

Cracking the Glass Ceiling: The Case of Women's Empowerment in Promoting Village Tourism Development in Malang, Indonesia

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Abstract

This study analyses how the Family Empowerment and Welfare Mobilization (PKK) team plays a significant role in increasing village tourism development in Pujon Kidul, Malang Regency, East Java Province, Indonesia. We highlighted women's empowerment by categorising the social, economic, and political dimensions that contribute to the success. Using the case study method, we investigated the phenomenon in tourism development from 2011 to 2023 (12 years). Data was collected through in-depth interviews with key stakeholders to reveal the extent to which women have been "cracking their glass ceiling" in the three dimensions. The finding reveals that the PKK team could accommodate women's interests and actualise their aspirations and initiatives by promoting community movement (social dimension), allowing them to join SMEs and upskilling programs (economic dimension), and involving them in drafting village development plans and budgeting (political dimension). This study contributes to the literature on women's empowerment, especially in the social, economic, and political dimensions of tourism development.

Keywords:

gender; women's empowerment; tourism; village development

Introduction

Women have encountered multiple obstacles or limitations that refrain them from progressing in various sociocultural, economic, and political sectors, putting them in the confines of a "glass ceiling". Indeed, the term glass ceiling refers to gender-related obstacles or limitations that prevent someone from achieving progress (Lockwood, 2004) socially, economically, and politically. Researchers such as Sharma and Sehrawat (2014), Madichie (2009), and Bandle and Wilhelm (2007) identified these barriers differently, comprising, among other things, education level, attainment, and experience, which inhibit progress among women due to societal perceptions. In any

case, the confinement prevents women from achieving significant leadership positions or influencing the male-dominated social spheres. Thus, some aim to raise awareness, garner support, and take practical action to overcome the barrier, "cracking the glass ceiling" to create gender equality and fair opportunities for everyone.

The Indonesian government has issued a village fund program at the national level, which provides substantial funding to be managed by the village government in accordance with the directions stipulated in the village fund's budgeting regulations. The funding aims to, among other things, develop tourism for economic growth in villages, and, in specific

Then, we identified women's glass ceiling for each indicator based on the actual condition at the village level. In the previous research, women's glass ceiling discourses are mostly concerned with women's limitations at top-level companies, universities, or parties. The limitations at the village level have not received enough attention despite the much-needed empowerment programs.

Moreover, rural areas need more government attention in terms of empowering women and providing a system that supports equality. Villages are prone to gender disparity as they uphold traditional values that hinder efforts to achieve gender equality. Therefore, this study aims to measure to what extent women are involved in village tourism development in three aspects: economic, social, and political, and how women are able to push boundaries in order to achieve success in tourism programs.

Literature Review

Women's Empowerment and Tourism

The concept of empowerment relates to the effort to gain more access and control towards resources by challenging the current system (Batliwala, 1994, p. 130). The empowerment concept also relates to the involvement of people and communities in daily activities (Abou-Shouk et al., 2021). In this regard, some people may have the opportunity to be involved, and others may not have access to some programs or receive some benefits from certain resources. In the context of women's empowerment, the obstacles are associated with patriarchal values, which are particularly pronounced in village communities. Therefore, women's empowerment aims to increase opportunities for women to access, connect, and be involved in some projects, events, or programs.

Previous studies have highlighted the involvement of women in tourism, which had a positive role in enhancing tourism activities. Such involvement also provides an

opportunity for women to gain economic and social benefits, which may lead to economic and social independence (Duffy et al., 2015). In this case, women may be able to negotiate their new gender roles and identities in society. For instance, Kabeer (2003) found that women's involvement in tourism has resulted in more opportunities and improved economic and social welfare. A similar study conducted by Movono and Dahles (2017) also links women's empowerment and tourism development in an indigenous Fijian community. The result shows that local women obtained economic, psychological, social, and political empowerment through tourism-based entrepreneurship. Scheyvens (1999) also mentioned that women empowerment comprises four dimensions, i.e., economic, psychological, social, and political, emphasising the importance of local communities having some control over and sharing the benefits of tourism development.

Likewise, Tinker (2006) revealed that tourism could significantly contribute to women's empowerment and increase their economic status. In Turkey, Çiçek et al. (2017) found that tourism has transformed the traditions in society by allowing women to enter the businesses and utilise the opportunities that tourism has provided, hence empowering women in economic, social, and individual terms. In this context, guest houses, other family-run tourism businesses, and homemade handicrafts are typical examples of women's entrepreneurship activities in the tourism and hospitality sector. These activities empower women economically and socially in their families and societies.

Past studies have shown that women's empowerment has become crucial for tourism development. Conversely, tourism development contributes to women's empowerment. Tourism development will be successful if it promotes empowerment and if local communities have some control over their tourism development

and fairly share benefits. Tourism provides new job opportunities, creates new business opportunities, develops skills, and manages resources and utilisation in rural areas.

The following sections outline the three dimensions of women's empowerment in tourism: economic, social, and political empowerment. Firstly, tourism projects can unite community members and strengthen collaborative social relationships (Strzelecka et al., 2016). Tourism activities increase the social interaction between residents and build camaraderie (Boley & McGehee, 2014). The participation of women in tourism activity, according to Arroyo et al. (2019), could elevate the social status of women in their society and may increase a sense of community. Thus, this empowerment brings about positive views on tourism development.

Secondly, economic empowerment involves women in the management of financial resources, including money, financial decisions, information, and knowledge. According to Abou-Shouk et al. (2021), economic empowerment refers to the economic benefits and access to productive resources by providing economic opportunities and equal distribution of resources. Tourism development benefits not only a single individual but also the community. Boley et al. (2014) stated that the community are strongly affected by the economic profits of tourism, even if they are not working in the tourism sector. Tourism could contribute to income generation for the community, especially women. Figueroa-Domecq et al. (2020) found that tourism is an economic sector that can empower women due to its diverse, dynamic, and flexible nature.

Moreover, according to the UNWTO (2019), tourism has the potential to empower women through income-generating opportunities in small and larger-scale tourism firms. Tourism activities that generate income for women may help eradicate poverty. Subsequently, this will also impact gender inequality and

the income gap in society. However, achieving gender equality requires support from policy implementation aiming to achieve economic growth and prosperity (Duflo, 2012). When women have access to economic resources through tourism, they can change other areas of their lives because economic empowerment is a vital component of women's empowerment.

Thirdly, political empowerment has a close relationship with the distribution of power (Pratto, 2016). Involving the local community in decision-making activities can empower them politically (Boley et al., 2015). When community members are involved in the decision-making, they will also be more inclined to manage tourism development (Boley & McGehee, 2014). In the context of women's empowerment and tourism development, women have the opportunity to participate in tourism activities, including tourism planning processes. Therefore, allowing women to participate in tourism activities can encourage positive changes in decision-making processes.

Nevertheless, the literature on women's studies only concerned that tourism provided a positive contribution to women's empowerment and vice versa. They highlight the multiple aspects of empowerment and the contribution of women to tourism development. While previous research focuses on the relationship between women's empowerment and tourism, this research delves deeper into the empowerment dimensions, i.e., social, political, and economic dimensions, and their contribution to the "cracking" of the glass ceiling.

The Glass Ceiling Concept

The glass ceiling is frequently associated with challenges that hinder women from achieving higher positions in social, industrial, educational, and governmental organisations (Lockwood, 2004). The glass ceiling is also illustrated as an invisible barrier which weighs women down in lower-middle positions

(Chadambuka, 2022). Gender stereotypes frequently become the main barrier for women to grow in their careers (Ali & Rasheed, 2021). Many organisations tend to be male-centric, believing that women are more emotional than men, less energetic, and incapable of handling organisational and administrative tasks. Lewellyn and Muller-Kahle (2020) found that the absence of women in top board positions is influenced by an organisation's values, attitudes, and beliefs.

Folke and Rickne (2016) categorised the glass ceiling into four inequalities: conditional vertical, bottom-to-top mobility, career advancement, and divergent career trajectories. The glass ceiling results in women's subordination in organisations and inequality in career progression (Carvalho et al., 2019). A previous study by Bazazo et al. (2017) measures the glass ceiling faced by women in tourism based on five potential barriers, which include structural, societal, governmental, situational and personal barriers. Meanwhile, Carvalho et al. (2018) explored the invisible barriers experienced by women managers in tourism organisations by assuming that gender issues do not exist. However, their results suggest the opposite, where women still experienced gender discrimination at the top positions (above the glass ceiling). The gender issues include women's competency, ideal image, and reputation. According to Remington and Kitterlin-Lynch (2018), systematic barriers faced by women, particularly to advancing their leadership in the tourism workplace, include cultural, educational, legal, and social barriers. Nevertheless, previous studies are more concerned with the tourism industry in travel and hotels, which are mostly located in urban areas. This condition is different from the concept of village tourism, where, according to *Sapta Pesona* elements, community development and participation become more important to improve village tourism. Therefore, this paper aims to measure the glass ceiling by using

three indicators, i.e., social, economic and politic dimensions. We propose three barriers in those three aspects as follows: 1) barriers to gaining strategic positions in social life, 2) barriers to obtaining financial advantages, and 3) barriers to joining administrative positions in government to be part of decision-makers.

Methods

This research employs a case study method to provide deep insight and understanding of TP-PKK's role in empowering women and their effort in cracking the glass ceiling related to village tourism development (Heale & Twycross, 2018). A case study method is appropriate for understanding "how" and "why" the case happens and the contextual conditions (Starman, 2013). The simple case study collects data not only about the current situation but also from historical perspectives, including phenomenon, actors, and context-setting (Thomas, 2011). We collect data about TP-PKK's role since village tourism started until the present time.

The three approaches to investigate this case are collecting secondary data, direct observations, and in-depth interviews. Firstly, we researched documents related to village tourism that provide information about when it was started, its programs, the strategies, financial reports, and the role of TP-PKK. Secondly, using direct observations, we visited research locations to investigate the community activities related to village tourism. The observation also includes identifying primary jobs, local traditions and values, and key stakeholders involved in village tourism development. The observations also focus on TP-PKK's contribution to tourism development from 2011 to 2023. Thirdly, we conducted in-depth interviews with six key stakeholders, especially those with broad information about TP-PKK's contribution to women's empowerment in social, economic, and political dimensions. Table 1 provides more information

Then, the solution is very simple. If I could not bring the goods out of the village, then I would bring the buyers in." (Village Head, Personal Communication, February 06, 2023).

Initially, the concept of a village tourism "rice field cafe" was widely criticised because people were sceptical about rice fields being made into tourist attractions. However, as time passed, the criticism began to diminish as more and more tourists came:

"Changing the people's mindset and understanding of village tourism potential is also not easy. People even laughed when I conveyed the vision and mission. In their mind, what tourists see is Batu only. Pujon Kidul wants to be changed like Batu. It is impossible. We do not answer with words but with work and performance. We prove what it looks like. As soon as we started the business, we got one or two guests. [The community thinks] "Oh, is this what the village head wants?" Yes, this. I will not change it like Batu City. Instead, we will prioritise local wisdom by how the community becomes the owners, actors, and managers." (Village Head, Personal Communication, February 06, 2023).

Integrated Policies Leading to Tourism Villages

The policy strategy implemented by the village government in building village tourism is one of the critical success factors. The village government understands that the village only has a small budget allocated for developing village tourism. Therefore, the strategy is to improve community wealth to realise the significance of *Sapta Pesona* Village:

"Regarding village tourism, it has all been taken care of. It starts from health, infrastructure, cleanliness, beauty, and everything else. *Sapta Pesona* is a safe area; without village

tourism, the village needs security. Without village tourism, we need a proper administration. The plan is to improve the village tourism to be clean, beautiful, hospitable, and memorable. If all that *Sapta Pesona* does, we can do it without talking about village tourism, right?" (Village Head, Personal Communication, February 06, 2023).

By concentrating development on each part of the *Sapta Pesona*, the village government has gradually raised the quality of the tourism village while having a broad and sustainable impact on one another.

Empowering Women in the Development of Village Tourism

There are at least three essential indicators for women's involvement in the development of village tourism: social, economic, and political empowerment. These three indicators are prerequisites for how women crack the glass ceiling and overcome the obstacles to their roles in the social, economic, and political spheres.

The local village government may consider TP-PKK organisation as a potential actor to succeed in village tourism programs. Pujon Village Head has embraced women's groups through the PKK organisation since the beginning of the development when many village residents underestimated the idea of village tourism. TP-PKK and women's community have spearheaded the success of village government policies to achieve *Sapta Pesona*, such as beauty, openness, and cleanliness for tourism destinations. TP-PKK promotes village programs on horticultural activities, which ensure women's participation in planting flowers and trees and opening sales stalls in front of houses. Women are vital in mobilising the community in various socio-economic activities such as competitions and cooperation. According to the Head of the

café Sawah (the rice field café). The initiative is to open the outlet, which was conveyed by TP-PKK when the MUSRENBANG (Development Planning Meeting) was held. As stated by the Chairperson of PKK, "At that time, PKK proposed establishing a souvenir centre at Café Sawah where each RT was required to sell at least one product at the souvenir centre".

Women's access to capital resources and technology allows them to establish income-generating businesses. The local village government supports capital with village funds through Pokdarwis. A partnership was built between the women and Pokdarwis. The joint venture was obliged to market the products produced by the women's group at the Café Sawah's souvenir centre. However, the marketing of the products is still around the village tourism area, targeting tourists. The marketing of these products still only fulfils the demands of the souvenir centres. The women have no intention to market their products outside the village. They have yet to consider expanding their business outside the region or island, or for export. The obstacle is the low competence in the use of information technology. Marketing through digital platforms is not a familiar concept for rural women. As a result, they rely on direct sales at local food outlets. Thus, collaborative efforts from various parties are needed to overcome the technological obstacle.

The government, community organisations, educational institutions, and the private sector have worked together to increase rural women's access to technology and provide training and technical support. This could change the culture and community perceptions of women's role in using information technology. However, the entrenched patriarchal culture in society limits the use of information technology because women are often considered unskilled in technology. The Pokdarwis management said, "Even though TP-PKK organises online marketing training for those who work with

universities to survive in the pandemic era."

Nonetheless, the village tourism development still has a socio-economic impact on women's groups, especially among homemakers who are members of the cooking group at Cafe Sawah. In addition, many homemakers work as employees at the Pujon Kidul (PIKID) Dairy Souvenir Centre. At least now, 13 females members become members of the MSME community group.

The local village government has also focused on women's health to reduce stunting rates and other programs. Apart from empowerment in the economic sector, policies related to women's and children's health become the targeted sectors of the village budget. According to a female health worker in the village, she received more attention than her colleagues in other villages:

"Funds for health are sourced from the village's original income from Café Sawah. Every year, the Village Health Centre (Ponkesdes) proposes funds of over IDR 150 million. This year, around IDR 173 million was allocated with the following details: for 1,000 days of HPK and 90 days of pregnant women, administration of iron supplement tablets for teenage girls entering their menstrual period, and for counselling at the health workers for PMT. I submitted it to the village. I made a budget plan. Then, I submitted it to the village during the MUSRENBANGDES. These applications are usually rejected. But so far, no one has been refused health funds because health is a priority in the village, so everyone immediately approved it. The Ponkesdes here are the most complete, which used to be called the Polindes. When the Polindes only served maternity and only provided midwives, it has been expanded to include midwives and nurses and visits to healthy people." (Village Health Worker, Personal

Communication, February 06, 2023).

The village government's effort to reduce stunting involves providing different assistance to overcome stunting, such as providing milk for pregnant women. PMT also arranges to counsel once a week for 90 days, supplements, tablets (blood boosters), ACT, and KEK and assists pre-marriage women, particularly those with high-risk pregnancies.

Women's political empowerment indirectly follows the results of socio-economic empowerment in village development. This includes the involvement of TP-PKK in budget preparation, starting from the MUSRENBANGDES to the RKPDES, as stated by the Bumdes Manager:

"Women are involved in Bumdes as administrative directors and staff in offices. Homemakers can also influence the RTs and participate in the inter-RT environmental competition organised by Pokdarwis. Likewise, village health workers also proposed the Ponkesdes Budget Plan (RAB)." (Bumdes Manager, Personal Communication, February 06, 2023)

Women's access to village decision-making is significant when village women are involved in allocating funds and organising socio-economic activities. For example, when TP-PKK and the women proposed to hold training on knitting bags (BENTEL), decoupage, woven bags, and batik to the Cooperatives and Industry and Trade Offices.

Women Cracking the Glass-Ceiling

The development of a village needs to fulfil equality aspects with all stakeholders of the society being involved in the planning, implementation, and evaluation. The government in charge of village development should include minority and women groups to acknowledge and accommodate their

aspirations. However, due to several conditions, such as the entrenched patriarchal view, women are often excluded from the village's development process. The social construction of gender roles has given rise to passivity, parochial women, and discrimination against women's groups in the social, economic, and political spheres. As a result, women are marginalised, even though women can also become agents of social change in the village. Therefore, women's inclusion is needed so that they can play a more significant role socio-economically and politically.

Social and economic empowerment helps women to maximise their potential. It enhances the well-being of families and society. Increasing women's welfare allows them more access to resources and services, including education, health, and fair employment opportunities. Thus, empowered women have implications for improving family health and well-being. When women have more significant income and control over family resources, including food and level of education, they can encourage social inclusion and engage in socio-political activities. As a result, economic growth will increase as women have fair opportunities to work, lead businesses, and help families and communities.

Furthermore, in the decision-making process, village women can raise their voices for women's interests in village decision-making to develop their skills in the allocation of village funds. This means that women from the village can influence the budgeting to become more gender-friendly, which is often referred to the gender budgeting. The political empowerment of women can also support environmental sustainability because women are the guardians of the environment. When economically empowered women become essential actors in promoting sustainable practices, women are socially, economically, and politically empowered to help achieve sustainable and inclusive development.

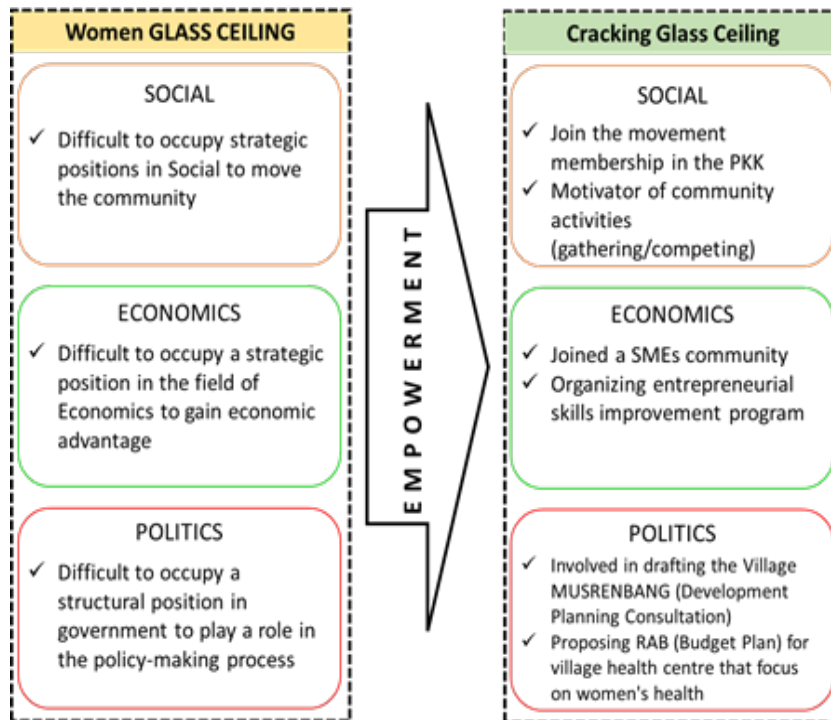


Figure 1. The cracking of the glass ceiling by the village women
 Source: Authors' Interpretation

In the Pujon Kidul Tourism Village, women have the local knowledge, wisdom, and experiences to play an active role in village life, such as developing tourism. This contribution can shape the design and implementation of village development programs relevant to the needs of village communities. Women can channel their potential and organise themselves through PKK to be involved in village development equally and fairly.

From the social, economic, and political empowerment in developing the Pujon Kidul Tourism Village, women made strenuous efforts to break through the obstacles that have confined them. Figure 1 shows that, first, socially, the village women have attained a significant social position. They are community mobilisers supporting tourism for village development programs. Secondly, they also have an important position in developing community SMEs and are actively proposing upskilling programs to develop central businesses in the Pujon Kidul tourism village. Thirdly, in the political aspect, they have gained

a good bargaining position to propose and speak for their interests. Through TP-PKK, they can propose budgeting and program proposals that care about women's welfare, including concern for the health of mothers and children.

The village women can maintain harmony and create cohesiveness, and they are even found in many female leaders. However, several aspects still indicate that women cannot break the glass ceiling completely, limiting their space for movement. Firstly, in strategic social positions such as the head of the RT (sub-village), it is still challenging for women to occupy the social construction that has been assumed by men for so long. Secondly, even though many women are involved in MSMEs, MSMEs chairpersons, and Bumdesadministrators, males are still dominating in numbers, meaning that women are empowered but have yet to reach the top positions. These barriers are closely related to the political aspect, where women still need to have strategic positions, such as becoming the chairperson of UMKM, the head of Bumdes,

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Appendices
Abbreviations

ACT	Quick action in responding to problems
ADWI	The 2021 Indonesia Tourism Village Award is an event for awarding tourism villages that have achievements with the assessment criteria from the Ministry of Tourism and Creative Economy.
Bentel	Knit
Bumdes	Village Owned Enterprises
KEK	Chronic Energy Deficiency is a condition in which a person experiences continuous fatigue even though he has rested.
MUSRENBANG	deliberation forum among policy stakeholders in order to develop development plans
MUSRENBANGDES	deliberation forum among policy stakeholders in order to develop village development plans
PKK	the Family Empowerment and Welfare
PMT	Provision of Supplementary Food
Pokdarwis	a tourism awareness driving group and Sapta Pesona in the regional environment in tourist destinations, as well as being a partner of the central government and district and city regional governments in efforts to realize and develop tourism awareness in the regions
PUKID	Pujon Kidul (name of Village)
RAB	Budget plan
RKPDES	deliberation forum among policy stakeholders in order to develop village development plans
SAPTA PESONA	Sapta Pesona are the seven elements contained in every tourism product and are used as a benchmark for improving the quality of tourism products
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
Decoupage	one of a kind craft cutting
TP-PKK	the Family Empowerment and Welfare Mobilization Team
UMKM	MSMEs - Micro, Small & Medium Enterprises
UN	United Nation
