women, Peace and Security	Emphasized the linkages between issues pertaining to women's rights and the achievement of regional peace and security across ASEAN community	Plan of action promoting a whole-of-ASEAN approach while involving women at the forefront

5.2. The Tourism Landscape

In 2010, the release of UNWTO of the first Global Report on Women in Tourism served as a momentous occasion in cementing UNWTO's commitment towards women's causes in the tourism industry. The report became a pioneer in identifying women's role in the tourism industry across five key areas, namely: entrepreneurship, employment, community, education, and leadership. Through the report, tourism's potential to catalyze women's empowerment and in overcoming gender challenges was emphasized.

Following the baseline study on women in tourism, the second edition of the report was released in 2019 to emphasize tourism's contribution in the achievement of UN SDG5 alongside updating the situation of women working for the industry. The report also covered a larger number of geographical contexts while providing illustrations of various experiences in promoting women's empowerment across different case studies. Some of the notable findings from this report emphasized the value of targeted interventions in promoting decent work for women working for tourism; the significance of gender-sensitive policies at the national level; availability of sex-disaggregated tourism data, among others.

In 2020, the world was put to a standstill following the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic. Mobility was gravely affected where tourism and hospitality industries were hit the hardest (Behsudi, 2020). These deleterious impacts have disproportionately impacted women and their future prospects for economic participation in various economic sectors, including tourism (Ferguson, 2022). For women-dominated sectors such as tourism, the pandemic has exposed several entrenched structural and cultural inequalities that women face including unpaid care and domestic work, concentration on informal economies, gender wage gap, among others (Ferguson, 2022). In response to these, the post-COVID-19 pandemic witnessed an increased number of initiatives integrating women's interests and needs at the core of tourism recovery efforts.

In the early parts of 2021, the UNWTO Inclusive Recovery Guide focused on the issues of Women in Tourism. The guide sets out several recommendations on how gender issues and women's empowerment can be integrated into the various strategies to assist in tourism recovery after the pandemic. This includes recommendations on the prospects of violence against women, gender mainstreaming, information availability, and training programs, among others (UNWTO, 2021).

In 2021, the First Regional Conference on Women’s Empowerment in Tourism was launched by UNWTO with a focus on Asia and the Pacific. Given the limits posed by the pandemic, 500 participants joined virtually while approximately 100 participants joined in person. The conference emphasized the substantial role of women in the tourism workforce while emphasizing the socio-economic conditions that they face as they engage economically in tourism work. The conference was aligned with international efforts to achieve SDG 5.

Similarly, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC)’s Global Summit 2021 launched the Cancun Women’s Declaration in recognizing women’s contributions to the tourism industry. Through this initiative, a multi-stakeholder approach is promoted across public-private-academic sectors. The initiative engages a wide range of private sector stakeholders to commit in developing the skills of women through formal sponsorship, and in creating mentorship programs for young women (WTTC, 2021).

In 2021, the Center Stage project was launched by UNWTO to create a people-centered model for tourism development by conducting training programs towards the promotion of gender equality across government, private, and civil society organizations involved in tourism activities. The project was launched in select destinations in Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jordan, and Mexico. Under this program, training programs were created to boost women’s career progression and visibility in formal and professional employment opportunities in the tourism industry. Part and parcel of this program are efforts to improve data collection on sex-disaggregated information while implementing a one-year action plan to promote women’s empowerment (UNWTO, 2023b).

In the same year, the World Travel & Tourism Council Global Summit adopted the Cancun Women’s Initiative Declaration Supporting Women in Travel & Tourism which outlined the commitment of more than 100 private tourism-related companies in implementing concrete actions that promote “*equitable opportunities, ensuring fair treatment, removing barriers, and fostering greater financial, professional, and social independence for women*” (WTTC, 2021, p. 2).

In 2022, UNWTO launched gender-inclusive guidelines for both the public and private sectors in tourism industries across destinations globally. These guidelines are hinged on existing reporting schemes that integrate aspects from Environmental, Social and Governance (ESG) reporting, and the Women’s Empowerment Principles (WEPs), among others (UNWTO,

2022). The guidelines for promoting gender mainstreaming efforts across local, regional, and national-level efforts relating to tourism initiatives. Meanwhile, the guidelines for tourism businesses include tools that support the creation and enhancement of existing strategies, initiatives, and programs relating to gender equality. Both guidelines integrate the prospect of the following key areas: employment, entrepreneurship, education and training, leadership and policy/decision-making, community and civil society, and measurement. The *Gender-inclusive Strategy for Tourism Businesses* includes action plans and strategies that assist private tourism businesses in gender mainstreaming. A four-step process is recommended to include securing support from key decision-makers, assessing the business' current progress on gender equality, reviewing progress following WEP, and finally drafting an Action Plan to promote gender inclusivity in tourism. Meanwhile, the *Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for the Public Sector in Tourism* emphasizes integrating the prospects of UNSDG 5, CEDAW into the public sector's processes and activities. The approach suggested offers two tracks including the integration of gender perspectives into existing tourism programs, and the second one referring to gender-specific interventions for women and girls working in tourism. Compared to the approach for the private tourism businesses, the guidelines suggest a five-step process from analyzing the current situation, designing an intervention, allocating financial and human resources to the projects, implementing strategies, and finally monitoring and evaluation.

Given the substantial contribution of women in the tourism workforce in the Asia-Pacific region, UNWTO released a *Regional Report on Women in Tourism in Asia and the Pacific* in 2022. This context-based report provided an overview of women's status in the Asia Pacific region. Against the backdrop of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, the report also provided some region-specific recommendations for integrating women's empowerment and gender equality approaches to the larger tourism development and recovery agenda of countries in the Asia Pacific region.

In an attempt to raise awareness regarding the cases and experiences of other governments, UNWTO prepared a report titled: *Snapshot of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in National Tourism Strategies to showcase* a total of 70 strategies of various national governments in addressing concerns on gender issues and women's empowerment. The report features examples of national tourism policies relating to aspects of gender transformation, gender responsiveness, gender awareness, and gender blindness from a range

of countries from Egypt, Ghana, Jordan, Malawi, Myanmar, Philippines, Timor-Leste, Uganda, and Zimbabwe (UNWTO, 2023e).

As a response to the systemic and harmful impacts of the pandemic on the tourism industry and its workforce, the UNWTO launched the *Survey on the Gendered Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Tourism Employment* which covered the pilot countries of the Centre Stage project, namely: Costa Rica, Jordan, Dominican Republic, and Mexico. Results suggest the disproportionate impacts of the pandemic across gender and destinations (i.e., for the Dominican Republic and Mexico, a larger share of women than men lost their jobs due to the pandemic, etc.) (UNWTO, 2023d).

In 2023, UNWTO launched the “Women in Tech Startup Competition” to promote women’s inclusion in digitally transforming tourism activities through start-ups in the Middle East. The initiative is aimed at supporting and mainstreaming women tourism tech innovators and entrepreneurs (UNWTO, 2023c) across the themes of social impact, future tech, events and community, and tourism and travel experience.

In the same year, the UNWTO launched an Online Gender Equality Training Course as part of its Center Stage Project. To ensure its accessibility, the training courses are made available in various languages such as Arabic, English, French, Spanish, and Russian for both public and private businesses to use. The course also covers a range of topics from the significance of gender equality and women’s empowerment in tourism, an overview of the impacts of gender inequalities in the operations of public and private tourism stakeholders, to the value of intervention in gender equality and women’s empowerment strategies in tourism.

A summary of the abovementioned initiatives in relation to women in tourism is listed in Table 4.

Table 4. List of Relevant Initiatives, Projects, Programs on Women and Gender Equality in Tourism

Year	Context	Conference/Programs/Initiatives	Focus	Outputs/Outcomes
2010	Global	UNWTO's first Global Report on Women in Tourism	Emphasized the role of women in the success and continued development of tourism across regions and areas	Cemented the role of tourism as a vehicle in harnessing women's empowerment and in promoting gender equality
2019	Global	Global Report on Women in Tourism (Second Edition)	Augmenting the baseline study from the first report on women in tourism, the updated report looked at how women's situation evolved alongside its contributions to the achievements of UN SDG5.	
2019	Regional (ASEAN)	ASEAN GAD (Gender and Development) Framework for Tourism (2020-2030)	Provides guidelines to assist AMS in planning, implementing, and evaluating their respective tourism initiatives following the principles of GAD	
2021	Global	World Travel and Tourism Council Global Summit	Emphasized the importance of promoting women at the heart of tourism recovery efforts	Cancun Women's Initiative Declaration Supporting Women in Travel & Tourism (signed by private tourism companies as a pledge to their commitment in bringing concrete actions to promote the empowerment of women).
2021	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	UNWTO Regional Conference on the Empowerment of Women in Tourism in Asia and the Pacific	In strengthening efforts to support the achievement of SDG 5, the conference showcased how the COVID-19 pandemic affected the socio-economic situation of women in the tourism workforce	
2021	Select Countries	UNWTO Center Stage Project	Fosters the creation of a people-centered model for tourism development by promoting gender equality through its	Training programs aimed at enhancing the capacities of women working for the tourism industry in selected countries

	(Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jordan, and Mexico)		training and capacity-building programs.	including Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jordan, and Mexico
2022	Regional (Asia and the Pacific)	UNWTO Regional Report on Women in Tourism in Asia and the Pacific	Focused on the substantial role played by women in the Asia Pacific region, alongside the issues and constraints they face to achieving women's empowerment and gender equality following the aims of UN SDG5	
2022	Global	UNWTO Gender Mainstreaming Guidelines for tourism businesses and the public sector	The guidelines for both private and public sectors integrate the prospect of the following key areas: employment, entrepreneurship, education and training, leadership and policy/decision-making, community and civil society, and measurement.	A set of accessible guidelines that can be publicly used across private and public stakeholders working in the tourism sector.
2023	Regional (Middle East)	Women in Tech Startup Competition	Targeted towards providing incentives to women tech innovators and entrepreneurs who are working towards advancing and developing the tourism industry	
2023	Global	UNWTO Online Gender Equality Training Course	Created to support UNWTO's aims for promoting education and awareness raising regarding the basics of gender equality and women's empowerment	

2023	Global	Snapshot of Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in National Tourism Strategies	Conduct of desk-based research exploring how select national governments addressed and integrated gender issues and women's empowerment into national policies
2023	Select Countries (Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Jordan, and Mexico)	UNWTO launched the <i>Survey on the Gendered Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Tourism Employment</i>	Showcased the various impacts of the COVID-19 across destinations and gender.

5.3. Summary

Efforts in promoting the advancement of women's welfare and rights globally and regionally have been palpable. As suggested in this chapter's review of relevant programs, initiatives, and agreements, the rhetoric on women's involvement in economic and development spaces has evolved over the years. For one, an acknowledgment of the gender imbalances and inequities in structural mechanisms has been made since 1947. Part and parcel of this recognition is a realization that women were not afforded the same human rights that are easily available to men (i.e., gender discrimination). Second, a paradigm shift has been observed in terms of how women are seen in relation to developmental efforts—from seeing women as mere beneficiaries of development to one where they are partners and contributors to its achievement (i.e., reports from World Bank, ADB, ILO, etc.). Third, upon recognizing these realities, a move toward establishing concrete strategies and measures to achieve women's objectives was observed. Fourth, regional entities (i.e., APEC, ASEAN, etc.) have followed suit in terms of promoting women's agenda in their developmental framework. Fifth, modifications and re-visits on existing goals and objectives were made to reflect an in-depth understanding of the issues and constraints faced by women (i.e., goals from MDGs to UN SDGs). Finally, the integration of gender aspects to other facets of society and across industries is made (i.e., women's involvement in disaster risk, peace and security, tourism, etc.).

Within the tourism industry, it was observed that efforts in promoting women's welfare remain still at their inception following the release of UNWTO's first report on Women in Tourism. In recognizing that there are constraints hindering women's full and equal participation in the tourism industry in the region, attempts at integrating GAD into its operations can be observed. UNWTO alongside ASEAN and WTTC, have also made some efforts to raise awareness about the importance of enhancing the positions of women working in the industry. Despite this, these efforts remain contextualized on a larger (i.e., regional) scale and have limited integration to the Philippines (i.e., where most UNWTO pilot projects are done in other member states). Similarly, most of the projects and initiatives conducted are time-bound (i.e., limited time frame), thus affecting the level of its integration and effectiveness in resolving entrenched issues that women face in the industry. It can also be observed that the pandemic may be considered as a precursor for the growth in the number of initiatives in relation to advancing gender equality and women's empowerment in the industry.

Chapter 6: Contextualizing Women and Tourism in the Philippines

This chapter is focused on discussing the results of the *Document Review* conducted to contextualize the findings in Chapter 7. More specifically, this section answers the second research sub-question:

“How are women involved in tourism in the Philippines?”

In answering this, a document review for this section was conducted as follows:

- First, in reviewing the historical accounts of women in the Philippines, several online historical manuscripts were consulted. Only those that were available online and were in English and Filipino languages were selected. In reviewing the national policies on women in tourism, the initial interviews with key government officials were used as guidelines in searching for the relevant policies.
- Second, a range of keywords was generated following the conduct of a systematic literature review in the previous section. The keywords used in this section included the following: “Filipina,” “Filipino woman” and “Philippine History”.
- Third, after the relevant historical documents were selected, the accounts were reviewed from a historical perspective (i.e., organized by period) to ensure that the descriptions on each period were obtained from multiple sources. Meanwhile, the policies surveyed and listed in Table 5 and Table 6.
- Fifth, analyses were made based on the documents considered for review.

The rest of the chapter is then organized as follows: a historical description of the gender dynamics and women’s role in the Philippines was elaborated, and contextual discussions on women in Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan are subsumed in this portion. The second portion then discusses the evolution of the perspective of women in Philippine tourism. Finally, a synthesis is made to conclude this chapter.

6.1. The Filipino Woman in History

The situation of women in the Philippines, herein referred to as Filipina or Filipino women, has been characterized by “sharp contradictions” (Santiago, 2002, p. 5). That is, while Filipinas were found to have strong visibility across economic, professional, political, legislative, and academic areas, their experiences as women suffering from discrimination, exploitation, and domestic violence, among others make their situations more complex. This complexity may be viewed as a reflection of the long history and the series of monumental events that influenced Philippine society over the years. Thus, re-examining the *Filipino woman* over the years is a crucial step to understanding how their experiences have been shaped and re-shaped, and how they were able to negotiate and re-negotiate their roles in their families, communities, and societies.

During the pre-colonial period, Filipino women were given high status in communities and societies. As Friesen (1989) noted, the pre-colonial women in the Pacific region were found to be highly involved in decision-making processes—from economic, social, cultural, and political aspects. This was furthered by the accounts of Reid (1988) suggesting that in the pre-colonial Southeast Asian region, women had a “*relatively high female autonomy and economic importance*” (p.629). The same is true in the pre-colonial Philippines. As the early accounts suggest, around the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries, women were deemed equal to men and there were no points of comparison made since they played different functions in societies. For instance, women were in charge of tasks such as harvesting rice, marketing², weaving; whereas men were in charge of activities that were deemed equally essential to the daily activities of pre-colonial Philippine societies. What set women apart then, however, was the reproductive responsibilities that provided them with “*magical and ritual powers which...(were) difficult for men to match*” (Reid, 1988, p.629). In the pre-colonial society, The epitome of Filipino women then was the presence of the *babaylans* characterized as powerful women who were traditional shamans that have a magical power that allowed them to communicate with spirits (i.e., as the dead and in nature) (Shahani, 2006). To Roces (2010), a *babaylan* is seen as a mysterious woman who has a “mystique, imaginative power... (who is) mature, wise woman with religious power” (p. 43).

Women of the pre-colonial period were also found to have equal rights as men (i.e., the right to inherit property) (Roces, 2010). Women in the Philippines were also found to dominate

² Marketing herein referred to as trading (see Reid, 1988).

trading and commercial activities—both in small and large-scale trading activities (Reid, 1988). Accounts suggest that women were trained to negotiate and bargain during trading activities that even men were astounded by their abilities (Chirino, 1604). In terms of leadership and rulers' position, women were observed to occupy ruling positions. Reid (1988) argued that for Austronesia societies such as the Philippines, “high-born women” (p. 639) were preferred by the population to occupy the throne. Within these contexts, gender dichotomy was not a concern nor a defining factor in designating the rights, roles, and responsibilities of individuals. For example, in terms of marriage, Chirino (1604) noted that in the Philippines, while monogamy was the norm, marriages were just as long as a couple's harmonious relationship lasted, and where divorce was normal in the face of irreconcilable differences and conflict. To this, both men and women as couples have the capacity to decide on the end of their marriage.

Over the years, however, through constant trading and the start of the period of colonization, the gender dynamics in the country have drastically changed. As Alzona (1934) and Mendoza-Guazon (1928) noted, women held so much power and prestige during the pre-colonial period that the change in their roles in societies during the advent of colonialism proved drastic and substantial. As Candelaria (2021) put it, women's equality to men during the pre-colonial period was a situation that “Western colonizers in the sixteenth century found bizarre” (p.114). As suggested by Lee (1988), the Filipino women we know today has emerged from a society characterized by a “*strong machismo culture resulting from centuries of Spanish feudal colonization, still dominated by a patriarchal Catholic church*” (p. 219).

The Spanish colonial rule from 1578 to 1898 presented a challenging position for women who enjoyed freedoms and rights never imaginable to Spanish societies. As opposed to the pre-colonial social dynamics on the equality of sexes, the Spanish leadership imposed male superiority across personal and public spaces (Friesen, 1989). Thus, women's role in society was reduced to their domestic job, mainly in charge of childrearing and housekeeping (Peralta, 2015). Their version of a male-superior society has been deeply ingrained and integrated into most, if not all, of the Philippine's society as evidenced by the strong influence of religion (i.e., Catholicism) and literature on the Filipinos. The strong religious capital of the Catholicism in the Philippines has been cited as one of the “roots of women's oppression” (Mananzan, 1998, p. 11) in the country—where women are perceived on their best and acceptable behavior when they obey their husbands and when they accept the superiority of men. The attitude and actions of a Filipina woman is thus

defined following their adhere to Christianity's or Catholicism's perspective on women as a martyr (Roces, 1998; 2009). To this end, Filipina women's tenacity to accept challenges and struggles were also justified given the strong culture of martyrdom that is expected of them (Añonuevo, 1990; Estrada-Claudio, 2002). The influence of religion on women's portrayal, as Añonuevo (1990) emphasized, in the form of Mary as a mother and Magdalene as a seductress. Following this illustration, a proper behavior of woman should resemble Mary, while any resemblance to Magdalene's would be frowned upon. The Spanish influence of "Christian machismo" (Maranan, 1985, p.38) thus extends to the contemporary Philippine society where women's role in society largely revolved around the domains of home and their relation to men. Despite these, Camagay (1995) suggested that Filipino women during this period despite being forced to conform into certain societal standards and expectations, they "...had a mind of their own, assertive, active, and enterprising..." (p. 3).

The same suggestive perception of women is forwarded in the works of Jose Rizal, the Philippine's national hero (Nakpil, 1964; Roces, 2010). These include the images of Maria Clara³, Sisa⁴, and Juli⁵ whose characterizations portrayed an ideal woman who is a combination of a virginal, obedient, quiet, self-sacrificing, hard-working individuals who is willing to endure hardships in life without question (Nakpil, 1964; Roces, 2010; Santiago, 2002). Thus, the revolt against the Spanish rule has led to the imagery of a Filipino heroine, Gabriela Silang, who symbolized an alternative model to the colonial imagery of a woman. As Friesen (1889) argued, the role of Gabriela Silang as the fulcrum of women's ability to rule and fight off foreign colonizers. She was revered alongside other Filipino women (i.e., Melchora Aquino or Tandang Sora⁶) who fought for the liberation of the country alongside men. After many years of Spanish rule (i.e., 333 years), however, the Philippines was left with a strong machismo culture that affected the relations between men and women in the country (Lee, 1988).

³ Maria Clara, a character from Rizal's works: *Noli Me Tangere* and *El Filibusterismo*, is characterized as the textbook ideal Filipino woman who is virginal, shy, obedient, convent educated woman who belonged to the upper-class society

⁴ Sisa, seen as a heroic character in *Noli Me Tangere*, is typified as a wife and a mother who is self-sacrificing, submissive, hard-working, quiet, and non-complaining amidst being subjected to domestic violence

⁵ Juli, a character in *El Filibusterismo*, who was a peasant woman who was forced to enter into domestic work as a payment for her father's debts

⁶ Melchora Aquino, also known as Tandang Sora, was celebrated for aiding the revolution by nursing and caring for the revolutionists (i.e., Katipuneros)

Meanwhile, the American colonial rule from post-1898 until 1946 reinforced male dominance over religious and economic life aspects (Friesen, 1989). As opposed to the Spanish rule, the American's approach to its occupation came in the form of benevolent assimilation—connoting a more progressive and human reform (i.e., colonization) of individuals and societies as opposed to the use force and fear that the Spanish colonizers employed (Diokno, 2002). Part and parcel of this approach is the introduction of accessible and inclusive education for Filipinos. In 1908, women were then allowed to enter into universities (Roces, 2010). As a result, women were given the opportunity to study and earn degrees (Peralta, 2015). Women, through their creativity and skills, powered the embroidery industry of the country which was then one of the top exports of the Philippines in the 1900s (Mendoza-Guazon, 1928). The presence of women in economic spaces was solidified as they worked as employees in manufacturing industries, given managerial positions and business firms in textile, transportation, real estate, and even retail industries which were then dominated by men (Mendoza-Gunzon, 1928). The education of women during the American colonization allowed them to regain their status back in Philippine society while breaking away from the traditional gender roles set up during the Spanish colonization. Alongside these efforts, the strong force of women as an organized cooperative proved victorious after winning their fight for suffrage in 1937. Between periods of colonialism and the dominance of males in societies, Filipino women remained magnanimous. Elite women, for example, have been documented to be faithfully working towards assisting the marginalized while promoting their rights as women (Friesen, 1989). During this period, women faced the challenges brought about by capitalism that heavily influenced the economic and political standing of the country (Lee, 1988). In 1905, through the *Asociación Feminista Filipina*, the women stood up for the following concerns: early marriage, work regulation for women and children, improvement of domestic service, and representation of women in key positions in educational institutions (Calderón, 1905 cited in Roces, 2010). Against the backdrop of these achievements however, Aguilar (1989) and Candelaria (2021) emphasized that these opportunities were only opened for a privileged few, the elite women. The reality for most Filipino women during this period was their rightful domain as responsible for domestic work (Talamayan, 2013).

In the 1960s, at the height of nationalist movements emerging from both legal and illegal organizations, the first women's organization was born under *Makibaka* (Fight Back), formed by women members of the Communist Party of the Philippines (CPP). Among other revolutionary

objectives, *Makibaka* supported the aims of the New People's Army in acknowledging women's suffering against feudal-patriarchal systems existing during this period. Part and parcel of this movement aimed at creating women's associations across urban and rural areas in the Philippines (Friesen, 1989). In the 1970s, against the backdrop of the Marcos regime and the growing influence of foreign intervention, women were treated as "*the cheapest most expendable components in the production process; development policies that treated women as market-place commodities through support for institutionalized prostitution, such as sex tourism and the 'hospitality industry for tourists and US servicemen*" (Lee, 1988, p.218). In this sense, the government was an enabler in using women as an instrument, and to an extent as Roces (2009) puts it, a "sacrifice" (p. 273) in exchange for the nation's economic gain. This is further aggravated by the rampant mail-order brides and workers whose victims were mostly women. The growth of the women's movement was furthered by the growing inequitable treatment of women in the country. Against the international backdrop that started to see women as partners of development, the Philippines saw that the "*women's 'share' of development was hunger, worry and fear as low wages could not feed families, and poor working conditions sapped strength and health, jeopardising ability to work*" (Lee, 1988, p.219).

In the 1980s, women formed a substantial number of the country's workforce. In the Bataan Export Processing Zone (BEPZ), for example, women comprised more than 80 percent of their workers (Friesen, 1989). Foreign companies would often prefer hiring them over men given the utmost attention they provide on detailed work and due to their "obedient and uncomplaining" (Friesen, 1989, p. 681) nature. Similarly, young women were asked to work in restaurants and bars where Americans and foreigners frequent (i.e., Subic Bay), thus leading to the emergence of prostitution (Friesen, 1989). Prostitution in the country has been largely targeted at women who act as entertainers, waitresses, hostesses, or cashiers. Due to their dominance, the women workers also became active members of unions and has therefore formed part of the national women's division of the national labor movement, *Kilusang Mayo Uno* (May First Movement).

As a result, an increased activism and involvement of women increased from the late 1970s to the 1980s. During this period, women became largely involved in various influential groups (i.e., Task Force Detainees and the Ecumenical Movement for Justice and Peace). Indigenous women faced soldiers engaged in illegal logging and construction of dams. Some also decided to join underground groups such as the CPP and NPA (Lee, 1988). Despite operating as an

underground organization during martial law⁷ in 1972 and moving into the rural areas of the country, Makibaka continued to flourish and thereby becoming a registered organization in 1984 under the General Assembly Binding Women for Reforms, Integrity, Equality, Leadership and Action (GABRIELA)⁸. Since then, GABRIELA⁹ became the largest women's coalition in the country that serves as the umbrella organization for all women's group across the country. To this end, women took a central position in the overthrow of the Marcos regime in 1986 (Lee, 1988). As Lee (1988) argued, the strength of the dynamic and diverse women's movement in the country can be largely attributed to a strong desire to bring an end to a regime (i.e., Martial law and foreign intervention) that continued to oppress and exploit women. In 1983, the first all-women demonstration was staged. This included women from the middle class (i.e., whose main task was to become homemakers) and members of the then-newly formed WOMB (Women for the Ouster of Marcos and Boycott) (Lee, 1988). The rise of Cory Aquino in the 1986 election also served as a challenge to persisting stereotypes that women are only made to be in charge of domestic responsibilities (Lee, 1988).

The period between 1985 to 2006, has been characterized as a period where the growth of women's organizations peaked and where their activities and influence became visible (Roces, 2009). To this, women's organizations have worked tremendous efforts to re-define what a Filipino woman is and what it can be in the future. As suggested by Roces (2009), during this period, the movements deconstructed the existing structures and systems that perpetuate their struggles in three ways: first, by criticizing the existing stereotypes for a Filipino woman (i.e., as a home maker, as a prostitute, as a secondary citizen, among others); second, redefining what a Filipino woman meant and proposing an alternative role model in the process; finally, modifying the narrative of women as "victims or survivors into advocates" (Roces, 2009, p. 270).

⁷ Martial law in the Philippines was synonymously understood as the ruling or control of military in most places in the country. The regime, declared in 1972 under the Ferdinand Marcos Sr.'s administration, was characterized by policies relating to the imposition of curfews, extensions of military law to civilians, and suspension civil laws and rights.

⁸ Named after the heroine Gabriela Silang who fought for the liberation of the Philippines against the Spanish rule during the eighteenth century.

⁹ During its organization and its activeness in the 1980s, GABRIELA stood up for three major issues, namely: promotion of the welfare of family, recognition of the welfare and rights of women, and the assurance of a conducive economic, social, political conditions that allow for the promotion of the welfare and rights of women, family, and children.

In March of 1985, due to the growing number national women's organization alongside GABRIELA, a Women's Protest was organized to speak about the problems faced by women alongside the issues concerning rampant economic inequality and foreign intervention (Friesen, 1989). As a part of the protest, "The Filipino Women's Manifesto" was prepared. In this mimeograph, emphasis was given on the daily struggles of Filipino women from various walks of life, from housewives, mothers, peasants, workers, migrant workers, mail order brides, students, and professionals, to street demonstrators who are demanding their struggles and rights to be recognized. The manifesto further emphasized how, as the silent majority, they have come to stand up against these injustices once and for all. As lifted from the manifesto:

"..And we say, ENOUGH IS ENOUGH.

We who make up the bulk of the silent majority, will no longer be silent.

We who have been called the weaker sex, will no longer be cowed.

We who have been relegated to the home will no longer be confined.

In unity we will raise our collective voices, we will build our collective strength." (The Filipino Women's Manifesto, par. 14)

Earlier on, members of Pilipina, a feminist coalition, have already noted the unequal division of labor between men and women, specifically in terms of productive and reproductive labor. As suggested by Jurgette Honculada, a Filipina feminist cited in Friesen (1989), without resolving this inequality that has been embedded in Philippine society in the past, Filipino women will remain concerned about the same issues for the next generations. Arguably, the women's movement in the Philippines proved to be one of the most dynamic and influential movements that inspired other feminist movements internationally (Friesen, 1989). Primarily rooted in a nationalist struggle that aimed to bridge gaps between classes, the movement was found monumental where cross-class involvement provided full-force support to promote women's welfare and empowerment (Friesen, 1989; Roces, 2010) and thus influencing government policies that advance women's welfare over the years.

The late 1990s to the 2000s witnessed a surge of Filipina entertainers who were deemed as country's exports. These entertainers, often termed as "Japayuki,"¹⁰ have increased in number and have been a cause of concern since most of them return to the country pregnant and abandoned by their customers. As a growing societal concern, an NGO, DAWN (Development Action for Women Network), was established with the goal of assisting these women migrants and their Filipino-Japanese children (Roces, 2009). Filipino women's presence has become increasingly felt across industries and sectors thus being recognized as an empowered force of the Philippine society. The Philippines, given its long history with its colonial masters and their strong influence on the societal construction of gender dynamics, has arguably improved in creating a conducive environment for women to thrive as evidenced by the many accolades it has received in bridging gender gaps.

As suggested by Friesen (1989), the women's movement influenced the situation of women in the present and the larger developmental agenda. A combination of these historical factors culminated in palpable inequalities between social classes and gender, thus furthering conflict (Friesen, 1989). As suggested by Friesen (1989), the women's movement in the Philippines is largely powered by Filipino women themselves. As suggested by Roces (2009), the existing perceptions of Filipino women and what femininity entails have not changed substantially despite women's activism over the years. This includes societal expectations on women to end up in marriage as their dignified destiny (i.e., despite succeeding in their studies and careers) (Samonte, 1991), to satisfy their roles as mothers and wives which includes taking on the majority, if not all, of domestic responsibilities such as cooking, cleaning, caring for children, budgeting, among others (Licuanan, 1991). Women are perceived in relation to men as wives and daughters which diminished their value in relation to the existence of men in their lives (Honclada, 1985). The disproportionate impact of societal issues and challenges on women has become a perennial part of women's struggles. Historically, women were found to comprise half of the marginalized workers in the country, taking up positions as landless peasants, and factory workers, among others. These jobs are often characterized by low pay and lacking health and safety hazards (Friesen, 1989). As suggested by Roces (2010), the generalization of the characteristics of a (empowered)

¹⁰ "Japayuki" is a term used for Filipino women entertainers who are travelling to Japan. This is often used as a derogatory term for entertainers who end up as prostitutes in the countries they are staying in.

Filipino woman is a complex task given the history of influences across the country. For example, the characterizations of a woman through the lenses of Spanish and Catholic influence cannot be readily applied across the country, especially in the Muslim areas and the Cordillera mountains (i.e., as they were not influenced by these factors).

At present, women in the Philippines are found to be more flexible than women in other countries given the “absence of a consolidated patriarchal system” (Quetulio-Navarra et al, 2017, p. 242) in the country. Arguably, women despite being primarily in charge of domestic work, are also given the chance to participate in economic work and assume leadership positions within communities. As a result of this balancing work, women were found to have bigger social networks, to an extent social capital, than men (Quetulio-Navarra et al, 2017). Caring work, as Prieto-Carolino and Mamauag (2019) noted, remains to be the primary responsibility of women and proves to be undervalued by Philippine society. The authors go on to argue that women’s sole burden of undertaking care work reinforces their marginalization in society. In rural households in the country, husbands entrust a portion or all their income to their wives (Pajaron, 2016). Previous studies have also shown that wives have gained more control in household expenditures and budgeting (Eder, 2006).

Globally, the Philippines has been recognized as the top Asian country and second in the Asia-Pacific region in bridging gender disparity, closing at least 79.5% of economic participation gaps (Crotti et al, 2021). As suggested by Gutierrez (2024b), owing partly to the strong women’s movement over the years, the Philippines has continuously institutionalized legal instruments that support women’s welfare and rights (Table 5 for a summary of some relevant policy instruments). From the attainment of women’s suffrage during the Commonwealth period and the introduction of maternity leave (i.e., Commonwealth Act No. 647), the recognition of women as equally capable members of society in promoting development (i.e., RA 7192: Women in Nation Building), to the momentous signing of the Magna Carta of Women (RA 9710) in 2009. The enhancement of the situation of women in Philippine society has been growing progressively. As a result, the pursuit of gender equality and the achievement of women’s empowerment has been integrated into other aspects of economic activities including tourism.

Table 5. Survey of select Philippine government policies concerning women

Year	Institutional and Legal Instruments	Objectives
1941	Commonwealth Act No. 647: An Act to Grant Maternity Leave to Married Women Who are in the Service of the Government	Married women working for the government are afforded work leaves (i.e., sick, vacation, maternity leaves amounting to 60 days)
1989	RA 6725: Prohibition on Discrimination against Women with respect to their employment	Amends a portion of Labor Code to address concerns on gender-pay gap and discrimination against women laborers
1988	RA 6657: Comprehensive Agrarian Reform Law	Provides women the land ownership rights
1990	RA 6972: Day Care Law	Acknowledges the parental and state responsibility on children by mandating the establishment of day-care centers in communities
1991	RA 7192: Women in Nation Building	Recognizes women's role in nation-building thus mandating the allocation of 5-30 percent of public budget to the promotion of GAD objectives
1995	RA 7877: Anti Sexual Harassment Act	Penalizes any act related to sexual harassment
1995	RA 7882: Provision of Assistance to Women Engaging in Micro and Cottage Business Enterprises	Assists women who are operating and managing small and micro enterprises
1996	RA 8187 Paternity Leave Act	Provides paternity leave (i.e., 7 days) for married men working in both public and private sectors
1997	RA 8353: Anti Rape Law	Declaring the act of rape as a public crime instead of a private crime
1998	RA 8505: Rape Victim Assistance and Protection Act	Assists and protects rape victims through the creation of rape crisis centers
2004	RA 9262: Anti-Violence Against Women and Their Children Act of 2004	Penalizes violence (in sexual, physical, economic, or psychological forms) against women and children
2009	RA 9995: Anti- Photo and Video Voyeurism Act	Penalizes photo and video pornography whose victims are mostly women and children
2009	RA 9710: Magna Carta of Women (MCW)	Blueprint for the creation of comprehensive women's human rights law across sectors and industries in the country
2010	Autonomous Region of Muslim Mindanao (ARMM) GAD Code	A regionally focused approach to integrating CEDAW and MCW into the ARMM
2013	RA 10361: Domestic Workers (<i>Kasambahay</i>) Law	Recognizes the precarious working conditions of household domestic workers (i.e., who are mostly women) thus providing safeguard

		measures to improve their conditions (i.e., work hours, basic salary, annual leave, etc.)
2014	RA 10644: Go Negosyo Act	Promotes women’s entrepreneurial activities through the provision of training programs, credit facilities, etc.
2014	RA 10354: Reproductive Health Law	Addresses women’s concerns regarding their reproductive health
2016	RA 10906: Anti-Mail Order Spouse Act	Protects women from being victims of mail-to-order activities of foreign nationals
2018	RA 11148: Health and Nutrition of Mothers (<i>Kalusugan at Nutrisyon ng Mag-Nanay</i>) Act	Provides benefits to mothers and their infants who are deemed “nutritionally-at-risk” individuals
2019	RA 11313: Safe Spaces Act	Enhances Anti-Sexual Harassment Act by non-discriminating offenders as subordinates or persons of authority; penalizes the use of discriminatory language against women and men in public spaces
2019	RA 11210: 105-Day Expanded Maternity Leave Law	Provides maternity leave (i.e., 105 days) to women workers, regardless of civil status
2022	RA 11596: An Act Prohibiting the Practice of Child Marriage and Imposing Penalties for Violations	Determination of child marriage as a public offense (i.e., marriage of children below 18 years of age)

6.1.1. Women in Metro Manila

Metro Manila or National Capital Region (NCR) is historically a global city given its central position in international trade. One of its component cities, Manila, became the central hub of Spanish rule alongside Cebu during the Spanish occupation. Thus, the remnants of Spanish influence on gender relations and dynamics can still be observed. As documented by Camagay (1995), women workers in Manila (Metro Manila) in the 19th century were concentrated in a variety of occupations including midwives, teachers, tobacco factory workers, store owners and vendors, seamstresses, and prostitutes. To date, women in Metro Manila are still employed in a diverse range of sectors but are now also professionally employed in high-level management positions in various businesses, and organizations, among others.

6.1.2. Women in Cebu

Known as the “Queen City of the South,” Cebu is the oldest city and first capital in the Philippines which served as the first Spanish settlement in the country and the Spanish colonial capital (Quisumbing, 1963). Due to its historical roots and attractions, Cebu receives over two million tourists annually before the pandemic (Arnaldo, 2021). Social relations have been largely shaped by the Spanish influence where women were respected and where a culture of shared responsibilities can be observed—division in managing domestic and care work, earning of income, among others (Quisumbing, 1963). Thus, women were also expected to contribute to household finances and has since been involved in several economic activities in the cottage industry where they are widely involved in weaving, and pottery making activities, among others (Quisumbing, 1963).

6.1.3. Women in Palawan

Palawan is considered the largest province in the country located in the western part of the Philippines. The province, owing to its renowned natural attractions, receives over a million tourists annually before the pandemic (Formoso, 2022). As the province is home to a variety of indigenous ethnic groups, their gender dynamics and relations have been influenced by indigenous traditions. As suggested by Pondorfer et al (2016), through historical accounts, Palawan appears to have a patrilineal society where men were seen to hold a better social standing than women

(Pondorfer et al, 2016). In this sense, men are seen as heads and leaders of religious, political, and ceremonial activities (Pondorfer et al, 2016). Within household dynamics, women were deemed responsible for taking on care and domestic work including the management of household finances (Alcantara, 1994). As a patrilineal society, women were not expected to participate in economic activities as they were deemed to be occupied with household responsibilities.

6.2. The Evolution of Philippine Tourism Industry vis-à-vis Women

Since the 1970s, the direction of tourism development and policy-planning has been influenced by a top-down approach (Dela Santa & Saporsantos, 2016) where the government mostly sets the agenda and goals to be achieved. In this perspective, both the national (Capistrano & Notorio, 2020) and the local government play a substantial role in driving the country's tourism development (Hartley, 2018).

Historically, tourism was perceived synonymously with prostitution targeted towards women and children (Friesen, 1989). This was particularly evident in the 1970s when international tourism became one of the flagship economic programs of the Marcos Sr. administration. During this period, international tourism was heavily promoted as were the Filipino women who became the top tourist product of the country. International tourism, as Chant and McIlwaine (1995) suggested, connoted a reputation for Manila as a hub for sex tourism specifically in the areas of Angeles City, Pampanga, and Cebu, among other areas where foreigners (i.e., former U.S. military base) usually frequent in. As a result, Filipino women were often seen as the main commodity and promoted as the country's main tourist attraction (Eviota, 1992). While prostitution remained illegal in the country, it has been masked through tourism activities where women are made available to foreigners and where entertainers (i.e., also called Overseas Performing Artists or OPAs) abroad are encouraged (Roces, 2009). This systemic perception, as Chant (1996) puts it, reflects the larger societal and cultural treatment of women as subordinates to men and as commodities.

Over the years, however, this has changed. The country's tourism industry continued to grow over the years, from 166,000 tourist arrivals in 1972 to 3.52 million in 2010 (Dela Santa, 2015). Beyond sex tourism, this growth is attributed to the natural and cultural attractions available in the country. This is reflected in the tourism industry where an increasing number of women have joined the tourism workforce. Recent estimates by the Department of Tourism show that 39%

of people employed in the industry are women, where most of them remain unrecorded given their presence in informal tourism industries (Carlos et al, 2023).

In the 1980s, during the Corazon Aquino administration, domestic tourism was then promoted (Rodolfo, 2009). In the 1990s, however, during the Ramos administration, witnessed a surge in the development of tourism infrastructure was observed including the development of the Ninoy Aquino International Airport Terminal II and III, the Batangas port, and the establishment of new airlines, among others. In contrast to this, the Estrada administration, on the other hand, had vague development prospects linking tourism with transportation plans (Capistrano & Notorio, 2020). The Arroyo administration in the year 2000s then promoted a range of developments including the roll-on roll-off (RoRo) program which supported the aims of domestic tourism promotions (Capistrano & Notorio, 2020). During this administration, the Tourism Act of 2009 was ratified to recognize tourism's role as a pillar for national economic growth and development. As suggested by Capistrano and Notorio (2020), Arroyo had the most tourism-related projects mentioned across the presidents under study. Under her administration, both transport and non-transport developments were promoted including the renovation and creation of new airports across the country including Kalibo (i.e., gateway to Boracay Island), Siargao (i.e., a top surfing destination in the country), among others which paved the way to the ease of movement between the destinations in the country. Bridges connecting key tourism destinations were also built (i.e., Taytay-El Nido (in Palawan), Cebu City-Daanbantayan (in Cebu), among others. Some non-transport-related developments include the declaration of some areas as protected areas and national parks (i.e., Tubbataha Reef, among others). During President Benigno Aquino administration in the 2010s, the world-renowned "*It's More Fun in the Philippines*" campaign was developed, alongside the multiple airport developments which earned the country a Category 1 rating from the US Federal Aviation Administration (Capistrano & Notorio, 2020). Meanwhile, the Duterte administration became known for its promotion of environmental protection in already famous tourism destinations (i.e., closure of Boracay Island in 2018) (Cruz & Legaspi, 2019).

As identified in the analysis of tourism priorities of six of the country's presidents from 1987 to 2019 conducted by Capistrano and Notorio (2020), a total of six tourism policies were explicitly mentioned by four presidents (i.e., Corazon Aquino, Ramos, Arroyo, and Duterte). These mentions of tourism policies, however, do not directly relate to initiatives on tourism development but instead focus on aspects of ASEAN foreign policy (i.e., ease of travel) in 1988, 1993, and 1994,

in relation to heritage preservation (i.e., Ifugao Rice Terraces) in 2006, and environmental management in 2018 (i.e., closure of Boracay Island). Across these tourism development initiatives, job creation and the improvement of the lives of those considered to be in disadvantageous areas (Bapista et al, 2019). This is reflected in the development of policies in relation to tourism and women working in the industry summarized in Table 6.

Table 6. Survey of Policies, Programs, and Initiatives on Tourism and Women in the Philippines

Year	Policy, Program, Initiative	Objective/s
2009	Tourism Act of 2009 (RA 9593)	Recognition that tourism is a vehicle promoting economic growth and development in the country; encourages the development of a sustainable form of tourism that accounts for gender aspects in its development
	DOT Gender and Development Focal Point System	Created to support DOT's GAD mainstreaming initiatives and activities
	Gender and Development (GAD) checklist for tourism	Provides a guideline measure to assisting the promotion of gender mainstreaming in tourism-related programs and projects.
	National Tourism Development Plan (NTDP)	Outlines the promotion of gender equality and women's empowerment by implementing plans and allocating budget for GAD initiatives
	Tourism Guidebook for Local Government Units (LGU)	Provides the guidelines on how the various LGUs in the Philippines can effectively develop their respective tourism industries while assisting them in the creation of a tourism development plan for their jurisdiction.
2018	Hosting of the ASEAN Gender and Development Forum in Tourism	Institutionalization of GAD in tourism activities in ASEAN and the formulation of the ASEAN GAD Framework
2022	"It's More Fun for All" marketing tourism campaign	A tourism campaign focused on promoting accessibility and inclusivity in the tourism sector including three sub-programs: Barrier-free Tourism (BFT), the Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE), and the Tourism Integrates, Supports and Minds Women's Rights and Child Safety (TouRISM WoRCS)
2019	Tourism Integrates, Supports and Minds Women's Rights and Child Safety (TouRISM WoRCS)	An advocacy program aimed at educating tourism stakeholders about the importance and their role in eradicating violence against women and children in the tourism industry
2022	Filipino Brand of Service Excellence (FBSE)	A training program aimed at improving the Filipino brand of hospitality through Filipino core values. The program aims to enhance the capacity of the Philippine tourism workforce.

6.3. Summary

Over the years, Filipino women have advanced substantially. This is evidenced by the fact that the issues raised by GABRIELA in the past have been somewhat and somehow resolved at present including issues on mutual determination of property management between spouses, maternity benefits, and the right to keep women's jobs even during pregnancy. Despite these, however, some issues relating to systematically integrated issues prevail including issues on multiple burdens and the gender pay gap that persist until today.

The same observations may be applied in the context of women working in the tourism industry. As illustrated in the review, initiatives concerning tourism development and women's empowerment in the industry appear to still be in their infancy. As suggested, deliberate efforts to improve the conduct of tourism and women's involvement in the industry were only done quite recently (i.e., in 2009). With a little over a decade, much can still be improved in terms of tackling the various facets of women's involvement in the industry including social, political, psychological, and economic aspects.

Chapter 7: Women’s Experiences in Philippine Tourism

This chapter presents the findings of the study that are presented in a discursive thematic format, according to the specified themes of analysis to answer the following research questions:

“How are women involved in tourism in the Philippines?”

“Does the participation of women in tourism result in their empowerment?”

“What are the challenges women encounter in participating in tourism?”

“What is the impact of women’s empowerment on community development in tourism areas?”

The section covers the following: an overview of the interview process, a profile of the respondents, a discussion of results according to themes, and a synthesis of the findings with the existing literature. In this discussion section, the researcher has taken precautions in using the personal details and affiliations of the participants. Instead, pseudonyms and aliases were used to differentiate their responses from each other (Table 7). Given the period spanning the study, all the participants for this research were involved in the tourism industry across the three research locals, namely: Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan. The participants were engaged in the industry in a variety of ways: entrepreneurs, self-employed, government employees, and privately employed. The participants had several years of experience working in the industry, from 3 to over 20 years, with varied educational attainment from high school, bachelor, and graduate degrees.

The interview transcriptions were analyzed through an inductive approach, specifically using a thematic content analysis, to identify common themes across the data (i.e., transcription) (Neuendorf, 2018). By using qualitative content analysis, key results were determined through a systematic method of organizing large number of texts—analyzing raw data from transcriptions to determine themes (Erlingsson & Brysiewicz, 2017). The analysis was conducted through NVivo 12, a software program used for qualitative data analysis, allowing researchers to manage, analyze, and visualize qualitative data such as transcriptions (Dhakal, 2022). A sample analysis of select interview transcripts is shown in **Appendix 6**.

As discussed extensively in the Methodology section, the respondents were identified from the top three tourism destinations in the Philippines: Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan. There was a total of **20** female respondents. Their profiles are summarized in Table 7.

Table 7. Profile of Respondents

Name	Age	Marital Status	Education	Employment Status
Trina	58	Married	Graduate	Former president of a tourism organization
Marga	56	Married	Bachelor	President of a tourism organization
Shell	45	Married	Graduate	Government employee
Barry	61	Married	Bachelor	Government employee
Joyce	48	Married	Bachelor	Self-employed: Restaurant owner
Neris	68	Married (Widowed)	High school	Self-employed: Food vendor
Jona	32	Married	Bachelor	Food and beverage staff
Janine	52	Married	Bachelor	Accommodation attendant
Mica	34	Single	Bachelor	Self-employed: Media business owner
Elaine	24	Single	Bachelor	Tourism officer
Maria	54	Married	Bachelor	Self-employed: Souvenir shop owner
Jamela	35	Married	Bachelor	President of tourism association
Mae	51	Married (Widowed)	High school	Tour guide
Tere	48	Married	Bachelor	President of tourism association
Pia	45	Single	Bachelor	Tour Guide
Dina	30	Single	Bachelor	Tour Guide
Ann	35	Married	Bachelor	Masseuse
Cathy	33	Married	Bachelor	Masseuse
Mabel	28	Married	High school	Self-employed: Souvenir seller
Yna	33	Married	High school	Self-employed: Souvenir seller

In analyzing the data, five (5) themes emerged in relation to women in Philippine tourism, namely: nature and dynamics of women's participation in tourism, empowerment of women, women's role in community and tourism development, challenges and issues on women's participation, and recommendations to improve women's situation. Quotes are provided to substantiate the interpretation.

7.1. Nature and dynamics of women's participation in the Philippine tourism industry

7.1.1 Dominance of women in Philippine tourism

Several studies have noted the tourism industry's ability to draw women to participate in economic work (Ateljevic, 2008; Fruman & Twining-Ward, 2017; Je et al, 2021). According to Trina (Metro Manila), *"what makes it unique from other industry is the hospitality. The caring, the nurturing which you know when you have guest, it's more natural for a female to be more caring."* Similarly, Mae (Cebu) noted that the industry *"gives us (women) flexibility to work when we are free from our responsibilities at home... we can work whenever we are free."* The same insights were found in the works of Ateljevic (2008), Boley and McGehee (2014), and Boley et al (2017). Given the nature of work required in tourism and hospitality: *"it's natural for us [women] to do well in this kind of business. We can multitask and we are good at it"* (Trina, Metro Manila). As Marga (Metro Manila) has observed, *"women has always been the core of the tourism industry."* As suggested, there is a proclivity for women to work for tourism and hospitality-related industries (Tristani et al, 2022).

Even without secondary data, it is believed that *"tourism is dominantly female led and its evident in the administration, it's evident in (inaudible), it's evident in the grounds. When you look at these organization in my region, they're pretty dominantly female led"* (Shell, Metro Manila). The same observation is made by Marga (Metro Manila) suggesting that *"women are really well represented in both formal and vulnerable employment in the services sector. They have a greater share of employment than men, generally."* In terms of women's contribution to tourism in the region, because

"here (Metro Manila), tourism pertains to 40 per cent focused on services and these services refer to efforts in beautification, aesthetic, food and beverage, women are

more dominantly involved. In fact, the value chains and steering of the wheel falls under women” Shell (Metro Manila).

Even the structure of tourism government, women leaders tend to dominate the industry. *“The dominance of women in tourism may be owed to their presence in tourism education where about 80 percent of students are women” Shell (Metro Manila).* For *“enrollment in any school for that matter, take a look at how many males, females there are. There are actually more female enrolled in tourism-related courses hence we can expect that it will also flow into the workplace”* (Trina, Metro Manila). Following this logic, it is mostly women who become entry level employees.

Arguably, the presence of women in the industry became more apparent during the pandemic.

“It became more obvious that the industry and the country needed to step up and use their creativity to help in recovery” Women acted as the literal frontliners, welcoming guests at the airport, assisting them in going to their quarantine hotels” (Shell, Metro Manila).

The same sentiments were shared by Jamela (Cebu) who shared her experience in volunteering during the pandemic: *“women here became the frontliners during the pandemic. It is us who helped in distributing goods, medicine, and assistance to our neighbors. We are the ones organizing funds to help out others.”* The same experience is applicable in times when they face disasters and typhoons, *“women are the ones who are organizing our neighbors to rebuild after a disaster, and now after the pandemic... we are still the one leading the recovery”* said Mae (Cebu). The same were observed in other establishments as suggested by Marga (Metro Manila), who mentioned that *“these days, you can see a lot of hotels have already women and they have led their hotels out of the pandemic.”* A more pronounced role of women in the industry has been recognized by UNWTO (2019).

7.1.2. Women's economic participation in tourism-rich destinations

The prevalence of tourism activities in the examined destinations suggests that tourism had an impact on the culture and gender relations. The supposed openness of Metro Manila to gender flexibility may be *“owed to it being a cosmopolitan area that has developed a global approach to management”* mentioned Shell (Metro Manila). Arguably, the same may not be the case in other regions especially those destinations in the rural areas. However, as noted by Pia (Cebu), the same flexibility is found in tourism-rich areas where *“the influx of visitors from abroad influenced the local culture here...because they treat women equally, the locals also learn from them. Women here are now treated better, and we benefit from this change.”* Globalized tourism activities proved that no culture remain insulated from influences. The same could be said about the impact of tourism on gender relations in some destinations as observed by Ferguson (2010).

A similar observation is made by Jona (Palawan) who noted that in their area *“our families approve of the work that we do because we are in a tourism destination, we survive because of this.”* To an extent, women's involvement in the industry became inevitable: *“...because our place (El Nido, Palawan) gets almost all our income from tourism, it was natural to join the industry,”* said Joyce (Palawan). For one, gender relations remain distinct where certain tourism-related occupations are still considered male, or female dominated (Alshareef & AlGassim, 2021; Tucker & Boonabaana, 2012). As Marga (Metro Manila) mentioned, *“some positions are dominated by women given their innate skills and abilities. Women dominate sales and marketing, while men dominate the operations.”* Occupations that require physical strength are often delegated to men such as bellhop, porters, etc. Arguably, there are occupations that suit women because of their innate abilities (Gutierrez & Vafadari, 2022). As suggested by Marga (Metro Manila), *“women are deemed better at sales and public relations because we are naturally kikay¹¹ and malambing¹², it is natural for us to interact with strangers.”* The same sentiments were shared by Shell (Metro Manila) who shared that *“women tend to be naturally hospitable and caring that is why they are good at showing genuine hospitality.”*

Yet, others have also noted a relative shift. For example, frontline services (i.e., front officers, housekeeping, food and accommodation providers, etc.) are occupied by both male and

¹¹ Refers to a girl or woman interested in beauty products and fashion

¹² Refers to a having an affectionate, sweet, and caring characteristic

female. In travel and tourism operations, most specifically, the dominance of women is observed (i.e., tour and travel operation, tour guiding). Male, however, continue to dominate transportation services. *“Women are mostly involved in guest relations, cooking, housekeeping before, because naturally, men would take up jobs that might be difficult and dangerous for women to do such as tour guiding which requires carrying heavy luggage, etc.”* (Joyce, Palawan). Marga (Metro Manila) observed that gradually, *“more women are slowly becoming general manager of hotels.”* Similar to the findings of Nagar (2020), a growing number of women are becoming more involved in the tourism industry. In the public sector, government employees in tourism-related agencies remain to be dominated by women. *“Tourism officers specifically are most occupied by women”* (Shell, Metro Manila). The same is true for government agencies including *“the tourism marketing arm where leaders are mostly women. For certain activities such as in events planning, women are mostly in charge because they are keen to details”* (Barry, Metro Manila).

7.1.3. Impact of gender relations and the nature of business

The impact of gender relations on tourism also varies depending on the nature of their work (Momsen & Nakata, 2010). As suggested, gender relations are less influential in community-level activities than in established tourism-related organizations. As noted by Trina (Metro Manila):

“Community base services, these are extensions of whom operations to earn additional income for the family. Because the husbands are doing something else and the females, normally the mother, would be looking at ways to contribute because their doing something that is not earning because they are not being paid as housewives and so they want to contribute also to the coffer and so that why if you take a look at mini community based tourism development, its normally women led because theirs small scale”

This is supported by Shell (Metro Manila) who observed that *“for the accommodation sector, women mostly occupy upper management positions such as those holding VP (i.e., vice president) positions. However, the general manager position is still mostly male dominated, especially for global luxury brands.”* The same observations were made by Marga (Metro Manila) where *“women are often found in cold kitchen or pastries while men are found in hot kitchen. In*

front office, it's a half and half. Travel agencies are mostly female. But the higher the rank, the distinctions are more observed." This is why it is noticeable that *"women who become head chef or a general manager are well-celebrated and recognized in the industry, as this is still considered a rare occasion"* (Trina, Metro Manila).

On the other hand, in small and community-based enterprises, it was observed that *"women participate in the production of tangible products: such as processed food, kakanin (rice products), local pastries, arts and crafts, weaved products, traditional massage therapists, etc. The frontliners are also mostly women dominated"* said Barry (Metro Manila).

7.2. Empowerment of women in Philippine tourism

7.2.1. Psychological

All the women respondents agreed that they were fulfilled, happy, and proud of their work in tourism. Women have emphasized their pride in sharing their culture, history, and traditions to tourists. As Pia (Cebu) proudly stated: *"I take pride in the work that I do. Because of my work, I can share the beauty of the Philippines to visitors."* As emphasized by Mica (Palawan): *"I am happy to know that I am doing my part to promote the culture here. I am proud to showcase the beauty of Palawan through my work."* Some have even shared how it was their dream to work for the industry. As Jona (Palawan) mentioned: *"it was really my dream to work for tourism here. I always wanted to be where I am now that is why I even took this degree. This was my dream workplace as well."* Others have mentioned that they deliberately chose tourism despite being non-tourism degree holders. Elaine (Cebu) shared that *"even if I am not a tourism graduate, when I decided to work for the government, I wanted to know how I can make tourism develop because it helped a lot of families in our province."* Despite being graduates with engineering degrees, both Dina (Cebu) and Pia (Cebu) chose to pursue a career in tourism since they enjoyed their work in the industry.

Through tourism, women also found an opportunity to improve their knowledge and hone their skills (Jackson, 2010; Pleno, 2006). Mae (Cebu) also talked about how her participation in tourism made her feel like she is back in school again: *"I am happy that I learned through our training how important protecting our environment is to maintain our livelihood. Now I am happy to share this with our visitors and to my kids as well."* Similarly, Pia (Cebu) cited how her work

made her “*feel the need to continuously learn about new languages, new skills... I am like in a student but outside the four walls of the classroom every day.*” Joyce (Palawan) also noted:

“before, I was really shy and I did not want to talk to strangers. But now, I learned how to communicate and socialize. I also had to learn some basic managerial skills so I can help my husband in managing our business.”

For others like Neris (Palawan): “*because of tourism, I learned how to speak English. I was also driven to finish my studies even when my classmates were younger than me. I became more confident that I can face anyone now.*” Meanwhile, Ann (Cebu) mentioned that: “*I feel like I am a real professional because I took an exam and I have a license to do massage.*” Interestingly, some of the women also cited how they were able to develop their self-confidence and self-esteem through their involvement in tourism. Dina (Cebu) mentioned how she is more confident with herself, “*because of my work, I know my worth better as a woman and as a member of tourism. I can face my family, friends, and visitors, whoever, without being scared or shy.*” Maria (Cebu), through her business, noticed that “*because of women’s involvement they realized that their skills, when trained, are valuable.*”

The same positive psychological impacts of women’s involvement in tourism activities were noted by several studies. Kunjuraman and Husin (2016), Moswete and Lacey (2015), and Pleno (2006), for example, found that women’s involvement in ecotourism developed their self-esteem and confidence. The development of their skills (e.g., communication, cooking, managerial) enabled them to achieve self-fulfillment and happiness (Lenao & Basupi, 2016; Miettine, 2006; Tucker, 2007). Through their engagement with tourists, women were also found to develop a sense of pride for the work that they do, along with their ability to showcase their culture (Elshaer et al, 2021; Kunjuraman & Hussin, 2016) and conserve their environment (Jumawan-Dadang, 2015; Nutsugbodo & Mensah, 2020).

7.2.2. Economic

In terms of their economic empowerment, specifically the economic contributions brought by their participation in tourism, mixed responses were noted. For one, the income they received through tourism acted as the turning point for their work to be accepted by their families and

communities. As Tere (Cebu) stated: *“it was only when I was able to bring home money for our meals and for my children’s education when my husband finally agreed that I continue working.”* For Jona (Palawan), *“because I am earning more than my husband, we decided that he will be staying at home to take care of our newborn baby while I work.”* Through her participation in tourism, Neris (Palawan) emphasized that *“I can now buy things for myself without asking money from my husband.”* For small-time souvenir sellers like Yna (Palawan), *“this (souvenir making) was just my hobby and because of tourism, I learned that my hobbies can earn me money.”* As observed by McCall and Mearns (2021) and Moswete and Lacey (2015), through the income they receive from tourism, they were able to improve the economic conditions of their own families. To an extent, the additional income allowed them to gradually negotiate their roles within their own households and communities (Foley et al, 2018; Movono & Dahles, 2017).

However, some also noted that they still cannot fully depend on their income from tourism as some of them are considered seasonal. This was the sentiment of Janine (Palawan) in saying that *“because visitors come and go, during lean season, we really cannot depend on it yet. Without the assistance from the government, I don’t think it will be enough.”* Others like Pia (Cebu) shared that *“it was difficult to transition to a seasonal income, especially if you come from a 15-30 salary¹³. This is more difficult to others who have families and other dependents.”* Joyce (Palawan) on the one hand noted that *“since the pandemic, we are still trying to recover. My income (their business) is now very dependent on whether tourists will start coming again.”* As Cathy (Metro Manila) suggested, *“my income here is dependent on whether there are a lot of tourists coming. It is enough if there are also enough tourists visiting.”* The same sentiments are shared by Yna (Palawan) in suggesting that in most cases, *“our income is fluctuating depending on the number of visitors. Sometimes it can cover our daily expenses, sometimes it is not enough.”* In some other cases, due to the seasonality of tourism activities (i.e., natural calamities and disasters, pandemic), some women still struggle to achieve economic independence (Bras & Dahles, 1998).

¹³ Refers to the usual payment scheme in the Philippines where workers receive their salary every 15th and 30th day of the month

7.2.3. Political

In terms of their political interactions and involvement, several women noted that women's occupation of key leadership positions across the industry proved beneficial to uplifting their status. For one, Mica (Palawan) noted that *"because I was exposed to women leaders both in the government and in the private sector, I became inspired to be participate as well."* The same sentiments were echoed by Elaine (Cebu) who said that *"I decided to work for the government because of governor who was a woman. Through her, I realized that women can actually lead."* The impact of women leadership on influencing other women was first noted by Cole (2018) arguing for increased avenues for women's voices to be heard. For others, their political involvement became heightened because of their participation in tourism. Jamela (Cebu) noted that as the president of the association, she *"(I) became more active in working with the government to talk about our concerns and our suggestions. I even organize the members before elections to talk about who is the best candidate to support the aims of their association."* The same observations were made by Elshaer et al (2021), Pleno (2006), Tran and Walter (2014), and Vizcaino-Suárez (2018) in suggesting that through tourism, women were given opportunities to take up leadership positions and be involved in decision making processes concerning tourism development. That is, their involvement signifies that they are "critical constituency within the local communities needing empowerment" (Lenao & Basupi, 2016, p. 56).

Despite these efforts, others have noted a mixed experience in seeking support from the government. Dina (Cebu), for example, noted that *"despite our efforts to voice out our concerns, we do not feel heard. Our issues before the pandemic remained the same even after."* Meanwhile, Pia (Cebu) mentioned how grateful she is for the support of the government especially during the pandemic, *"we (tour guides) are grateful for the government. Even without financial assistance, they provided support in kind through training programs since the pandemic until today."* Some of these trainings include language classes, hospitality training, among others. Majority of the respondents, however, noted that while there are training programs organized by their respective local government units, they have not attended any of these. *"I know there are some training programs here and there, but I never really joined them,"* said Neris (Palawan). A common sentiment among the women interviewed emphasized the value of government assistance to ensure that they are empowered in their work. As Janine (Palawan) emphasized, it is important for the government to *"..hear out our concerns and to help develop our skills so we can participate."*

According to her, it is difficult not just for women, but other local community members to participate in tourism without the right knowledge and skills. For others, they remain unsure since they were not particularly engaging with the government. For example, Ann (Cebu) primarily relies on their association to negotiate their needs and concerns with the government. As she stated: *“I do not engage a lot with the government but I think our association does that for us. They try to make sure that we are safe when we work especially at night.”*

7.2.4. Social

As noted in works of Abou-Shouk et al (2021), Alshareef & AlGassim (2021), Diaz-Carrion, Vizcaino (2021), Nutsugbodo & Mensah (2020), and Vukovic et al (2021), the involvement of women in economic activities are influenced by the socio-cultural aspects in their communities. Long-standing traditions, culture, and attitudes readily impact women’s perceptions of themselves—their aspirations, participation in work, among others. With the Philippines being celebrated for its feat in bridging gender gaps (Mathkar, 2019; Tomacruz, 2018), Trina (Metro Manila) noted: *“Women (in the Philippines) are the unsung heroes...it is a very patriarchal society that we have... yet we are the only Asian country in the top spots (in gender equality matrices)”* (Trina, Metro Manila). According to her, despite established patriarchal structures in society:

“families are brought together simply because of the mother or the grandmother or whoever, is really ruling the family. But if they have children that are male, they may be still some servient to the head of the family, but they, the female they make it appear that the males are, to make a lot of, what this, are more powerful... females make daily decisions, while male make decisions on a grander scale” (Trina, Metro Manila)

This observation compares with the early findings of Awad and Konn (2020), Chant (1996), and Prieto-Carolino and Mamauag (2019) who noted the dynamics of Filipino men and women in households.

According to Trina (Metro Manila) in referring to the societal culture across the country:

“The structure that we have as of now, men aren’t really obliged, or they don’t feel obliged really to help out women in household work and care work. It still falls upon women and it feels like, you know for women, it’s their responsibility, at least, to take charge even if they want to do, like to engage in economic work.”

As suggested by Marga (Metro Manila), *“it is normal in Filipino society to degrade women in the form expressions such as of ‘ahhh babae ka dito ka lang ayy dito ka lang¹⁴,’, you cannot do tasks such as carrying of heavy things like in housekeeping right.”* The impact of such stereotypes tend to influence women’s self-perception and their ability to participate in economic work (Diaz-Carrion & Vizcaino, 2020; Dulnuan & Mondiguin, 2000; Moswete & Lacey, 2015; Nimble, 2019; Zhonghua, 2001). The same sentiments were shared by Dina (Cebu) who mentioned that *“in my community, women are just housewives. We do not aspire to be anything else. We just get married (off), then we become mothers like a cycle. Because of this, my decision to work is frowned upon.”*

To remedy such situations, women are often expected and bound to adjust:

“We also choose our battles, we know where we’re good at. I believe you know what you are good at, we know what positions are ideal for us and there is really and there is not much of conflict between the male and female gender in our industry,” stated Marga (Metro Manila)

On a positive note, however, Trina (Metro Manila) observed that:

“the younger ones right now, males, they don’t share the same old view... they look at females as equals which is good. There are also a change in roles. We now have househusband, they stay home because the wife is earning more. They have to decide who’s going to bring home the bacon. And some husbands are happy enough to do the mother role”

¹⁴ Directly translated in English as: “since you are woman, you should only be here (i.e., in a specific area, field)”

Beyond the individual impact of tourism on women, it was also worth noting how their participation influenced their status within their households and communities. Again, their responses revealed the complexity of their situation. Within their community, Neris (Palawan) stated that *“our status improved. Now they see that women are not just housewives but can also bring in money.”* The same sentiments were shared by Jamela (Cebu) who noted that *“because I am the president and tourism officer is also a woman, they see us differently. Now they know that women can lead and help the community.”*

However, their situation in other communities and households remains diverse. Dina (Cebu) recalled her struggle in leading the boatmen association in their locality: *“They did not take me seriously, maybe because I was young and a woman. They did not see why I am leading them.”* Over time however, with much effort, Dina was accepted as the president of the association and has gained the respect of the members who were mostly men.

As Neris (Palawan) also mentioned: *“my husband was not happy that I was earning more. He started drinking while I was out working. He just stayed at home while I tried to balance both my work and taking care of the house.”* As Ferguson (2011) and Chant (1996) noted, in some cases, tourism exacerbates the burden (i.e., domestic and economic work) carried by women. The same case is observed by Tere (Cebu) in suggesting that *“even if I was working, I am expected to take care of the kids and the house. I still do the cleaning and cooking.”* Because domestic work is believed to be woman’s work, men are often inclined to refuse this responsibility (Feng, 2013). As Anonuevo (2000) suggested, a Filipina tend to be seen as an *“expert in double burden”* (p.1). For others like Joyce (Palawan), Jona (Palawan), and Maria (Cebu), they were happy to say that their husbands were very supportive in providing taking charge of domestic work while they were out working.

The experiences of women in this aspect suggests that women tend to have increased external empowerment (i.e, outside household), but limited internal empowerment (i.e., within their household) (Caparrós, 2018; Dunn, 2007). This is particularly exhibited in the case of Ann (Cebu) where despite her own family’s and community’s acceptance of her work, she experiences some level of discrimination from her husband as she mentioned: *“My husband just stopped working when I started earning money. I don’t know why (he stopped). He is not helping in any of the house chores or taking care of our kid.”* Despite women’s improved status in their respective communities, gender-assigned roles remained within their households. Men still refused to take up

and share household and care work (Caparrós, 2018; Feng, 2013), while resort to antagonizing actions (e.g., drinking, violence) (Ishii, 2012; Tran & Walter, 2014).

As emphasized by the juxtaposed experiences of Ann (Cebu) and Cathy (Metro Manila), their work requires their family members to be willing to take on domestic responsibilities when they physically cannot give their jobs. As Ann (Cebu) mentioned: *“I need his (husband) help because I have to take care of my hands. It cannot get wet, nor can it get any wounds or else I cannot perform my massage.”* Fortunately, unlike Ann’s experience, Cathy (Metro Manila) found that her family members were more understanding and cooperative: *“I am just thankful that my family is supportive of my work. They help me when they know I cannot use my hands to do house chores. They also understand that massaging takes a lot of work and is tiring.”*

In a patriarchal society such as in the Philippines, women’s economic participation has not been readily accepted (Gumba, 2020). As Neris (Palawan) suggested:

“in the past, women like me were prohibited by our husbands to work because they want us to focus on taking care of our kids. In our community, we are not encouraged to work outside. They were not happy to see me going out to work.”

The same observations were made by Maria (Cebu) noted that:

“hiring women was difficult in the past as their husbands did not allow them to work. People were expecting them to just stay at home. I needed to convince them at first that this work will add income to their households. But now, it is acceptable for women to go to work.”

In some areas, the work of women in tourism is frowned upon as stated by Dina (Cebu):

“when my relatives heard that I am working for tourism, they thought I was doing something illegal (like sex tourism). I needed to explain to them what I do before they accept that this is a decent work that I am doing.”

Meanwhile, others have expressed their concerns about tourism work. *“My father did not support my work in tourism at first because he did not understand what I was doing. He thought I will not earn any money from it,”* said Pia (Cebu). The same hesitations were observed since the early 1990s when tourism was attributed to primarily sex tourism in the Philippines (Chant, 1996).

However, over the years, changes in this societal expectation have been observed. For one, the growing financial needs of Filipino households have increased overtime where Joyce

(Palawan) argued: *“nowadays, we need to work. We are expected to work to help our own families earn income.”* Mae (Cebu) also supported this by suggesting that *“...because his earnings were not enough, I needed to step in.”* Over time, these exceptional cases became an expectation from women’s families and the larger society (Duffy et al, 2015).

In other cases, their community’s background helps them in obtaining support to the work that they do. Ann (Cebu), a masseuse, for example, stated that:

“I came from a small community where massage was known as hilot and it has helped a lot of our families when we cannot afford to go to a hospital. But through the tourism program here, I learned that there is a medical and proper way to do massage. I studied, took the exams, and passed to help my family and my community members.”

Over the years, gender stereotyping in occupations become obsolete. *“Now, a lot of occupations are competency-based, regardless of your gender”* (Trina, Metro Manila). This is also observed by Marga (Metro Manila) who stated that *“when women take up positions that are usually for men, and people see that they are doing good with their position. It encourages more women to climb up the ladder without hindrance...and over time, the same situations made all these things possible for women at present.”*

Even in marketing tourism, *“traditionally male oriented activities are now being associated with women such as motorcycle tourism where the ambassador is a woman”* (Barry, Metro Manila). This is also observed in the accommodation where Marga (Metro Manila) noted that *“housekeeping were traditionally dominated by women. But right now, the male is actually dominating the housekeeping department. Women now are getting into other departments such as the kitchen, the restaurant services.”* Jona (Palawan) also noted that there have been changes over the years, *“it’s changing since I see some women becoming tour guides, dive masters, etc. while it was mostly men now who in charge of housekeeping.”*

The same observations were noted by Jamela (Cebu) in suggesting that:

“I don’t think gender is an issue for work as long as you are qualified. We have boatmen and tour guides who are women. We also have male performers. For us, as long as you are skilled and willing to be trained, you can take the job.”

7.2.5. Redefining Empowerment

To an extent, it might be deduced that empowerment is dependent on the available assets to a person, training capacities, and culture backgrounds where they belong in. As suggested, empowerment may derive from *“the availability of training, the availability of exposure...it may even root from the existence of traditional cultures”* (Shell, Metro Manila). The same sentiments are echoed by Pia (Cebu) and Trina (Metro Manila) in stating that *“empowerment is when I can learn and unlearn things every day”* and that *“empowerment comes from knowledge,”* respectively. In some cases, empowerment is seen as the ability of women to navigate difficult situations (Gutierrez & Vafadari, 2022). Because the society is not necessarily free of discrimination, empowerment in this sense can also be about women knowing *“how to filter the positions that we want to be in right, do you want to be trained in, and that’s an empowerment for us, we know our battles we know we are better for a better journey in our career path,”* said Marga (Metro Manila). In accepting these realities, it has become a norm for women who are pursuing their careers is that *“...when you enter the industry you have to make sacrifices as a woman. You need to have a better perspective on family planning.”* This along with women’s increased presence across industries become an acceptable *“indication of how Filipinos have accepted the women in our work forces.”* To an extent, such perspective encourages women to accept the bare minimum that a society can offer (Tristanti et al, 2022).

In exploring the relationship between women’s involvement in tourism and their empowerment, Shell (Metro Manila) suggested that *“it could be that their empowerment doesn’t stem from their participation at all”* where their empowerment has stemmed from other aspects of women’s lives. Meanwhile, Marga (Metro Manila) noted that the industry has increased and contributed to the empowerment of women as *“we (women) are given the chance to be responsible of other people...there is so much respect and appreciation for the work that women do for the industry.”* As suggested by Boley and McGhee (2014) and Elshaer et al (2021), empowerment is a multi-dimensional concept that is not readily explainable by economic opportunities.

7.3. Women's role in community and tourism development

Women's participation in tourism also affected the community and cultural contexts surrounding them. The interview respondents expressed how happy they are to see that their involvement in tourism resulted to positive spillovers to their respective communities, including other women.

As Mica (Palawan) mentioned: *"I am happy that through my business, I am also able to employ other talented women since we are a woman dominated company."* This sentiment was also shared by Marie (Cebu) who mentioned that *"women just needed to hone their skills to work... key to my business' success is all the women who patiently created each of my products carefully."* For others such as Neris (Palawan), who became one of the first members of the community who provided products and services to the nearby private tourism estate, mentioned:

"I am happy that my work in tourism allowed other women and other members of the community to earn extra income. When they needed someone to entertain the guests, I asked women to join me and form a singing choir. I also recruited some youth members when I needed help in producing kakanin (rice cake) for the guests."

As observed by Caparrós (2018), women-owned and -led enterprises tend to employ other women as well. Similarly, Vizcaino Suárez (2018) suggested that increased women representation in leadership and top-level management positions lead to greater gender equality measures to be implemented. This is supported by the insight of Dina (Cebu) who shared how her position as a worker and leader in the industry allowed her to inspire other women to be involved as well. *"Because I am a working woman, the younger women I talk to realize that they can also work and not just get married. Whenever I share my experience as a woman working in tourism, there are others that I inspire to dream."* For Jamela (Cebu), the success of their association meant that *"women can lead a group...that we can help our community"* in talking about the scholarship program, cash assistance initiative, among other programs that their association funds through their community tourism enterprise. The same case is shared by Tere (Cebu) who talked about how her leadership does not only capacitate women, but specifically senior citizens, fishermen, and artisans in their community who wants to work and to receive extra income, *"I am happy to serve the*

senior members, fishermen, artisans, and other service providers in our community. When we have a visitor, we also need their help.”

Elaine (Cebu) went on to say that *“through my work, I realized that if more women are able to work, the better is for our industry and for the economy,”* suggesting that encouraging more women to join economic activities would be beneficial to their community. Having a role model to look up to become a motivation and inspiration for other women to become active in economic and political spheres (Vizcaino Suárez, 2018). As Dina (Cebu) shared, *“it started with my mother who became a good example that a woman is not just a housewife. She taught us at an early age that we should not depend on our husbands. We need to be independent.”* In this sense, women’s participation in tourism allows them not only to help themselves but their respective communities as well. The contribution of women in uplifting the quality of lives in their own communities have also been noted by existing studies (Caparrós, 2018; Yankowski, 2019).

7.3.1. The value of empowering women

By acknowledging that women contribute substantially to the industry, women can increase their involvement. Arguably, the success of the industry and women’s dominance *“speaks empowerment for women and the beneficial impact on tourism and in the shared economy”* said Shell (Metro Manila).

“Women can be more encompassing in our perspective of how tourism could be and what is really the tourism culture at the same time we are not putting down the male, they have their own role, but it's really the women who are nurturers and in our commitment to our clients and to all our visitors and tourist coming into the Philippines to our doors” stated Marga (Metro Manila).

As Marga (Metro Manila) stated:

“Empowered women will always bring to the organization and to the industry a lot of values, a lot of new things... these empowered women will always bring out the best of the Filipinos and will really bring the tourism industry back to its original towards 2019 level. Empowered women will always make this possible for the Philippine tourism.”

While there is still a lot to work on, women are deemed to be in better positions. Empowered women in tourism, as Shell (Metro Manila), are those women who are “...*considered the decision-makers who stir how the industry develops for the better.*” As Marga (Metro Manila) suggested, “*they have realized the value of women and how the leadership of women and maybe that's it. You know we also lead with a heart.*” As leaders of the industry, “*it is our happiness to see that our plans and decisions push through because we respected and recognized,*” said Barry (Metro Manila). A growing number of women are seated in positions where they can “*provide leadership...focus, and provide direction of where tourism is going—how they will expand, how they will market, how they will promote it... Women are also the ones making sure that such decisions are implemented*” mentioned Shell (Metro Manila). As Marga (Metro Manila) suggested, “*the increased presence of women here is good for the industry.*”

7.4. Challenges and issues on women’s participation

7.4.1. Household Structure and Domestic Responsibilities

Deriving from the socio-cultural structure of households in the Philippines, women are still deemed as secondary income earners (Gumba, 2020; Gutierrez & Vafadari, 2022).

“Because women are considered the ‘ilaw ng tahanan’¹⁵ we take in charge of household work, of taking care of our children. Motherhood is essentially something only females have issues on because of work-life balance, and then family is something that is uniquely managed by females and we take so much from ourselves that our careers are affected” mentioned Shell (Metro Manila)

Primarily in charge of domestic and care work (Caparrós, 2018; Vizcaino Suárez, 2018; Wesely & Gaarder, 2004), women’s work is looked down upon. “*Women are used to doing unpaid work... But if you put a value to the work that you do at home, you’ll find out that you should be earning more*” said Trina (Metro Manila). The same findings were made by Caparrós (2018).

¹⁵ An idiomatic expression in the Philippines referring to mothers who are perceived to be the light (i.e., bringing warmth, care) to families

Arguably, once the society “*starts valuing our work, women could become filthy rich*” uttered Shell (Metro Manila). In reality, “*household work needs a lot of brainpowers...and women should be recognized as domestic engineers*” said Trina (Metro Manila)

Due to this societal perception, women suffer from double, even triple, burden (Caparrós 2018; Moser, 1993; Sinclair, 1997; Vizcaino Suárez, 2018). This was noted as well where women need to play multiple roles at the same time: “*as a mother, as wife, as a friend, there’s so many stressors for a woman, not just in the tourism industry but in society*” said Shell (Metro Manila). Women has the proclivity to take on all of these burdens because “*woman have the tendency to want to be good at everything*” mentioned Shell (Metro Manila). For these reasons, this generation of career-driven women shy away from getting married or conceiving, as Trina (Metro Manila) put it, “*a lot of females are not looking at settling down early.*” The struggle to balance all these burdens along with women’s economic work continue to prevail (Carvalho et al, 2018; Freund & Hernandez-Maskivker, 2021; Keizer & Komter, 2015).

7.4.2.The Consequences of Marriage and Conception

In most cases, women’s ability to conceive has become a hindrance to their career advancement (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2011). As stated by Trina (Metro Manila):

“there are biases towards women especially to those who are still at the age when they are giving birth. They are seen less of a worker because they have to contend with maternity leave or there would be occasions when they would have to leave for their family.”

In these types of situations common in most workplaces, women “*have to prove more on work as to compared to their male... women take it upon themselves*” said Trina (Metro Manila).

This situation is further evidenced by the smaller number of women in top-management positions, as Trina (Metro Manila) suggested, for women it is “*very time consuming especially to those who are raising families and so it’s taken against you if you are still of age that can bear children and that’s why you have some differences in the ways that females.*” Often women are penalized for their ability to bear a child (ILO, 2011) where “*psychologically, when I decide to*

become a mother, I am afraid that others will take up my position (when one takes maternity leave)” said Shell (Metro Manila.) Zhang et al (2022) suggested that “motherhood penalty”¹⁶ continues to prevail in many societies. Similarly, as Trina (Metro Manila) stated, it is expected that for women *“when you (they) get married there is a certain role they have to play...settling down”* which often entails sacrificing their careers. In recognizing the work undertaken by women when they choose to get married and conceive, government policies should make sure that *“mothers who are professionals don’t lose out on the raise...that when they take a leave, they will not lose their position over a man”* said Trina (Metro Manila).

7.4.3. Differed Experiences in Community and Private Establishments

The experiences of women in tourism also vary on the establishments to which they belong in. *“The influence of gender relations to tourism activities is often more significant in formal and big tourism enterprises”* said Trina (Metro Manila). It is suggested that gender relations are found to be less influential in community-level activities, as Trina (Metro Manila) noted:

“Community-based services are extensions of home operations...because the husband is going to work, women who are normally the mother, would be looking at ways to contribute to the coffer... because they are not being paid as housewives. Community based tourism development is normally women led because they are small scale and conducted while the husband is away.”

While it is noticeable that it is normal for small-scale enterprises to be women-led, there is a need to *“capacitate them to grow their businesses, and not just for men to take over (then grow it)”* (Trina, Metro Manila). The same observation was made by Hampel-Milagrosa (2014). In most cases, these small enterprises are considered home-based and are generally informal entities (ILO, 2005).

In private and established businesses, glass ceilings still do exist (Carvalho et al, 2019; González-Serrano et al, 2018). As González-Serrano et al (2018) note, glass ceilings still exist due

¹⁶ Motherhood penalty defined as the effects of having a child on labor market outcomes. After becoming a mother, “sharp decline in labor earnings, labor market participation, working hours, etc. are observed... while fathers’ labor outcomes remain the same” (Zhang et al, 2022, p.1).

to continued stereotyping of certain job positions including vertical and horizontal segregation. In some tourism-related sub-sectors, *“women rarely occupy top-level management positions specifically in transportation, aviation sectors”* said Shell (Metro Manila). Similarly, however, *“I observe that men find it difficult to penetrate tour guiding, aesthetic and wellness, etc.”* (Department of Tourism). In terms of challenges in vertical movement, Trina (Metro Manila) observed that *“women are often found in supervisory to certain mid-level management... but you go to the top, it is still male dominated.”* The challenge therefore is not just for women to work but also *“how to get female up to the (top) management level.”* Aggravating such issues is the pervasiveness of *hidden discrimination* (Carvalho et al, 2019) defined as *“microaggressions in the form of brief statements or behaviors...that transmit a negative message about a non-dominant group”* (Nadal, 2010 cited in Carvalho et al, 2019, p. 87).

Similarly, gender pay-gap is still observable in private organizations where *“males are getting higher pay as compared to the counterparts. The male tends to have higher salaries than women”* observed by Trina (Metro Manila). The prevalence of gender pay-gap in societies and industries was observed by Bolles (1997), Ferguson (2018), and Zhang and Zhang (2021). This has become a norm that others are made to believe that it is normal and acceptable. The same sentiment is shared by Marga (Metro Manila) who said that *“I don't know why but maybe because it's in the culture of the Filipinos right? But over time, we also get the compensation that we are due to us.”* As suggested by Roethlisberger et al (2022), personality traits and social norms tend to influence the prevalence of gender pay gap in societies. As suggested, both factors reflect the expectations society has on men and women, which then shapes personal preferences and choices.

7.4.4. Gender-based discrimination and violence

In tourism activities in the Philippines, *“it is almost always the case that women are involved”* (Shell, Metro Manila). As suggested, this may be the case given the nature of tourism which requires *“establishing good relations, hospitality, caring... which are often innate to women”* (Shell, Metro Manila). In most cases, however, women’s involvement in tourism connotes certain stereotypes in some areas. For some, these have been internalized as suggested by Marga (Metro Manila) where *“the nurturing and the caring of a woman can put together the experience that the Filipino hospitality is committed to provide.”* As suggested by Elaine (Cebu), on the other hand,

“here, when women and tourism are mixed, people often think of sex tourism.” This therefore reveals the underlying assumptions that continue to affect gender relations in the industry.

As observable in some of the experiences of other women, gender-based discrimination persists at present. As Cathy (Metro Manila) and Ann (Cebu) alluded to, their work as massage therapists is often seen as a job that is vulnerable to sexual harassment. As Cathy (Metro Manila) stated: “At first, others think that we offer extra service when we do massage services. But because of the testimonies and experiences of others, they realize that it is not, that we are just doing our jobs professionally.” In order to address such concerns, proactive measures have been in place to assist women including training them about their rights and laws that protect them, safety measures, among others. As suggested in the experience of Ann (Cebu): “there were times when I encountered foreign visitors who thought I offered more than massage... good thing I was trained how to handle them and I explain respectfully and leave.” For some of these women, they experience some level of discrimination in terms of banter and jokes from their colleagues. As Mabel (Cebu) mentioned, “other sellers would comment on our clothes and ask us out on dates which makes me uncomfortable since I am just here to work.”

7.5. Comparative Analysis on Women’s Experiences in Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan

The experiences of women working in the tourism industry of the three research areas focused on in this study have varied experiences given the diverse economy, culture, history, and societal contexts that influence their participation and empowerment. A summary of the comparative analyses is illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8. Summary of Comparative Findings

	Metro Manila	Cebu	Palawan
Participation	Women’s economic work considered a need	Prohibited to participate in tourism work (i.e., sex work)	Women are expected to work in tourism
	Gender assigned work that is gradually changing	Gender assigned work that is gradually changing	Gender assigned work that is gradually changing
	Focused on large/established enterprises:	Focused on community-based/small-scale enterprises:	Focused on community-based/small-scale enterprises:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Glass ceiling • Gender pay gap • ”Marriage discrimination” 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “extensions of home operations”

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “Motherhood penalty” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “extensions of home operations” • Problems arise when more time required from women 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Problems arise when more time required from women
Empowerment			
<i>Psychological</i>	Happiness, sense of fulfillment, pride in tourism work	Happiness, sense of fulfillment, pride in tourism work	Happiness, sense of fulfillment, pride in tourism work
<i>Economic</i>	Positive contributions to personal and family income	Mixed experience (i.e., seasonality and informality of work)	Mixed Experience (i.e., seasonality and informality of work)
<i>Political</i>	Women as decision-makers and direction-setters	Women as decision-makers and direction-setters	Women as decision-makers and direction-setters
<i>Social</i>	Improved external and internal empowerment	Improved external, but limited internal empowerment (i.e., alcoholism, violence, not sharing domestic responsibilities)	Improved external, but limited internal empowerment (i.e., alcoholism, violence, not sharing domestic responsibilities)
Community Development	Women in leadership positions create opportunities for other women	Tourism initiatives employ other women (i.e., housewives) and senior citizens	Tourism initiatives employ other women (i.e., housewives) and senior citizens
	Younger women inspired by women in leadership positions	Setting up of income funds to support community needs (i.e., scholarship programs, cash assistant programs)	Women business owners employ other women
		Younger women inspired by women in leadership positions	Younger women inspired by women in leadership positions
		Women business owners employ other women	

Metro Manila

The experiences of women working in Metro Manila, the regional capital of the Philippines, are considered substantially different from the experiences of women working in the other research areas of this study (i.e., Cebu and Palawan) given that they are situated in the country’s main business hub. Tourism in Metro Manila is primarily characterized by urban tourism where large

and formal tourism-related establishments (i.e., hotel chains, MICE [meetings, incentives, conferences and exhibitions] dominate the industry, while other forms (i.e., cultural tourism, gastronomy tourism, among others) also exist albeit in smaller segments. Thus, the cosmopolitan and economically advanced nature of Metro Manila facilitated women's involvement in the labor force. In fact, women's participation in economic work is considered a need due to higher costs of living. Women's involvement in economic and tourism work is already perceived as mainstream rather than an exception. Given that Metro Manila is the main gateway for international trade and commerce, it has been largely exposed to various cultures that continuously challenge culturally entrenched gender stereotypes and expectations emerging from its history of colonialism (i.e., Spain, USA). While traces of gender stereotypes remain, they are not easily perceived in general contexts but are integrated into the culture and societal settings to which women are found. As noted by the participants, while women's involvement in tourism work is promoted, they continue to suffer from issues of glass ceiling (i.e., invisible barrier preventing women from being promoted to higher positions within an organization), gender pay gap (i.e., women are paid less than men for the same job requirements), marriage discrimination (i.e., work and hiring discrimination against married women and women of marrying age), and motherhood penalty (i.e., work and hiring discrimination against mothers), among others. In most cases, these gender inequalities have been so deeply entrenched that they have been internalized.

In terms of women's empowerment in Metro Manila, their involvement in the industry was found to have positive impacts on their psychological, economic, political, and social well-being. Their ability to work for the industry allowed them to lead happier, more fulfilling lives that allowed them to improve themselves and gain economic freedom to support themselves and their families. These improved capacities allow them to continuously re-negotiate their roles within their households, communities, and the larger society (i.e., improved external and internal empowerment).

In terms of community development, the involvement of women in the tourism industry was found to create ripple effects on other women through their presence in leadership positions. As mentioned by the participants, women's presence as corporate leaders, managers, and high-level positions inspire other women to advance in their respective careers.

Cebu

Cebu, the oldest city and first capital of the Philippines (i.e., the first Spanish settlement), renders a different context influencing the participation and empowerment of women working in the tourism industry. For one, Cebu is an area where Spanish-influenced gender relations have been deeply entrenched and where sex tourism proliferated and dominated the industry in the 1970s. Thus, stereotypes against women working in tourism continued to prevail, albeit less at present. This was echoed by the participants who found themselves justifying their involvement in the tourism industry to their own families and communities. Similarly, women's participation in economic work was not as mainstream as in other areas. While it is not frowned upon, it was not deemed necessary as women were still seen as traditional homemakers and care providers of families. Over time, however, the participants noted that stereotypes against tourism work and women's participation in the workforce gradually changed due to the various influences from other cultures. At present, Cebu, just like Metro Manila, has become a cosmopolitan and business hub that receives many foreign visitors thereby challenging traditions and beliefs relating to gender stereotypes. Thus, a gradual change in perceptions of gender-assigned work is observed. Compared to Metro Manila, however, tourism in Cebu remain small-scale and community-based in nature, primarily focused on cultural, gastronomy, and ecotourism. Thus, the experiences of women working in tourism have been largely characterized by household-level gender stereotypes where their work has been limited to those that are deemed extensions of their care and housework (i.e., cooking, guest relations, administrative work). The same observations were made on entrepreneurs whose businesses were deemed acceptable until they decide to grow them—thus affecting their supposed domestic responsibilities.

In terms of empowerment, women's participation in tourism resulted to positive impacts on their psychological and political well-being where they were found to take pride in their work thus allowing them to take up decision-making positions in the industry. In terms of their economic empowerment, however, the seasonality and informality of their engagement in tourism yields mixed experiences—some women can support themselves and their families through their income, while others still require alternative sources of income. Compared to the experiences of women in Metro Manila, women in Cebu experienced improved social statuses within their communities (i.e., given their ability to support other people through their work in tourism), while they remain discriminated against within their households. As reported by some of the participants, due to their

ability to earn income from tourism, they suffer from issues of gender antagonism from their household members (i.e., husbands) who resort to alcoholism, violence, and unwillingness to share household responsibilities.

In terms of community development, given the communal nature of tourism activities in Cebu, women were mostly found to be working in community-based and small-scale enterprises, they were found to create direct positive impacts on their community members (i.e., especially women and senior citizens) through the opportunities and projects they create. The same with women in Metro Manila, women occupying leadership and entrepreneurial positions were found to positively influence other women as well to take on economic work to advance their careers and well-being.

Palawan

Palawan, dubbed as the last ecotourism frontier of the Philippines, has a substantial population of ethnic and indigenous communities that continue to influence the societal and cultural contexts to which women are situated in. These influences include the dominance of men in leadership, economic, and political functions, while women are deemed responsible for reproductive responsibilities. Despite the existing patrilineal influences on the gender dynamics in the province, the predominance of tourism activities and other cultural influences challenged these dynamics. As a renowned tourism destination in the country, the people of Palawan (e.g., including women) are expected to work for the industry. Women, as noted by the participants, are in fact expected to work for the tourism industry. Similar to Cebu, tourism activities in the province are primarily small-scale and community-based with a focus on ecotourism. Given this, gender influences on the participation of women reflect traditional household dynamics where women are primarily in charge of domestic and care work and are thus involved primarily on work that resemble these responsibilities (i.e., guest relations, cooking, administrative, souvenir-making). Similar to the experiences of women working in Cebu, entrepreneurs have no trouble building their enterprises so long that it does not interrupt their designated work within their households.

In terms of empowerment, the experiences of women in Palawan mirrors the ones in Cebu where women found happiness, fulfillment, and pride in the work that they do for tourism. For the same reason that women are politically empowered as they occupy decision-making positions in the industry while being deemed as direction-setters in its development. However, women also face issues in terms of the seasonality and informality of their engagement in tourism. Mixed

experiences were also observed where others found their income sufficient while others do not. Finally, in terms of their social empowerment, women were found to have improved external empowerment, but with a limited internal empowerment. Within their households, they face issues in relation to their economic participation and gender stereotypes (i.e., women as homemakers and not as income earners). They also face gender antagonism from their household members.

In terms of community development, the participation of women in tourism were found to create positive impacts on their own communities where women business owners were found to support other women too, and where women leaders provide support and inspiration to other women to be involved in the industry.

7.6. Summary

As suggested in the findings in Chapter 5, international efforts to promote women's rights and welfare have been ongoing for decades now. Within this period, an evolving view on women was observed—from seeing women as victims of inequality and recipients of interventions to women being perceived as partners in development efforts. This paradigm shift translated to a realization that concrete strategies are required for systemic and institutional inequalities to be modified, thus transitioning into the perspective where women are seen as equally capable of contributing to the growth and developmental initiatives (i.e., disaster risk, peace and security, tourism, among others). As discussed in Chapter 6, efforts to integrate gender equality and women's empowerment into the local agenda have been observed in the Philippines where multiple policies have been in place to support women's welfare. Due to a long-standing history of colonization and influences from various cultures, the advancement of women's rights has been challenging. Owing to pressures from both international and domestic communities, substantial efforts have been made as evidenced by the numerous policies supporting and protecting women in the Philippines (Table 6).

However, in looking at the regulatory environment surrounding women in tourism at the international (Chapter 5) and domestic levels (Chapter 6), efforts can be considered relatively new and still in their infancy. This can be expected given the recent emergence and recognition of tourism industry globally as a viable growth and development pillar (i.e., the Philippines' Tourism Act of 2009). Despite this, the significance and urgency of making such policies available prove crucial in ensuring that women working in the tourism industry are protected, secured, and

empowered. Underpinned by the aforementioned international and domestic efforts, the insights derived from Chapter 7 illustrated the current status of women working in the Philippine tourism industry with the goal of better informing research and policy on how to better address the challenges and constraints faced by women who are in the industry.

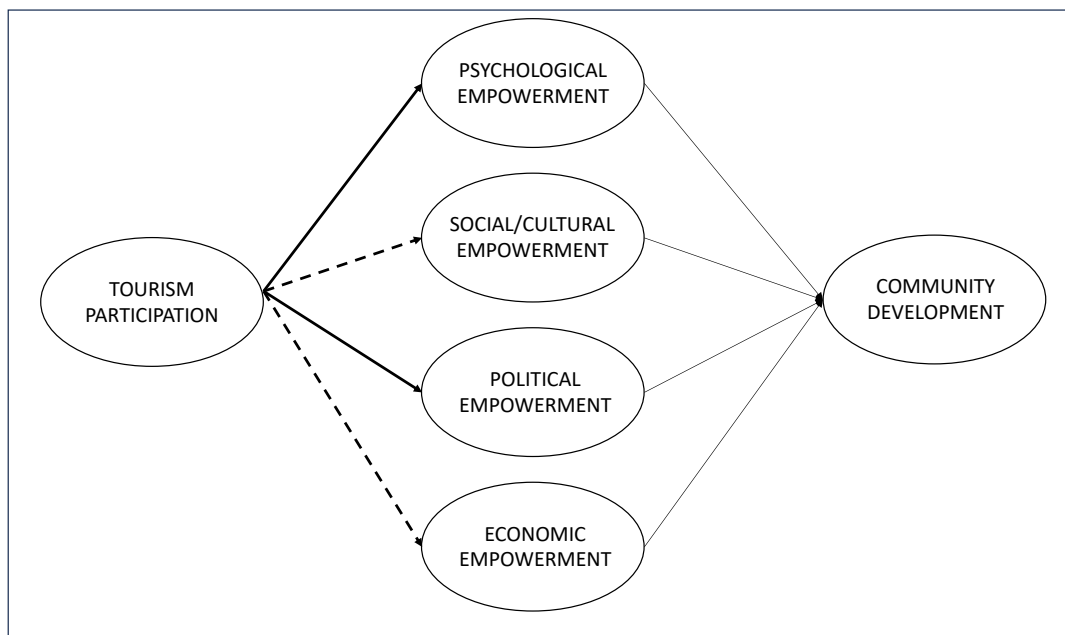


Figure 7. Summary of findings in conceptual framework
Source: Author’s own

Following this study’s conceptual framework, Figure 7 illustrate that women working for the Philippines’ tourism industry are generally found to be psychologically and politically empowered—where women are found to be content and happy with the work that they do, while they remain to be capable of taking leadership positions thus influencing policies that govern the industry. Meanwhile, in terms of economic empowerment, women were found to have mixed experiences given the seasonality of tourism activities in specific destinations. For one, some women found that their income proved insufficient to support their entire family’s needs, while others experienced economic independence (i.e., the ability to decide how they could spend their income) from their involvement in tourism. Finally, social empowerment remains problematic where women were found to have improved external empowerment (i.e., relations outside their household), while others remained to have poor internal empowerment (i.e., relations within their household). The experiences of the women interviewed suggested that their social statuses

generally improved as they were able to contribute to their community's development, yet issues with gender stereotypes (i.e., men as primary income earners) prevailed within their households.

From this, it can be observed that the international and domestic environment governing women and women's involvement in the industry (Chapters 5 and 6), readily influences how women participate in the country's tourism industry (Chapter 7). This is particularly emphasized during the validation workshop conducted where practitioners, academicians, and policymakers consulted underscoring the value of research-informed policies on women.

7.7. Recommendations

At the end, the women respondents agreed that at present, *“gender should never be an issue. It should be more about competencies. Gender is a non-issue whether this particular job or this particular requirement is needed gender wise”* (Trina, Metro Manila). An observable trend of more women being active in engaging with gender-related issues have been observed.

Given their experiences and the insights derived from the validation workshop conducted, several recommendations were forwarded: First, women from the public sector suggested the need for gender empowerment tools and indicators that can help identify and bridge gender gaps. As emphasized by Shell (Metro Manila), *“there is no good metric for us (government) to measure gender development and gender equality...(it is difficult) not knowing where we are and we are heading is difficult.”* Second, in relation to this, given the dearth of policy-oriented research on women in tourism, Shell (Metro Manila) noted that *“we also need research studies that can actually translate into implementable policies, and not just for academics.”* These types of research may aid decision-makers in better understanding the situation of women in the industry. Third, while there have been policies in place to ensure gender equality and the empowerment of women, the implementation remain flawed. *“We have a lot of policies already, but translating policies to action and tools to measure policy is missing,”* said Shell (Metro Manila). As suggested by Anonuevo (2000), despite the presence of a legal framework, formal and informal institutions tend to contradict each other therefore continuously challenging the promotion of gender equality. Fourth, to transform societal traditions and mindsets, according to Trina (Metro Manila), the efforts made at the public level must be mainstreamed,

“it should flow back all to curriculum, as early as basic education. There should no longer be subjects and activities that are for boys or girls only. Home economics

should be undergone by both boys and girls, in the same way that electronics (subject) should also have girls in them. Education is really empowerment.”

Fifth, as informed the varied experiences of women interviewed, *“the presence of other women in certain positions prove inspiring and motivating to other younger women”* (Shell, Metro Manila). For such experiences to be replicated, *“success stories of women must be recreated,”* shared and retold said Trina (Metro Manila). As Dina (Cebu) suggested, platforms where *“successful women can mentor and talk to other women can increase their confidence and self-perception.”* Sixth, skills training and capacity-building specifically for women should be mainstreamed. As noted by Trina (Metro Manila), there is a need for *“more training to the female because they have very little appreciation for the business side of tourism.”* Such can help women upskill to become entrepreneurs and formal economy employees (Hampel-Milagrosa, 2014).

Chapter 8: Conclusion and Recommendations

This final chapter synthesizes the findings from the data gathering conducted in the previous chapters while also integrating the insights derived from the conducted literature review. Ultimately, this chapter answers the research question posed in the study: “How can women’s participation in tourism facilitate community development?” To do so, this chapter is divided into sub-sections including a summary of the key findings, research contributions (e.g., both in theory and practice), and finally, a discussion on the limitations and possible directions for future study.

8.1. Summary of Findings

Guided by the theoretical (i.e., combined theories of community development, tourism development, and empowerment) and conceptual framework of this study, the findings of the study illustrate the ways in which women participate in tourism and how they can facilitate their own empowerment while contributing to their community’s development. As suggested in this study, the gender relations in the tourism industry were found to be influenced by the cultural and traditional factors affecting Philippine society. This can be traced back to the historical roots of the country that directly influenced the policies governing its tourism activities and the nature of the involvement of women in the industry. Similarly, as suggested in the document reviews conducted in this study, the policies governing women’s involvement in economic activities across industries such as tourism have been readily influenced by international and regional efforts to push for gender equality and women’s empowerment. That is, the international, regional, and national initiatives on these aspects have shaped the dynamics in the Philippine society and the tourism industry. Against this backdrop, the examined experiences of women in this study suggest that the Philippines continues to see men as superior to women as reflected in the continued presence of gender-based discriminatory policies and behavior entrenched in communities and society. Albeit a gradual shift towards a more positive and proactive outlook is becoming more apparent (i.e., where the younger generation is becoming less interested in gender-assigned roles and expectations).

In terms of women’s participation in the Philippine tourism industry, women were found to dominate the industry where their presence has become more apparent during the pandemic. As suggested, tourism work is seen as women’s work in the Philippines. Women were found to be

visible in occupations that tend to involve responsibilities that are seen as extensions or reflections of their traditionally assigned work including care work, hospitality, and administrative management, among others which may be attributed to the cultural contexts they belong in. While women's participation remains focused on maintaining gender-assigned work, evidence suggests that a gradual shift is observable in some areas where women can take on occupations that were deemed traditionally men-dominated (i.e., tour operation, diving, etc.) and vice-versa. Thus, it can be deduced that tourism, when managed effectively, can be a precursor to improving gender relations in communities and societies.

In terms of women's empowerment in the industry, the experiences of women interviewed for this study suggest the following:

First, in terms of psychological empowerment, tourism was found to have a positive impact where women were reported to be happy, fulfilled, proud, and content with their work. Their participation in tourism was also found to facilitate the development of their existing skills while rediscovering their new abilities.

Second, in terms of economic empowerment, tourism was found to render mixed experiences. For one, some women reported that through their engagement in tourism, they were able to help their own families and communities financially, while also regaining a sense of economic independence and autonomy that aided in negotiating their roles within their households and communities. Meanwhile, others suggested that the seasonality of tourism activities in their areas influences their ability to depend on the income derived from their work in the industry.

Third, in terms of political empowerment, tourism was found to be an industry that enables and allows women to take up leadership and decision-making positions. As suggested, women's presence in these positions has a positive impact in terms of influencing other women to follow suit.

Fourth, in terms of social empowerment, tourism was found to improve women's external empowerment—their relations and social standing within communities, while its impact on internal empowerment remains contentious—their relations with their own families and households. Entrenched gender-assigned roles (i.e., determining who is primarily responsible for productive and reproductive work) in some areas remain to influence women's social empowerment.

Following the investigation of the relationship between women's participation in tourism and its contribution to their empowerment and ability to promote community development. This study redefined the meaning of empowerment from one that is focused on a more individualistic approach to a more communal one. Departing from existing definitions of empowerment, this study redefines the concept to one that refers to women's ability to take charge of themselves and to use that ability to influence positive development in their respective communities. This conceptualization of empowerment therefore supports the paradigm shift suggesting women's capacity to be active partners in achieving developmental outcomes.

Building on these insights, this study illustrated how women's participation in the industry can facilitate the development within their communities—by influencing other women to be active in productive work, engaging other marginalized members of communities, and inspiring younger generations to take up economic spaces and leadership positions, among others.

8.2. Research Contribution

8.2.1. Theory

This study complements the growing literature investigating women's involvement in the tourism industry. More specifically, this study contributes to the dearth of literature examining the experiences of women situated in developing economies such as the Philippines. As suggested in the literature review conducted in this study, while there is an emerging literature on women in the country, very few have explored women working in the tourism industry. Within the context of the international academic literature, this study extends and builds on existing studies that examine women's participation by analyzing how this further contributes to community development.

Conceptually, an examination of the relationship among the concepts of participation, empowerment, and community development remains underexplored, and this study aims to contribute to that. In extending these widely used concepts to practice, this study contextualized them to the realities women experience in the country. Thus, an in-depth understanding of women's involvement and contribution to developmental initiatives was made.

The existing theoretical definition of empowerment was also re-examined in this study by taking off from existing perspectives suggesting its multi-faceted nature. That is, beyond economic aspects, empowerment further entails psychological, social, and political aspects for genuine

empowerment to accrue. Underpinning this conceptualization, this study further extends this by suggesting that empowerment goes beyond the qualities of a woman as an individual but encompasses their ability to facilitate and instigate positive changes to other women and other members of their communities thus contributing to the achievement of community development.

In terms of women's studies, this research sheds light on the issues and challenges women continue to face while working in a country dubbed as Asia's top gender-equal country (i.e., the Philippines) and in an industry (i.e., tourism) that has facilitated women's involvement in economic activities. Following the insights from this study, it can be deduced that continued research on women's experiences across cultures, industries, and contexts needs to be explored to improve their statuses in societies.

8.2.2. Practice

As earlier suggested, the case of the Philippines proves crucial as it is recognized as the most gender-equal country in the Asian region. Thus, an explication of the actual experiences of women in the country is useful in better understanding what lessons can be learned to further enhance women's welfare and empowerment. As earlier suggested, women should not be treated as a homogenous group as they prove to be diverse in terms of their attitudes, interests, motivations, and behavior, among others. Thus, a context-based examination is necessary.

Globally, the interest in promoting women's empowerment and the larger aims of gender equality continues to grow as the governments work together in achieving the UN SDGs alongside other developmental aims. Yet, much still needs to be addressed to ensure that we succeed in achieving them by 2030 and beyond. Within the region, initial efforts have been made to put in place policies and mechanisms that support women's advancement alongside promoting gender equality (i.e., ASEAN GAD toolkit on tourism), yet there remains scant information about women's involvement in the industry. This study therefore aims to contribute to filling in this gap. Within the Philippines, existing initiatives and policies supporting women remain to be at their infancy thus requiring more in-depth information and data on the realities that women face in the tourism industry and society as a whole. The insights and recommendations derived from this study can therefore assist in informing governing bodies and policymakers in creating evidenced-based approaches to further enhancing women's empowerment and welfare in the country. As suggested in this study, policies aimed at promoting women's increased involvement and their empowerment need to account for the contexts, cultures, and nuances that influence their

participation in industries. A “one-size-fits-all” gender-sensitive policy or program may not be effective in addressing their issues and concerns. Thus, communities and governments alike must obtain a more in-depth and critical approach (i.e., better understanding of the situation of women) to ensure its effectiveness.

8.3. Limitations and Directions for Future Study

This study contributes to further deepening the knowledge about the realities of women working in the Philippine tourism industry. While the experiences of women examined in this study prove essential in furthering the theoretical and practical initiatives aimed at enhancing women’s welfare, the insights derived from this study should not be generalized given the limits posed in conducting it: First, the study is primarily focused on the experiences of women in three key tourism destinations in the Philippines: Metro Manila, Cebu, and Palawan. The study was further focused on examining the experiences of middle-class majority women in the country. Following the limits posed by the sampling method used, the experiences of select women were examined. Second, as the study was conducted mostly during the pandemic, the approach (i.e., virtual interviews) and the impressions shared in the study may have been influenced by the immediate impact of the pandemic and the re-opening of tourism destinations. Third, given the reliance of the study on qualitative data, validation of the findings by using other approaches may be necessary.

Following these limitations, the author recommends directions for future study:

Studies exploring other tourism destinations in the Philippines may enhance and validate the insights derived from this initial research conducted. This study can be further expanded in various ways: within the Philippine context, future studies may look at the experiences of women in other areas where culture remains distinct and highly pronounced (i.e., Mindanao region). The experiences of women belonging to the informal sector and ethnic minorities may be examined by future studies as well. These studies may further examine how culture can influence the gender relations and women’s involvement in economic activities. Furthermore, future studies may explore other tourism areas and other areas in tourism where women were found to be concentrated, including the informal tourism sector, accommodation sector, and community-based tourism destinations. Beyond the tourism sector, future studies may also explore the experiences of women in other industries including agriculture, retail, etc. where women’s presence prove substantial.

Comparative studies examining the experiences of women in other economies may also be explored. This may include the experiences of women in the tourism industries of other ASEAN countries, East Asian countries (i.e., Japan, South Korea, etc.) or in the wider Asia-Pacific region. Future studies may further validate the findings from this study by exploring other methodological approaches to examining women's experiences. This can range from conducting surveys to participant observations and focus group discussions which may further enrich the understanding on the topic.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1. *Informed Consent*

Women Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development in Tourism Areas in the Philippines

INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Greetings!

You have been identified as a possible survey respondent for this research titled: “**Women Participation, Empowerment, and Community Development in Tourism Areas in the Philippines**”. This study will serve as the basis of the dissertation conducted by Eylla Laire M. Gutierrez of the Ritsumeikan Asia Pacific University under the supervision of Prof. Kazem Vafadari. The details of the research are outlined below:

1. Purpose of the study

The study aims to:

- a. Understand how and in what ways women participate in tourism activities;
- b. Examine whether tourism participation contributes to the empowerment of women;
- c. Determine how women can act as active agents facilitating community development in tourism destinations;
- d. Identify the barriers and opportunities for women’s participation in tourism;
- e. Assess existing policies and institutions that influence the tourism and community development.

2. Procedure and Confidentiality

Participation in this data collecting procedure is voluntary. You may choose to discontinue at any time without question or any consequences. Rest assured that the data gathered from this interview will be treated with utmost confidentiality. Your identity as a respondent will remain unidentified as the results will be reported in aggregated form. The researcher acknowledges its responsibilities under Republic Act No. 10173, also known as the Data Privacy of 2012.

For any questions and concerns, please contact the Ms. Eylla Laire M. Gutierrez at gu21e6qa@apu.ac.jp.

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

By proceeding with this interview, I confirm that:

- I understand the information provided in this consent form;
- I am aware of that I can decide to opt out or discontinue my participation in this research activity;
- All my questions about the research have been answered clearly;
- I voluntarily agree to take part in this study; and
- A copy of this form has been made available to me.

Proceed with the interview:

Yes

No

Name:

Signature:

Date:

Appendix 2. Notes from Validation Workshop

Suggestions for current study

- Emphasis on the active role of the Philippines in integrating international conventions and norms into domestic policies (i.e., on women)
- Trace the historical evolution of policies related to women in the Philippines
- Synthesize the gaps in existing policies with the findings of the study
- (If available) Justification for choosing research locales beyond tourism arrivals (i.e., contribution of tourism to local economy of destinations)

Suggestions for future studies

- Translation of insights into toolkits and policy instruments to support women at the local level
 - Inclusion of informal sector in the analysis
 - Recommend ways on how the approaches used in the study can be replicated/validated in other industries in the country
 - Expansion of studies to other tourism destinations in the Philippines
 - Creation of policy notes for easier read
 - Explore macroanalysis on women's experiences in tourism
-

Appendix 3. *Profile of Attendees of the Validation Workshop*

Gender	Age	Occupation	Expertise
Female	52	Consultant/Professor	Tourism
Female	55	Professor	Gender and Tourism
Female	45	Practitioner	Tourism
Male	61	Government Official/Researcher	Macroeconomics
Male	58	Government Official /Researcher	Labor economics
Female	37	Development Practitioner/Researcher	Gender and Agriculture
Male	28	Researcher	Microeconomics
Male	62	Government Official	Development Studies
Male	30	Development Practitioner	Inclusive Development
Female	32	Practitioner	Tourism

Appendix 4. *Interview Questions*

PART I: Personal Information

Question	Notes
Name (Optional)	
Age	
Educational Background	
Current Work or Sources of Income	
Work/Business/Sources of Income History	
Number of Dependents	
Marital Status	
Household Structure and Sources of Income	
Residence and Place of Origin	
Other Questions	

PART II: Participation of Women in Tourism

Question	Notes
What is your current work/ business in the tourism industry? Please identify the sector involved in (i.e., accommodation, F&B, transportation, tours, etc.).	
Describe the work/business you are engaged in.	

When did you start with your current work/business? How did you find out about the work/business? How did you become involved in tourism? Motivation to engage in tourism.	
How big is your business/work? (i.e., number of workers/employees, how many estimated customers per day, how much was the capital)	

PART III: Perceptions on Empowerment

Question	Notes
Would you say you are happy/satisfied with your work in tourism?	
Do you think that tourism allows you to develop your self-confidence, skills, knowledge, etc.?	
Are you satisfied with the income you receive from your work in tourism? Is your income enough to support your and your family's needs? Can you decide how you spend your income?	
Do you feel that your family/community supports your work in tourism?	
How does your work/business affect your family?	

Are you aware of any government programs on women?	
Do you feel that you have a platform to raise your concerns/issues with the government?	
General perceptions on women working for tourism (i.e., observations, empowerment).	
Have you ever ask the government for any assistance?	
What do you wish the government will do to assist you as a woman in the informal tourism sector?	
Challenges/Issues in Tourism	
Did you face any gender-based discrimination/harassment on your work/business?	
Did you have any observations regarding the gender dynamics in tourism (i.e., preference of customers/government)?	
Are there any issues/roadblocks hindering women's participation in tourism (i.e., psychologically, socially, politically, economically)?	
How do you think can these be resolved (i.e., policies, strategies, activities, etc.)?	

PART IV: Tourism/Community Development

Question	Notes
Do you think that your work contributes to the development of tourism in Cebu/Palawan/Metro Manila?	
Do you think that your work contributes to the development of your community?	
Do you have any aspirations for your work/business?	
Are there any programs/initiatives from the government that can help you achieve your aspirations?	

Appendix 5. Sample Field Notes

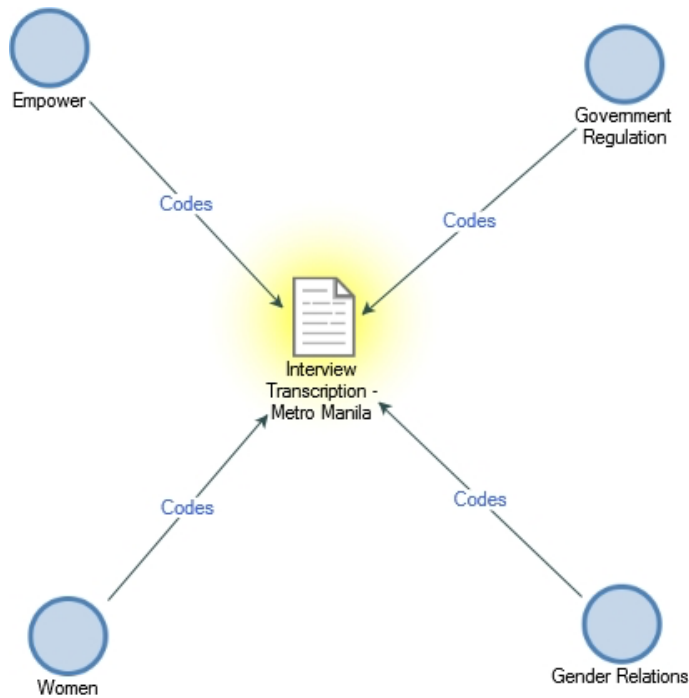
Metro Manila	Cebu	Palawan
<p>NCR- gender relations, cliché, stakeholders In hotel shift from female-led front officers to mix male and female; housekeeping, mix, most of them are female, waiters and servers mixed. Before predominantly, male. Associations are female-led; LGBT tour operated; misconception, LGBT tends to work in tourism Tour guides, 55% are female, serice providers pedicab drivers male</p> <p>Very evident in NCR; frontline services in airports—DOT personnel are women</p> <p>Warmth and hospitality connected to females; most of ojets and applicants in female. Consistency of tourism applicants are women 80%; entry level employees; Discrepancy on careers (male vs female) – manpower schools</p>	<p>Women are considered to be employed in more established and professional settings (i.e., offices) Most preferred to be interviewed via Zoom Respondents had good working relations with the government</p>	<p>Preferred to be visited at the destination Women in communities quite hesitant to be interviewed individually, preferred to be with others Women were not that connected with government</p>
<p>Accreditation portal;</p> <p>A lot of upper management levels dominantly female led, general manager on male; luxury brands global brands tend to have male managers; 700; Tourism officers female led</p> <p>Competencies and skills not stereotyping in NCR; not assumed role of women anymore; personal choice</p>	<p>Preferred to be visited at the destination Have problems with internet and mobile connectivity Respondents were well connected with the local government Dominance of women in tourism-related businesses (apparent)</p>	<p>Gender relations not that relevant</p>
<p>NCR, context, 40% is service encompasses beautification, aesthetic, accommodations, hotels; women who mostly do the grunt work, mostly on the grassroots;</p> <p>Suman mostly women delicacy in Muntipula (kababaihan ng Muntinlupa) ; Balut making my males; mostly in NCR, contribution is huge—small and micro medium enterprises are women-led</p>	<p>Double edged sword,</p> <p>Women tend to have the best kinds of idea, creative ideas; practical ideas; empower women in services sector contribute to tourism development, predominatly female-led , evident on the ground; skills set and opportunities when to exploit</p>	<p>Social yes Philippines female as ilaw ng tahanan, the functions that a women perform in the house, in the workplace and in between is so huge</p> <p>Motherhood is uniquely females, decision to make economics, social, political,</p> <p>Psychologicall-if I am occupying this decision, theres so many stressors in the industry not just in tourism; our own worst enemies; not with others, not with themselves, to be good at everything, motherhood is a decision, that you can be paid</p>
<p>Decision-making is with women; reliance on women; provide leadership</p>		

Appendix 6. Sample NVivo Results



Word Cloud for Interview Transcript – MM1

Source: NVivo 12



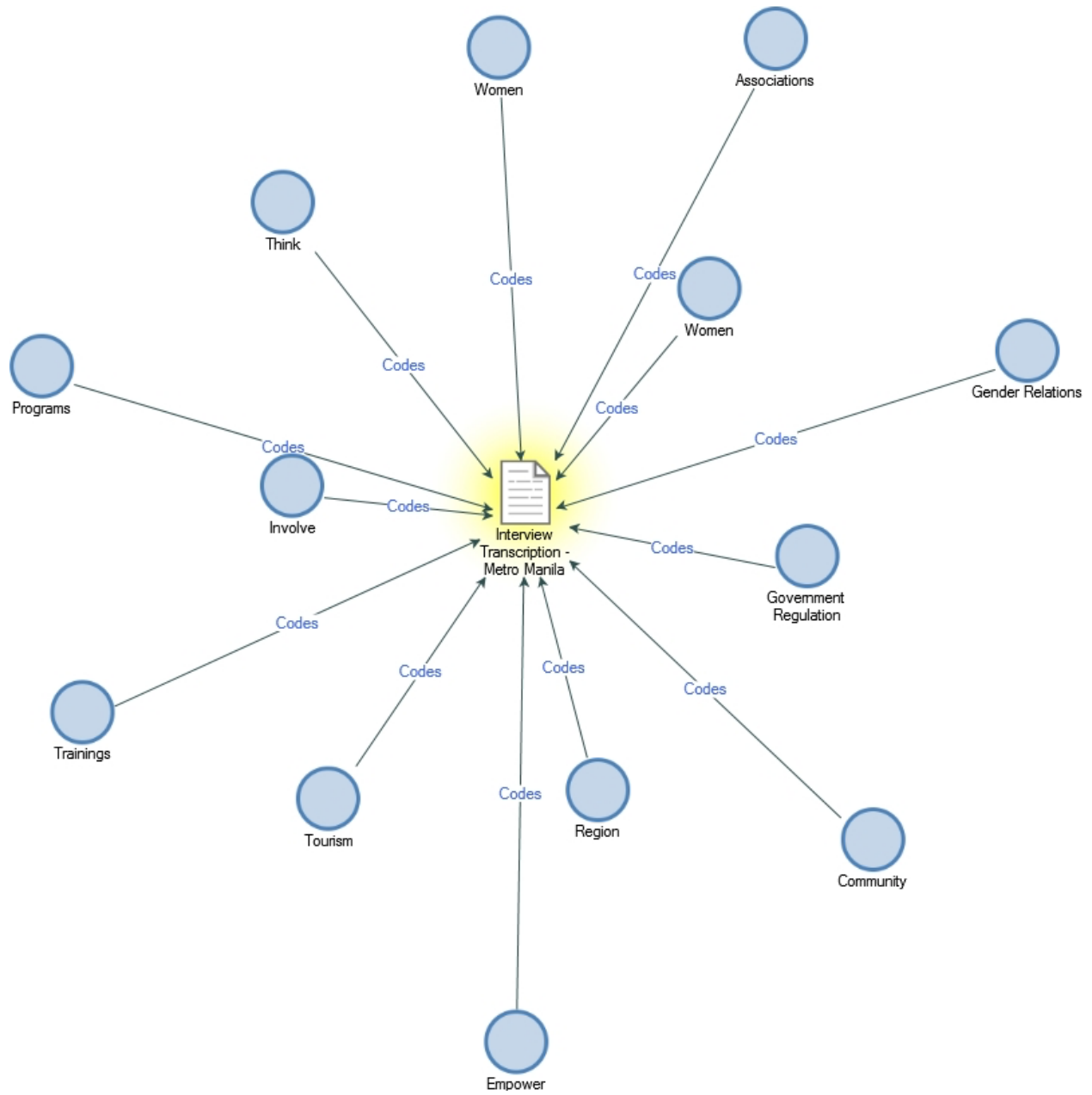
Coding Diagram – MM1

Source: NVivo 12



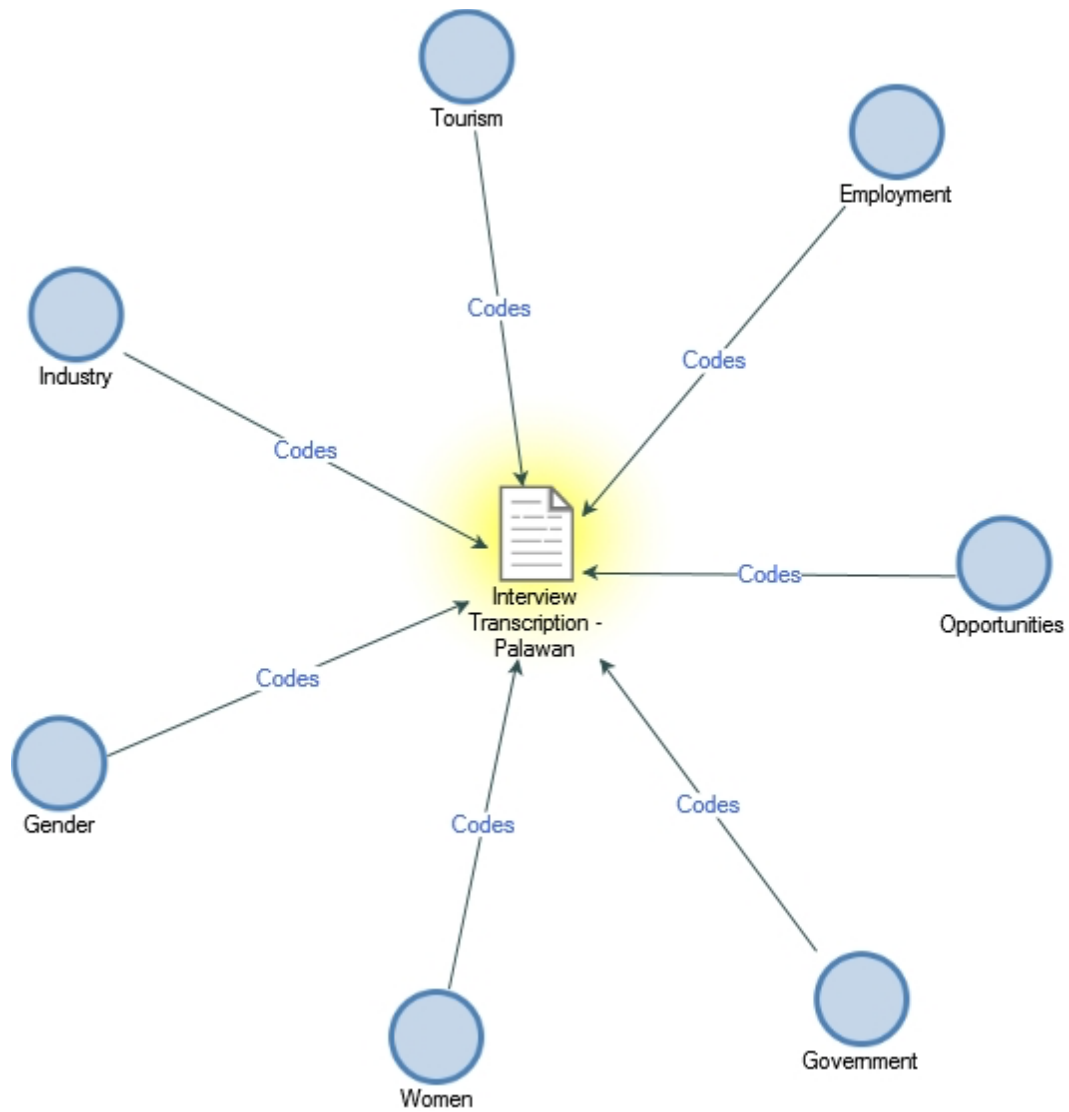
Word Cloud for Interview Transcript – Cebu

Source: NVivo 12



Coding Diagram for Interview Transcript – Cebu

Source: NVivo 12



Coding Diagram for Interview Transcript – Palawan

Source: NVivo 12