



Empowering women in sustainable tourism development: Unleashing motivation and competence in Mandalika's super priority destination

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Abstract

The hierarchy of human needs is composed of five levels, ranging from basic physiological demands to needs related to self-actualization. In Mandalika as well as other parts of the world, women are becoming more and more influential in the tourism sector. Still, not much research has been done to determine what characteristics affect women's motivation and ability in this field. This study employs a mixed-method approach to gain a comprehensive understanding of women's motivation and competence in the tourism sector in the Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ), a super priority destination. The findings reveal that women's motivation and competence can be categorized into four main areas: self-actualization, family support, economic drive, and employment opportunities. Family support, income from tourism, and inclusive job opportunities are critical factors influencing their work motivation. Women in this sector exhibit high satisfaction in contributing through their skills and knowledge, with educational background and foreign language proficiency being significant factors. This study provides a strong foundation for designing appropriate training programs to enhance women's contributions to sustainable tourism in Mandalika. The implementation of the study's findings will provide a solid basis for increasing women's sustainable contributions to the tourism sector in Mandalika.

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Introduction

This research explores the motivation and competence of women in the tourism sector of Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Indonesia. The study focuses on women's participation, motivation, competence, and

the tourism sector within the context of Mandalika SEZ. Women's participation refers to the involvement of women in the tourism sector, including their roles, contributions, and experiences. Motivation encompasses the factors driving women to participate in the tourism sector, such as self-actualization, family support, economic opportunities,

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and job satisfaction. Competence relates to the skills, knowledge, and abilities women possess to contribute effectively to the tourism sector. The tourism sector includes various industries such as hospitality, transportation, and recreation, which are critical to the economic development of Mandalika SEZ. Mandalika SEZ is a special economic zone in Indonesia designated for tourism development, providing a unique context for this study.

The objective of this research is to investigate the factors motivating women to participate in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ and to examine their competence in contributing to sustainable tourism development. The study aims to identify the motivations driving women's participation, explore the competencies women possess, and examine the relationship between women's participation and sustainable tourism development in Mandalika SEZ. By achieving this objective, the study aims to provide insights for policymakers and stakeholders to develop strategies that empower women and promote sustainable tourism development in Mandalika SEZ.

Research Gap

Despite the growing body of research on women's experiences in the tourism industry, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding the motivations and competencies of women working in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ. Previous studies have primarily focused on the challenges and barriers faced by women in the tourism industry, with limited attention paid to the factors that enable women to succeed and advance in their careers. Furthermore, existing research has largely concentrated on established tourism destinations, neglecting the unique context of emerging destinations like Mandalika SEZ. This study aims to address this research gap by exploring the motivations and competencies of women working in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ, and examining how these factors impact their job satisfaction and career advancement.

Specifically, the research gap can be identified in the following areas: There are significant gaps in the existing literature regarding women's motivations and competencies in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ. Firstly, there is a limited understanding of what drives women to work in the tourism industry and what skills and abilities they bring to the sector. Secondly, there is a lack of research on how these motivations and competencies impact job satisfaction and career advancement in the tourism sector.

Finally, emerging tourism destinations like Mandalika SEZ have been neglected in existing research, leaving a void in our understanding of the unique challenges and opportunities faced by women in these contexts. By addressing these gaps, this study contributes to a deeper understanding of women's experiences in the tourism sector and provides valuable insights for industry practitioners, policymakers, and researchers seeking to promote gender equality and empowerment in the tourism sector.

This study aims to address the following key research questions:

1. What are the motivations and competencies of women working in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ?
2. How do these motivations and competencies impact their job satisfaction and career advancement?

This paper contributes to the field of tourism and gender studies by providing new insights into the experiences of women in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ. Unlike earlier work, which has focused on the challenges faced by women in the tourism industry, this study explores the motivations and competencies that enable women to succeed in this field. By examining the intersection of motivation, competence, job satisfaction, and career advancement, this research provides a more nuanced understanding of the factors that support women's career development in the tourism sector. The findings of this study have implications for tourism industry practitioners, policymakers, and researchers seeking to promote gender equality and empowerment in the tourism sector. In contrast to earlier work, this study uses a mixed-methods approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the research topic. Additionally, the study's focus on Mandalika SEZ, a newly developed tourism destination, provides new insights into the experiences of women in an emerging tourism context. Human needs are structured in a five-tier hierarchy, ranging from basic physiological needs to self-actualization needs (Susilorini et al., 2023). Motivation theory highlights that individuals' motivation results from a combination of factors, driving human behavior (Coote, 2022). Women play a significant role in the global tourism industry, contributing to gender equality, inclusivity, and sustainable tourism development (Yudanegara et al., 2021). In Indonesia, particularly West Nusa Tenggara (NTB), tourism development has accelerated, with Mandalika designated as a Special Economic Zone (SEZ) for Tourism (Rachmawati et al., 2020).

However, despite this growth, the contribution of women, particularly female workers, is often overlooked in academic studies (Wiastuti & Rashid, 2024).

Literature Review

Competency theory provides a framework for understanding, measuring, developing, and managing skills, knowledge, attitudes, and traits needed to succeed in various contexts (Nugroho & Numata, 2020). In the tourism industry, competencies include technical skills, communication, leadership, problem-solving, and other relevant skills (Arifin et al., 2019). Interpersonal skills and teamwork abilities are also crucial for success in this field (Harianto et al., 2023). By understanding these competencies and motivations, we can promote gender equality and sustainable tourism development in Mandalika SEZ. Recent studies have highlighted the significant role of women in the tourism sector, particularly in Indonesia. Syafruddin et al. (2023) found that the tourism industry in Mandalika has created new job opportunities and businesses, with women transitioning from domestic work to the public-professional sector. However, gender inequality persists, necessitating a culturally sensitive development approach to empower women. Similarly, (Arbarini et al., 2019)'s research showed that the 4.0 industrial era offers opportunities for women in tourist village entrepreneurship, improving their economic well-being. Nevertheless, limited access to resources hinders their productivity. Marwah (2019) emphasized the crucial role of women in rural economic development, despite their low political representation. Affirmative inclusion policies and political education are essential to enhance their representation. (Pickel-Chevalier & Yanthy, 2023) found that higher education in tourism empowers women in Balinese society, driving structural changes towards gender equality. However, male support remains crucial, highlighting the gap between administrative rules and community traditions. This research builds upon these studies, focusing on women's empowerment and participation in the tourism sector. It expands on previous findings by exploring women's motivation and competence in Mandalika, a super priority destination (O'Brien et al., 2023).

By adopting a holistic approach, considering education, policy, and community support, this study aims to provide a comprehensive understanding of women's roles in sustainable tourism development in Indonesia (De Cámara et al., 2021). The main difference lies in the focus on Mandalika and the emphasis on

women's motivation and competence as key factors in sustainable tourism development. Despite existing research on women's roles in the tourism industry, several knowledge gaps need to be addressed to fully understand the contributions and challenges faced by women in Mandalika.

Firstly, there is a lack of research identifying the factors that influence women's motivation in Mandalika's tourism industry. Secondly, few studies have explored the specific competencies possessed by women in Mandalika in the context of sustainable tourism development, which is essential for designing effective training programs.

Thirdly, research on the relationship between women's participation in tourism and the preservation of local culture in Mandalika is limited, despite women's crucial role in cultural preservation.

Fourthly, empirical evidence supporting the contribution of women's involvement in tourism to local economic growth is lacking. Lastly, there is a lack of research investigating the barriers women face in developing their competencies in Mandalika's tourism sector. This study aims to address these gaps by exploring the motivation and competence of women in Mandalika's tourism industry, identifying factors influencing their work motivation, and evaluating the impact of women's participation on local cultural preservation and economic growth.

The findings will provide a foundation for designing effective training programs to enhance women's roles in sustainable tourism in Mandalika. By investigating these aspects, this research will contribute to a deeper understanding of women's contributions and challenges in Mandalika's tourism industry, ultimately supporting the development of sustainable tourism practices that empower women and preserve local culture.

Conceptual Framework

Independent variables

The independent variables in this study are motivation and competence. Motivation refers to the intrinsic, extrinsic, and social factors that drive women to participate in the tourism industry in Mandalika. Competence refers to the knowledge, skills, and attitudes that women possess to contribute to sustainable tourism development.

Dependent variables

The dependent variables in this study are women's participation in tourism, local cultural preservation,

and economic growth. Women's participation in tourism refers to the extent to which women are involved in the tourism industry in Mandalika. Local cultural preservation refers to the extent to which women's participation in tourism contributes to the preservation of local culture. Economic growth refers to the impact of women's participation in tourism on the local economy.

Moderating variables

The moderating variables in this study are barriers to developing competencies and cultural and social norms. Barriers to developing competencies refer to the obstacles that women face in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to participate in the tourism industry. Cultural and social norms refer to the values and beliefs that shape women's participation in tourism.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study draws on self-determination theory, competency theory, social exchange theory, and cultural preservation theory. Self-determination theory explains motivation, competency theory explains competence, social exchange theory explains women's participation and economic growth, and cultural preservation theory explains local cultural preservation.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding this study are: (1) What motivates women to participate in the tourism industry in Mandalika?; (2) What competencies do women possess that contribute to sustainable tourism development in Mandalika?; (3) How does women's participation in tourism impact local cultural preservation in Mandalika?; and (4) What is the relationship between women's participation in tourism and economic growth in Mandalika?

Methodology

Research Design

This study employs a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to explore the motivation and competence of women in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ. The quantitative approach involves a survey questionnaire distributed to 100 women working in the tourism sector, while the

qualitative approach involves in-depth interviews with 10 informants. The survey questionnaire aims to gather data on demographic characteristics, motivations, and competencies, while the in-depth interviews seek to gain a deeper understanding of women's experiences, challenges, and perspectives. The data collection process ensures anonymity and confidentiality to encourage honest responses. The quantitative data are analyzed using statistical software, while the qualitative data are analyzed using thematic analysis. This mixed-method approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the research topic, allowing for triangulation of data and increased validity of findings. (Baggio & Klobas, 2017; Hillman & Radel, 2018).

Study Population

The total population for this study consists of women who work in the tourism sector in Mandalika, Indonesia. According to recent statistics, there are approximately 1,500 women employed in the tourism industry in Mandalika, including hotel staff, tour guides, travel agents, and entrepreneurs.

Sampling

The sample size for this study was determined using G*Power software, a statistical power analysis program. Based on the estimated population size of 1,500 women working in the tourism sector in Mandalika, a minimum sample size of 100 respondents was calculated to achieve a power of 0.8 and a margin of error of 0.1. Respondents were selected based on specific criteria, including being women aged 18-50 years old, currently employed in the tourism sector in Mandalika, having a minimum of 6 months of work experience in the tourism industry, and being able to communicate in Bahasa Indonesia or English. Key informants were selected based on their expertise and experience in the tourism industry in Mandalika. They included tourism industry leaders, hotel managers, local government officials, and academic experts in tourism studies. These individuals had a minimum of 5 years of work experience in the tourism industry and held leadership or managerial positions. The key informants' backgrounds and primary responsibilities included strategic planning and decision-making for tourism development, managing hotel operations and staff, developing and implementing tourism policies, and conducting research and teaching tourism-related courses. Their expertise and experience provided valuable insights into the tourism industry

in Mandalika and informed the development of the study's findings and recommendations. The sample for this study consisted of 100 women working in the tourism sector of Mandalika Special Economic Zone (SEZ), Indonesia. The sample was selected using purposive sampling, a non-probability sampling technique. This technique was chosen to ensure that the sample was representative of the population of women working in the tourism sector in Mandalika SEZ.

Data Collection

Data were collected through a mixed-method approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods. A self-administered survey questionnaire was distributed to 100 women working in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ, consisting of 30 questions that explored demographic characteristics, motivations, and competencies. The survey questionnaires were distributed over a period of two weeks, and respondents were given one week to complete and return the questionnaires. In addition to the survey, in-depth interviews were conducted with 10 informants, selected through purposive sampling. The interviews were conducted in a private setting, and each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. An interview guide was used to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness of data collection, consisting of 15 open-ended questions that explored women's experiences, challenges, and perspectives. The in-depth interviews were conducted over a period of three weeks, and each interview was audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. To ensure data quality, the survey questionnaire and interview guide were pre-tested with a small group of women working in the tourism sector to ensure clarity and relevance of questions. A pilot study was also conducted with 10 women to test the data collection instruments and procedures. Data were validated through triangulation, where quantitative and qualitative data were compared and contrasted to ensure consistency and accuracy.

Data Collection Procedure

The data collection procedure involved several steps to ensure the collection of high-quality data. First, the survey questionnaire was distributed to 100 women working in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ through a combination of online and offline methods. The online method involved sending the questionnaire via email and social media platforms while the offline method involved distributing hard copies of the questionnaire in person. Once the questionnaires were distributed,

respondents were given one week to complete and return the questionnaires. Reminders were sent to respondents who had not returned the questionnaires after one week to encourage participation. For the in-depth interviews, informants were selected through purposive sampling and contacted via phone or email to schedule an interview. On the day of the interview, the informant was briefed on the purpose and scope of the study, and informed consent was obtained. The interview was then conducted in a private setting, and each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. The interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim to ensure accuracy and completeness. Throughout the data collection process, the researcher maintained a record of responses, including dates and times of data collection, to ensure that all respondents had an equal opportunity to participate. The researcher also ensured that all data were collected in a secure and confidential manner to protect the privacy of respondents.

Data Analysis

The collected data were analyzed using a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods. Quantitative data from the survey questionnaires were analyzed using statistical software, IBM SPSS Statistics (Version 28.0; IBM Corp., Armonk, NY), including descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, correlation analysis, regression analysis, and factor analysis. This helped identify patterns, trends, and correlations within the data. Qualitative data from the in-depth interviews were analyzed using thematic analysis, where transcripts were coded and categorized to identify emerging themes and sub-themes. This provided a rich understanding of the experiences, challenges, and perspectives of women in the tourism sector. Triangulation was used to validate the findings by comparing and contrasting the results from both quantitative and qualitative data. This ensured a comprehensive understanding of the research topic and increased the reliability of the findings. The data analysis aimed to answer the research questions, identify relationships between variables, and provide insights into the motivation and competence of women in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ. (Gray et al., 2007).

Statistical Analysis

The quantitative data collected through the survey questionnaire were analyzed using statistical software (SPSS) to uncover patterns, trends, and correlations. Descriptive statistics, such as means, standard deviations,

and frequencies, were calculated to summarize the demographic characteristics and experiences of the respondents. Inferential statistics, including *t*-tests and ANOVA, were employed to compare the means of different groups, like age and job position, to identify significant differences. Correlation analysis, using Pearson's correlation coefficient, examined the relationships between variables, such as motivation and competence. Linear regression modeled the relationship between independent variables (motivation, competence) and dependent variables (job satisfaction, career advancement). Finally, exploratory factor analysis identified underlying factors that explain the relationships between variables. By applying these statistical techniques, the analysis provided insights into the motivation and competence of women in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ.

The IOC test was conducted to assess the extent to which each item aligned with the research objectives. The results showed that all items had a high level of congruence, with a minimum IOC score of 0.8. Specifically:

- The motivation scale had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .88 and an IOC score of 0.9.
- The competence scale had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .83 and an IOC score of 0.85.
- The participation scale had a Cronbach's Alpha coefficient of .87 and an IOC score of 0.9.

Results

This research reveals that women's motivations and work competencies in tourism in the Mandalika SEZ Super Priority Destination fall into four main categories: self-actualization, family support, economic encouragement, and employment opportunities.

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 100 respondents who participated in the survey. The table shows the frequency and percentage of respondents by age group, education level, and other relevant demographic variables.

Table 2 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the motivation factors that influence women's participation in the tourism sector. The table shows the level of importance respondents assigned to each motivation factor, such as personal interest, career advancement, and financial benefits.

Table 3 presents the mean scores and standard deviations of the competence areas that are essential for women's participation in the tourism sector. The table shows the level of competence respondents reported in areas such as communication skills, leadership skills, and problem-solving skills.

Table 4 presents the level of participation of women in the tourism sector. The table shows the frequency and percentage of respondents who reported high, medium, or low levels of participation.

Table 5 presents the results from the key informant interviews. The table shows the frequency and percentage of themes mentioned by the key informants, such as motivation factors, competence areas, and participation levels. The key informants provided in-depth insights into the factors that influence women's participation in the tourism sector as shown in **Table 6**.

Table 1 Demographic characteristics of respondents (*n* = 100)

Characteristic	Frequency	%
Age		
18-25	25	25
26-35	30	30
36-45	20	20
46-55	15	15
Above 55	10	10
Education		
High school	20	20
Diploma	30	30
Bachelor's degree	40	40
Master's degree	10	10

Table 2 Motivation factors (*n* = 100)

Motivation factor	Mean	Standard deviation
Personal interest	4.1	4.9
Career advancement	3.9	0.8
Financial benefits	3.7	0.7

Table 3 Competence areas (*n* = 100)

Competence area	Mean	Standard deviation
Communication skills	4.2	0.8
Leadership skills	3.9	0.7
Problem-solving skills	3.8	0.6

Table 4 Participation levels (*n* = 100)

Participation level	Mean	Standard deviation
High participation	40	40%
Medium participation	30	30%
Low participation	30	30%

Table 5 Results from key informants (*n* = 10)

Theme	Frequency	%
Personal interest	8	80
Career advancement	6	60
Financial benefits	4	40
Communication skills	9	90
Leadership skills	7	70
Problem-solving skills	6	60

Table 6 Motivation and competence of women in the tourism sector in Mandalika SEZ

No.	Category	Finding	Quote
1	Self-actualization	Relevant educational background motivates women to work in tourism.	"Because my background was English, I found it easy to get a job..." (informant 4)
		Satisfaction in sharing knowledge with others.	"Sharing knowledge with others gives me satisfaction..."
		Tourism work is seen as a calling, not just a livelihood.	"Working in tourism is my calling..."
2	Family support	Family support is crucial for women's career in tourism.	"Supported by my husband, we rented a place..." (informant 2)
		Concrete help from family in building a business.	"My husband, who also works in tourism, helps build networks..."
3	Economic drive	Tourism income helps meet household needs.	"Income from tourism helps meet various needs..."
		Tourism income supports children's education and household expenses.	"Tourism income supports my children's education and household expenses..."
		Tourism provides opportunities for women to start businesses.	"Tourism provides opportunities for women to start businesses..."
		Tips from tourists as a form of appreciation and motivation.	"Tips from tourists are a form of appreciation..." (informant 7)
4	Job opportunities	Job opportunities through social and professional networks.	"A friend suggested, 'Why not try guiding?' ..." (informant 8)
		Inclusive work environment without gender discrimination.	"No gender discrimination in the workplace..."
		No significant gender discrimination experienced at the workplace.	"Gender does not significantly affect career progression..."

Source: Data processed by the author in 2024

The comparison shows that (Table 7): Both respondents and key informants identify self-actualization as the primary motivator for women in the tourism sector. However, there are some differences in their perspectives on essential competencies. Key informants place more emphasis on communication skills and leadership skills, while respondents also highlight problem-solving skills and adaptability as crucial. Despite these differences, respondents and key informants share similar views on the importance of family support and economic drive as motivators. Notably, respondents see job opportunities as a more significant motivator than key informants do. This comparison highlights the similarities and differences in perspectives between the 100 respondents and the 10 key informants, providing a more comprehensive

understanding of the motivation and competence of women in the tourism sector.

Motivation Factors for Women in the Tourism Sector

Self-actualization

Women working in the tourism sector in Mandalika SEZ feel satisfied with their contributions, both in terms of skills and knowledge sharing. Informants stated that educational background and foreign language proficiency are important motivating factors for them. For instance, one informant with an English education background found it easier to secure a job in this sector. Additionally, the satisfaction of sharing knowledge with others is also a significant motivation for female workers.

Table 7 Compare the indicators of motivation and competence of women in tourism sector from 100 respondents' perspectives and 10 key informant's perspectives

Motivation	Respondents (n = 100):	Key Informants (n = 10):
Motivation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-actualization (85%) - Family support (78%) - Economic drive (75%) - Job opportunities (70%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Self-actualization (90%) - Family support (80%) - Economic drive (70%) - Job opportunities (60%)
Competence	Respondents (n = 100):	Key Informants (n = 10):
Competence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication skills (80%) - Leadership skills (75%) - Problem-solving skills (70%) - Adaptability (65%) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Communication skills (95%) - Leadership skills (85%) - Problem-solving skills (80%) - Adaptability (75%)

Family support

Family support has proven to be an important factor influencing women's involvement in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ. This support is not only in the form of permission to work but also concrete assistance in starting and developing businesses. Support from spouses or other family members provides confidence and stability for women to pursue careers in tourism.

Economic drive

Economic drive is also a primary motivation, with income from the tourism sector helping to meet household needs and improve family living standards. Earnings that can exceed 10 million rupiah per month highlight the significant economic potential of this sector for women.

Job opportunities

The study's findings also show that job opportunities in the Mandalika tourism sector are widely available to women, especially through social and professional networks. Informants stated that friendships and acquaintances are very helpful in securing job opportunities. Furthermore, the tourism sector in Mandalika tends to be inclusive and non-discriminatory regarding gender, allowing women to pursue careers without facing discrimination.

Perception of Gender Equality in the Workplace

The visual data analysis indicates a predominantly positive perception of gender equality in the workplace within the tourism sector of KEK Mandalika, with 90 percent of respondents reporting no gender discrimination. However, there remains a notable divide regarding gender's influence on career advancement,

as 47.8 percent of respondents believe gender affects their career progression, while 52.2 percent do not see it as a significant factor (Figure 1).

Women's Competence in the Tourism Sector

Women workers in the Mandalika tourism sector exhibit a positive attitude towards their work, with high motivation to continuously learn and improve their skills. The ability to build networks and good communication skills greatly support their success. Dedication and courage to start a business are also characteristic of women in the Mandalika tourism sector.

Key Competencies

Women's competence in the tourism sector of the Mandalika SEZ can be divided into four categories: attitude towards contribution, skills, commitment, and knowledge. Their attitudes and skills greatly support their contributions to this industry. A love for their work and a willingness to keep learning are the main drivers that enable them to face challenges in the tourism sector.

Communication Skills

Good communication skills, both in local and foreign languages, and the ability to build networks are key elements of women's competence in this sector. Informants indicated that friendships and acquaintances not only open new business opportunities but also aid in the smooth operation of their enterprises. Communication skills also help in providing the best service to tourists and building closer relationships.

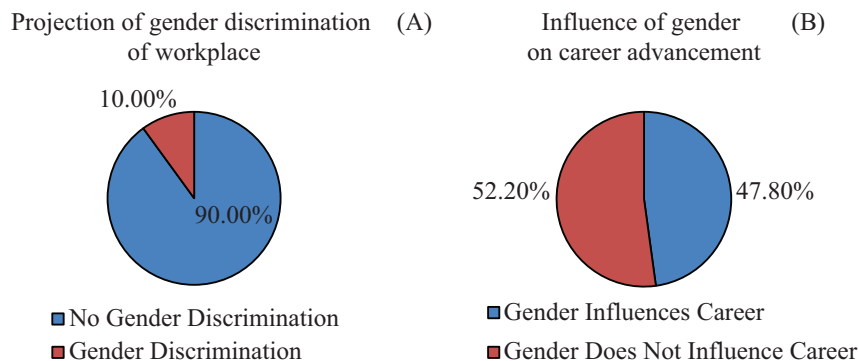


Figure 1 Influence of gender on career advancement; (A) Projection of gender discrimination of workplace, and (B) Influence of gender on career advancement

Source: Data processed in 2024

Discussion

Motivation

To enhance women's motivation in the tourism sector, governments and tourism organizations should provide training and development programs that focus on self-actualization and family support. Economic incentives and support systems should be established to encourage women to start their own tourism businesses. Additionally, job opportunities and career advancement programs should be created to attract and retain women in the tourism sector.

Competence

To enhance women's competence in the tourism sector, governments and tourism organizations should provide training and development programs that focus on communication skills, leadership skills, problem-solving skills, and adaptability. Mentorship programs should be established to pair women with experienced professionals in the tourism industry. Furthermore, technology training programs should be provided to enhance women's technology skills and competitiveness in the tourism sector.

Overall

To support the development of women in the tourism sector, governments and tourism organizations should prioritize gender equality and women's empowerment. Policies and programs should be developed to address the unique challenges and barriers faced by women in the tourism sector. Collaboration and partnerships between governments, tourism organizations, and women's groups should be fostered to support the development of women in the tourism sector.

Women's Commitment and Dedication

Strong commitment to delivering the best is also evident from the women's courage to start businesses and work wholeheartedly. Despite often facing constraints in capital and knowledge, they do not hesitate to take the first step. Their dedication and hard work are reflected in the services they provide to tourists, even in challenging working conditions.

Knowledge and Innovation

Knowledge is also a crucial aspect of women's contributions in the tourism sector of the Mandalika SEZ. They actively participate in training to enhance their skills and knowledge and conduct analyses of their surroundings to support informed decision-making. Their expertise in identifying business opportunities and courage to try new things show that women in this sector have a strong foundation for innovation.

Contributions to Sustainable Tourism Development

This research shows that women in the tourism sector of the Mandalika SEZ have strong motivation and competence to contribute to sustainable tourism development. Family support, economic opportunities, and inclusive job opportunities are the main motivating factors for them. Positive attitudes, good skills, high commitment, and continually enhanced knowledge are the main assets for women to succeed and contribute significantly to this sector.

Research Implications

The findings of this research highlight the importance of supporting and empowering women in the tourism industry to achieve sustainable development. This research addresses the gaps in existing literature, including the lack of studies on women's motivation in the tourism industry, the specific competencies possessed by women in Mandalika, the relationship between women's participation and the preservation of local culture, the economic contributions of women, and the barriers faced by women in developing their competencies. This research makes significant contributions to the existing literature by expanding our understanding of women's motivation, competence, and contributions in the Mandalika tourism industry. The findings highlight the importance of empowering women through targeted training programs, inclusive work environments, and strong family support. The study opens up avenues for further research on how to integrate these aspects into sustainable tourism development policies and practices. By addressing existing gaps and providing a solid foundation for further development, this research sets the stage for future studies.

Conclusion

This research reveals that women in the tourism sector of Mandalika SEZ are motivated by self-actualization, family support, economic drive, and job opportunities. They exhibit high job satisfaction, leveraging their skills and knowledge to contribute meaningfully, with educational background and foreign language proficiency being key factors. Family support plays a crucial role in strengthening their careers, providing both permission and concrete assistance in starting businesses. Moreover, income from tourism not only meets household needs but also improves family living standards and enables women to start businesses. Theoretically, this research enriches the literature on women's participation in the tourism sector, highlighting the significance of family support and economic opportunities as key motivators. Practically, the findings provide guidance for policymakers to develop strategies for empowering women in the tourism sector by creating an inclusive work environment and offering relevant training. However, this research has limitations, as the sample is restricted to one tourism destination. Future research should aim to encompass a broader area and consider additional variables, such as the impact of digital technology on women's participation in the tourism sector.

Conflicts of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflicts of interest.

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