

Women's economic empowerment: sense of belonging and participation in tourism

Empoderamiento económico de las mujeres: sentido de pertinencia y participación en el turismo

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Abstract: in developing countries like Indonesia, empowering women entrepreneurs plays a crucial role in both business development and the growth of tourist destinations. This study examines the critical role of women's economic empowerment in influencing a sense of belonging, tourism involvement, and willingness to recommend a destination. The respondents in this study are women entrepreneurs who run businesses in areas surrounding tourist destinations. A total of 299 women entrepreneurs participated in the survey. This study employs the structural equation model-partial least square (SEM-PLS) method. The findings reveal that women's economic empowerment enhances the sense of belonging to tourist destinations and increases women's involvement in these destinations. Furthermore, the sense of belonging to a tourist destination has a significant positive impact on women's involvement in the destination. The results also indicate that both a sense of belonging to a tourist destination and women's involvement in the destination positively influence the willingness to recommend the destination. This study provides valuable contributions to both theory and managerial practices.

Keywords: womenpreneurs, empowerment, sense of belonging, women's involvement, willingness to recommend.

Resumen: en países en desarrollo como Indonesia, el empoderamiento de las mujeres emprendedoras desempeña un papel crucial tanto en el desarrollo empresarial como en el crecimiento de los destinos turísticos. Este estudio tiene como objetivo examinar el papel fundamental del empoderamiento económico de las mujeres en la influencia del sentido de pertenencia, la participación en el turismo y la disposición a recomendar un destino. Las encuestadas en este estudio son mujeres emprendedoras que dirigen negocios en áreas cercanas a destinos turísticos. Un total de 299 mujeres emprendedoras participaron en la encuesta. Este estudio utiliza el método de modelo de ecuaciones estructurales con mínimos cuadrados parciales (SEM-PLS). Los hallazgos revelan que el empoderamiento económico de las mujeres mejora el sentido de pertenencia a los destinos turísticos y aumenta la participación de las mujeres en estos destinos. Además, el sentido de pertenencia a un destino turístico tiene un impacto positivo significativo en la participación de las mujeres en el destino. Los resultados también indican que tanto el sentido de pertenencia a un destino turístico como la participación de las mujeres en el destino influyen positivamente en la disposición a recomendar el destino. Este estudio proporciona valiosas contribuciones tanto a la teoría como a las prácticas de gestión.

Palabras clave: mujeres emprendedoras, empoderamiento, sentido de pertenencia, participación de las mujeres, disposición a recomendar.

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Introduction

Women's empowerment is crucial to the current catalyst for inclusive and sustainable industrial growth (Alsaad *et al.*, 2023). It is crucial in facilitating fair and equal access to opportunities, resources, and decision-making processes in many industries. As more individuals recognize the importance of equal opportunities for men, the global discourse on women's empowerment has intensified (Alsaad *et al.*, 2023; Duffy *et al.*, 2015). People view women as inferior and believe they need training and assistance (Figueroa-Domecq *et al.*, 2020). Women's empowerment is a term that refers to the comprehension of gender inequality as the absence of equal access to economic resources (McCall and Mearns, 2021; Zavaleta Cheek and Corbett, 2024). Reducing poverty and bolstering social and economic resilience are two important outcomes of empowering women by promoting gender equality. The active engagement of women in the labor force and leadership roles stimulates innovation and cultivates a more varied and inclusive industrial milieu.

Several research studies have validated a positive relationship between the empowerment of women and the tourist sector (Nassani *et al.*, 2019; Vujko *et al.*, 2019). Women play a crucial role in enhancing the tourist industry and actively participate in various social initiatives (Çiçek *et al.*, 2017; Ferguson, 2011). Women entrepreneurs in the tourist industry frequently operate at a modest, community-based level (Duffy *et al.*, 2015; Knight and Cottrell, 2016). Dadi (2021) elucidates that empowerment may be achieved through education organized by specific communities, such as the Community Learning Activity Centre. These women frequently capitalize on local cultural traditions and knowledge to develop distinctive and genuine tourist experiences that captivate visitors. In addition to generating income for their families, their enterprises also aid in the preservation of local heritage and the advancement of sustainable tourism practices. Although these entrepreneurs operate on a lesser scale, they

encounter substantial obstacles, such as restricted access to financing, market networks, and training opportunities. However, their innovative approaches and resilience allow them to play a critical role in empowering other women in their communities and advancing community development.

The involvement of women in the tourist industry contributes to their empowerment by enhancing their economic and social autonomy (Duffy *et al.*, 2015; McCall and Mearns, 2021). According to Firmansyah and Sihaloho (2021), the empowerment of women has the potential to enhance socioeconomic development at the regional level. Through involvement in this industry, women have access to wealth-producing prospects that enable them to provide for their families and make investments in their communities. The attainment of financial independence frequently results in heightened self-assurance and authority in making decisions, both inside their own families and in the wider society. Moreover, participating in tourism-related activities allows women to establish connections, gain new entrepreneurial skills (Vij *et al.*, 2023), and question conventional gender norms. Active participation of women in the tourist sector, particularly through the homestay program, enables them to earn additional money, enhance family bonds, and expand their social impact, all while mitigating domestic violence (Quang *et al.*, 2023).

We identified a research gap where no prior studies have examined the relationship between women's economic empowerment, sense of belonging to a tourist destination, and willingness to recommend a tourist destination. This research focuses on investigating how women entrepreneurs participate in empowerment activities conducted by the government, private sector, or specific communities. The study aims to examine the critical role of women's economic empowerment on sense of belonging, tourism involvement, and willingness to recommend a destination.

Women economic empowerment

Empowerment is a multidimensional notion (Abou-Shouk *et al.*, 2021). Empowerment, defined as the act of granting authority and control to someone, has served as a means to enhance the overall quality of life for women in both personal and professional domains in recent years (Setyaningsih *et al.*, 2012). Empowerment entails the active participation of women in the decision-making process and their acknowledgment of their role within it (Mathur, 2020) and exertion of control over several facets of an individual's life (Kishor and Gupta, 2004). Empowerment refers to the enhancement of an individual's ability to take action and achieve meaningful objectives (Trommlerová *et al.*, 2015). Zimmerman (1995) has examined four distinct components of empowerment: psychological, political, social, and economic.

The primary objective of this study is to examine women's economic empowerment. Pavlović *et al.* (2022) stated that several chances exist for women to enhance their socioeconomic standing via tourism. Economic empowerment is the measurement of the economic advantages that an individual obtains from tourism (Gautam and Bhalla, 2024). Scholars widely acknowledge the economic empowerment of women as a crucial element in achieving gender equality and promoting global development (Bhojani *et al.*, 2024). Ensuring the economic empowerment of women is essential for achieving sustained economic growth and development, as it effectively breaks the destructive cycle of poverty (Zelu *et al.*, 2024) and human development (Balasubramanian *et al.*, 2024). Women's economic empowerment refers to the capacity of women to achieve economic satisfaction by engaging in purposeful and lucrative forms of employment (Zelu *et al.*, 2024). Uddin and Barua (2024) elucidated that economic empowerment enables women entrepreneurs to actively participate in family expenditures, resource distribution, and decision-making processes.

Women's economic empowerment in tourist destinations has the potential to augment their feeling of affiliation with the area via their engagement and participation in social and economic endeavors. Giving women more power makes them more involved in developing their communities and tourist destinations (Abou-Shouk *et al.*, 2021), thereby fostering stronger emotional connections (Kewalramani and Agarwal, 2014) with their environment. Furthermore, this empowerment often boosts self-confidence (Ma *et al.*, 2021) and a sense of ownership (Seo, 2023), so women think they have had a big part in the region's growth and development, which makes their connection to the tourist destination stronger. Moreover, the empowerment of women promotes the establishment of inclusive communities (Sarjiyanto *et al.*, 2022) and robust social networks, therefore strengthening the sense of togetherness among members of the community. When women are empowered, they are more inclined to take on the role of catalysts for change, advocating for the preservation of local identity and culture (Pitanatri, 2016). This improves the tourist experience and strengthens the feeling of community belonging among the residents. Consequently, women's empowerment yields favorable outcomes for individuals and improves the overall standard of living within the community, thereby strengthening their emotional connection to the tourist destination.

H1: Women's economic empowerment has a positive and significant influence on the sense of belonging to tourist destination.

Women's economic empowerment catalyzes increased participation by women in the tourist industry (Arisanty *et al.*, 2020; Wardhani and Susilowati, 2021), whether in the role of service providers, guides, artisans, or destination managers. Empowered women's presence and involvement in the tourism sector may enhance the authenticity and engagement of visitor experiences. Women's involvement in tourist activities is shaped by social elements

like patriarchal environments, stereotypes, and self-esteem concerns. This underscores the necessity for comprehensive empowerment initiatives and community support (Samad and Alharthi, 2022). Women's involvement in tourism might manifest as their advocacy for effective waste management, preservation of the local biodiversity (Krisnayanti and Saskara, 2024), conservation of the river culture (Arisanty *et al.*, 2020), etc. In the realm of destination development and administration, women occupying significant roles will endeavor to offer viewpoints and methodologies that prioritize humanism and social orientation. The preservation of the sustainability of tourism destinations will be facilitated by the active participation of these women, in addition to attracting visitors.

H2: Women's economic empowerment has a positive and significant influence on women's involvement in tourist destination.

Sense of belonging to tourist destination

Sense of belonging pertains to an individual's impression of being linked, embraced, and integrated into a certain social group or setting (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). The construct is multifaceted and impacted by aspects such as social connections, cultural background, personal experiences, and psychological needs (Hagerty *et al.*, 1992). In most cases, the examination of social connectedness and belonging was conducted within the context of predetermined communities (Ang, 2019; Holt-Lunstad *et al.*, 2019). Sense of belonging means emotional attachment to a destination, which encompasses sentiments of safety, comfort, and belonging to a community in that location (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001).

Sense of belonging pertains to an individual's perception of psychological affiliation with other group members or coworkers inside the organization (Baumeister and Leary, 1995). In the context of tourism, a sense of belonging refers to the emotional bond that women entre-

preneurs experience inside the community of a tourist destination, which motivates them to collaborate in developing tourist destinations. The presence of a robust feeling of inclusion among female entrepreneurs will influence their involvement to participate in the development of tourist destinations. Procentese *et al.* (2019) elucidated that fostering a sense of community will enhance the participation of community members in mutual contributions. Their propensity to engage in activities such as cultural participation, patronage of local enterprises, maintenance of cleanliness in tourist destinations, and a range of other pursuits is higher.

H3: Sense of belonging to a tourist destination has a positive and significant influence on tourism involvement.

The concept of a sense of belonging to a tourist place pertains to the emotional connection or degree of affiliation developed with a certain destination (Cheng and Kuo, 2015). The concept of emotional connection is synonymous with the feeling of being remembered (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). The level of affiliation that an individual feels greatly impacts their relationship with the local social environment, as well as with the structures and items in their immediate vicinity ((Hagerty *et al.*, 1992). For women entrepreneur, this feeling of belonging engenders a feeling that the destination is an integral part of their identity (Dini *et al.*, 2023), or holds significant importance and significance in their life. Due of this powerful emotional bond, travelers who have a strong feeling of belonging are more likely to be eager to share their experiences with others. They desire that their closest loved ones likewise enjoy the same sense of connection and shared experience. Thus, their inclination to endorse the location to acquaintances, relatives, or even via web evaluations is heightened. Individuals who have a strong emotional attachment to a destination tend to provide more genuine and persuasive recommendations, therefore exerting an impact on the decision-making process of others visiting that place.

H4: Sense of belonging to a tourist destination has a positive and significant effect on willingness to recommend a destination.

Women's involvement in tourist destination and willingness to recommend a destination

Women's involvement in tourism is any act or procedure in which women participate in the tourism industry. Promoting greater participation of women in the tourist industry is crucial for attaining gender equality (Krisnayanti and Saskara, 2024). Tourist activities offer women an opportunity to participate in the economic sphere. Community participation encompasses several methods that, at the lowest level of the participation hierarchy, begin with basic manipulation of the public and progress into a constructive and significant community engagement specifically aimed at political control (Christens, 2012). Tourism involvement is a mechanism to enhance empowerment for those residing in rural regions lacking sufficient job prospects (Ertac and Tanova, 2020). Women's involvement in tourism can increase tourist destination development (Elshaer *et al.*, 2021; Samad and Alharthi, 2022). These activities serve the dual purpose of generating revenue and fostering skill development, while also

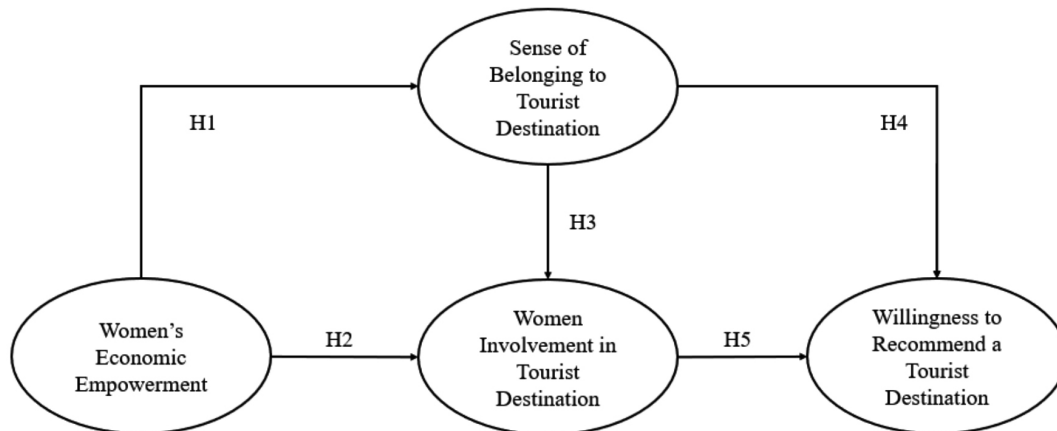
enhancing self-esteem and promoting greater autonomy.

Tristani *et al.* (2021) elucidated the significant contribution of women in the advancement of tourism. The active participation of women in activities in tourist destinations often leads to their emotional attachment. They endeavor to demonstrate a care for tourist locations by providing suggestions to prospective guests. The advice provided to prospective travelers demonstrates their concern and commitment to tourism sites. Research indicates that the inclination to suggest is a crucial factor in demonstrating loyalty towards a tourist location (Lesjak *et al.*, 2015). Engaged visitors typically possess a wider and more comprehensive understanding of the location, therefore enhancing their confidence and enthusiasm in endorsing the site to their circles of friends, family, or network. Simply put, the greater the degree of tourist engagement, the more likely they are to endorse the place since they sense an emotional connection and contentment that motivates them to share their experiences.

H5: Women's involvement in tourist destinations has a positive and significant effect on Willingness to recommend a destination.

Based on the explanation of the hypotheses above, we propose the following research model:

Figure 1
Proposed research model



Materials and methods

The participants of this study consist of female entrepreneurs who run enterprises located near tourism destinations in several towns in Sulawesi, Indonesia. Makassar, North Toraja, Tana Toraja, Gowa, Kendari, Bulukumba, Selayar, Wakatobi, Buton, Palu, Bone, Poso, Manado, Tomohon, Tondano, Likupang, and Bunaken are among the cities in the region. The total respondents were 299 female entrepreneurs. A significant proportion of the participants, specifically 236 respondents (78.93%), have either finished high school or obtained a bachelor's degree (S1). This suggests that most

respondents possess a somewhat advanced level of education. In addition, the participants cover a range of age categories, with the bulk falling between 31 and 45 years old, amounting to 119 respondents (39.80%). The educational attainment and age of these female entrepreneurs indicate that they have considerable potential and competence to make valuable contributions to the growth of the tourist sector. Their young age and advanced education suggest they are likely to be flexible in response to change and innovative, crucial elements for maintaining and expanding tourism in a competitive economic climate.

Table 1
Profile of the respondent

Education Level	17 - 30 years old	31 - 45 years old	46 - 60 years old	< 17 years old	> 60 years old	Total
Postgraduate	3	2	1	0	0	6
S1	37	40	14	0	0	91
Diploma	6	12	1	0	0	19
High School	47	48	45	2	3	145
Junior High School	1	10	11	0	1	23
Elementary School	0	6	7	0	1	14
Not in School	0	1	0	0	0	1
Total	94	119	79	2	5	299

This study has four key constructs: women's economic empowerment, sense of belonging to a tourist destination, women's involvement in a tourist destination, and willingness to recommend a tourist destination. Each construct is measured using items adapted from previous literature. The indicators for women's economic empowerment were adapted from Abou-Shouk *et al.* (2021) and Scheyvens and van der Watt (2021), the sense of belonging to a tourist destination was adapted from Haim-Litevsky *et al.* (2023) and Hagerty *et al.* (1992), women's involvement in a tourist destination was adapted from Scheyvens and van der Watt (2021) and Samad and Alharthi (2022), and

willingness to recommend a tourist destination was adapted from Lesjak *et al.* (2015). Every item in the questionnaire was assessed using a 5-point scale, with 5 representing strong agreement and 1 representing extreme disagreement. The developed items can be found in Table 2. The analysis used is a covariance-based structural equation model. We used Amos version 26 to process the data

Table 2
Measurement

Latent variable	Elements
Women's Economic Empowerment	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tourism ensures a decent economic income for women in my area. 2. Tourism provides opportunities for income growth for me as a female entrepreneur in my area. 3. Through tourism, I can support my financial independence and that of my family.
Sense of Belonging to Tourist Destination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I have a strong sense of ownership toward the tourist destinations around me. 2. I should be a member of the tourism development community in my area. 3. I am committed to helping develop tourist destinations in my area. 4. I am willing to invest my time in the development of tourist destinations in my area.
Women's Involvement in Tourist Destination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I'm pleased to have the opportunity to access the tourism market by promoting local products/services. 2. I am happy to be involved in tourism activities, particularly in preserving tourist sites. 3. I believe that my presence in tourism activities is important for maintaining the sustainability of tourism in my area
Willingness to recommend a Tourist destination	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. I will recommend the tourist destinations in my area to many people. 2. I always talk about the tourist destinations in my area with my friends. 3. I always spread good news and positive information about the tourist destinations in my area

Results and discussion

Measurement model

Hair *et al.* (2021) reveals that the measurement model specifies the approach for measuring the latent variables. Essential components of the measuring paradigm are validity and reliability. The findings of the validity and reliability testing study show that *all* tested items had factor loadings (FL) over 0.50, indicating strong convergent validity for all items. This indicates that the items reliably assess the targeted concepts. Furthermore, the Average variation Extracted (AVE) values for all latent variables

exceed 0.50, suggesting that most of the variation explained by the constructs is attributed to pertinent items rather than measurement errors. Overall, the Composite dependability (CR) scores for all constructions surpass 0.70, indicating a high level of dependability for these constructs. Furthermore, the Cronbach's Alpha (CA) values, which exceed 0.70, provide additional evidence that the items within each construct reliably assess the same notion. Hence, the instrument employed may be considered valid and trustworthy for quantifying the variables in this investigation. The findings are displayed in Table 3.

Table 3
Validity and reliability test

Latent variable	Elements	M	SD	CF	AVE	FC	CA
Women's Economic Empowerment	WEE1	4.17	0.831	0.904	0.688	0.888	0.749
	WEE2	4.25	0.772	0.851			
	WEE4	4.11	0.905	0.565			
Sense of Belonging to Tourist Destination	SOB1	4.07	0.977	0.677	0.599	0.913	0.858
	SOB2	3.98	0.983	0.720			
	SOB3	4.25	0.872	0.903			
	SOB4	4.05	0.924	0.789			

Latent variable	Elements	M	SD	CF	AVE	FC	CA
Women's Involvement in Tourist Destination	WI1	4.29	0.794	0.797	0.746	0.920	0.863
	WI2	4.31	0.781	0.871			
	WI3	4.28	0.791	0.803			
Willingness to recommend a Tourist destination	WRD1	4.33	0.803	0.831	0.616	0.929	0.875
	WRD2	4.28	0.883	0.862			
	WRD3	4.35	0.785	0.821			

Note: M= Mean; SD= Standard Deviation; FL= Factor Loading; AVE: Average Variance Extracted; CR= Composite Reliability

Structural model

A structural model examines the interrelationships among latent variables (Hair *et al.*, 2021). There are 5 hypotheses tested. The table of hypothesis testing (See Table 3) findings indicates that *all* hypotheses postulated in this study were accepted, with a significance level of $p < 0.05$. The first hypothesis (H1) demonstrates that women's economic empowerment has a robust and statistically significant impact on their sense of belonging to tourist destinations. The calculated coefficient for this effect is 0.615, and the p-value is 0.001. This finding suggests that there is a positive correlation between the level of economic empowerment experienced by women and their sense of belonging to tourist places. This finding aligns with the existing body of research that asserts the significance of economic empowerment in enhancing individual affiliation with a community or location. Furthermore, the

second (H2) and third (H3) hypotheses also provide statistically significant findings. The hypothesis H2 posits that there is a positive correlation between Women's Empowerment and Women's Involvement as Entrepreneurs in tourist locations, with an estimated coefficient of 0.289 and a p-value of 0.001. Meanwhile, the third hypothesis (H3) indicates that the sense of belonging to a tourist destination has a favorable impact on women's involvement as entrepreneurs, with an estimated coefficient of 0.650 and a statistically significant p value of 0.001. These results underline the importance of a sense of belonging to a tourist destination as a factor that drives women's involvement in entrepreneurial activities in the tourism sector. The fourth (H4) and fifth (H5) hypotheses are also accepted, confirming that both Sense of Belonging and Women's Involvement have a significant effect on the Desire to Recommend a Tourist Destination to Others.

Table 4
Hypothesis testing

Hypothesis	Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P Value	Result
H1: Women's Economic Empowerment → Sense of Belonging to Tourist Destination	0.615	0.102	6,034	0.001	Accepted
H2: Women Empowerment → Women's Involvement in Tourist Destination	0.289	0.072	3,996	0.001	Accepted
H3: Sense of Belonging to Tourist Destination → Women Involvement in Tourist Destination	0.650	0.070	9,056	0.001	Accepted
H4: Sense of Belonging to Tourist Destination → Willingness to Recommend a Tourist Destination	0.490	0.106	4,627	0.001	Accepted
H5: Women's Involvement in Tourist Destination → Willingness to Recommend a Tourist Destination	0.262	0.106	2,480	0.013	Accepted

Discussion

The results of this study indicate that the higher the level of women's economic empowerment, the stronger the sense of belonging to the tourist destination. Previous research findings indicate that employees in the tourism industry are generally more proficiently trained than the national average and would be more effectively used in other economic sectors from a national standpoint (Jiménez-Marín *et al.*, 2021). Achieving empowerment in local communities can improve the economic well-being and general standard of living for the local people, especially women (Othuman Mydin *et al.*, 2014). The enhancement of economic empowerment among women facilitates their active engagement in economic endeavors, therefore fostering a deeper emotional connection to the destination. This emotional connection is significantly shaped by the notion that tourism in the vicinity of their company site has a profound impact on them or their families. This statement aligns with the assertion made by Tse (2014) that Tourism has the potential to impact persons' self-perceptions, location of residence, neighborhood, employment, social network, family, and overall life-lived experiences. Women entrepreneurs become increasingly emotionally engaged and actively participate in the development of tourism places. Participation in this activity incentivizes women to provide financial support and fortifies their social and emotional connections within the community in the selected area. The perception of affiliation with a tourist location might significantly influence women's choices to persist in their contributions and investments towards it.

The present study elucidates the considerable favorable impact of women's economic empowerment on their participation in tourism destinations. Boley *et al.* (2014) explains that personal economic benefits can increase support for tourism. Support for tourism can be in the form of involvement in tourism development (Boonsiritomachai and Phonthanukitithaworn, 2019). This empowerment may manifest as the

provision of educational opportunities, skills development, and assistance from both the community and the government. The provision of this assistance enhances the prospects for women to initiate and oversee enterprises within the tourist industry (Zavaleta Cheek and Corbett, 2024). By participating in tourism, they enhance their economic standing and make valuable contributions to the social and cultural progress of tourist locations. Furthermore, the participation of female entrepreneurs in the tourist sector might introduce fresh and inventive viewpoints that enhance the industry (Setyaningsih *et al.*, 2012). The results of this study provide evidence that women's empowerment initiatives are crucial components of a sustainable tourist development plan.

Furthermore, a sense of belonging to a tourist destination has a very significant influence on women's involvement in a tourist destination. This demonstrates that when women experience a profound emotional connection to a tourist area, they are more inclined to actively participate in tourism initiatives in that specific place. This feeling of belonging might emerge from individual experiences, familial background, or strong social connections with the surrounding community (Haim-Litevsky *et al.*, 2023; Seo, 2023). This strong emotional connection motivates female entrepreneurs to perceive the destination as a location for conducting business and an integral component of their own identity. Therefore, a feeling of belonging becomes a powerful motivating element to sustain and enhance their economic activities in tourist places. Furthermore, this engagement can enhance their social ties and commercial networks within the surrounding community. Furthermore, these results emphasize the need of comprehending and enhancing emotional connections to locations in order to get more women engaged in the tourism industry.

The sense of belonging to a tourist destination has a notable and favorable impact on the willingness to recommend a tourist destination. A person's inclination to promote a trip to others is directly proportional to the intensity

of their connection to that destination. The feeling of belonging fosters a willingness among individuals to share their favorable experiences and motivates others to visit the same location. Furthermore, this feeling of belonging might evoke a sentiment of social obligation to advance the destination, particularly if the person believes that the prosperity of the destination is connected to the well-being of the local population. Individuals who experience a strong sense of connection to a location are more inclined to assume the role of active tourism advocate. This phenomenon contributes to the augmentation of tourist arrivals and enhances the favorable perception of the place among prospective tourists.

The study's findings indicate that women's involvement in tourist destinations has a favorable and substantial impact on willingness to recommend a tourist destination, therefore affirming the significance of women's contributions to the tourism sector. This engagement may encompass a range of tasks, spanning from overseeing local enterprises to actively contributing to the growth and marketing of locations. Higher levels of female involvement are associated with a heightened sense of ownership and commitment to the place, thereby fostering a propensity to promote it to others. Furthermore, the participation of women may enhance the caliber of services and tourism experiences, therefore bolstering tourist allegiance and fortifying the reputation of the location in the perception of tourists.

There exist several theoretical implications within this work. Firstly, enhancing the correlation between the perceived sense of belonging and customer behavior. The discovery that the feeling of belonging significantly impacts the engagement of women entrepreneurs and their inclination to suggest tourism locations enhances the current body of knowledge on the capacity of emotional connection to shape consumer behavior. This study validates that the feeling of belonging is an outcome of engaging in economic activities and a powerful motivating mechanism for advocacy action.

Secondly, the investigation of the philosophy of engagement and social roles in tourism. This study provides evidence in favor of the hypothesis of involvement, which posits that the participation of women in tourism activities has a substantial influence on their conduct in promoting tourist destinations. This paper expands upon the current theoretical framework by incorporating aspects of social and emotional engagement as significant determinants in mobilizing tourist advocacy. This paper examines the correlation between empowerment and economic involvement. The empirical evidence from the conclusion that women's empowerment influences their engagement in tourism supports the hypothesis that empowerment is connected to economic participation. These findings indicate that empowerment plays a crucial role in enhancing personal welfare and in fostering community economic growth by increasing participation in the tourist industry.

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from the conclusion that women's empowerment influences their engagement in tourism supports the hypothesis that empowerment is connected to economic participation. These findings indicate that empowerment plays a crucial role in enhancing personal welfare and in fostering community economic growth by increasing participation in the tourist industry.

Conclusions

The findings of this study indicate that the economic empowerment of women has a notable influence on their emotional connection to the tourist destination. Consequently, this emotional attachment further influences their participation in tourism enterprises and their inclination to suggest the destination to others. This finding demonstrates that the empowerment of women enhances their involvement in the economic domain and reinforces their social functioning within the tourist community. This discovery underscores the need to implement a comprehensive empowerment approach that addresses the economic dimension and the social and emotional growth of women within the tourism sector. Furthermore, the study demonstrated that a strong feeling of belonging has a significant role in motivating female entrepreneurs to actively engage in tourism and in promoting tourist destinations. This suggests that emotional connection to the destination is essential for the long-term viability of the tourism sector.

Study is subject to two limitations. Firstly, the study was carried out during a certain duration, which implies that it was not possible to longitudinally assess the dynamic changes in the tourist business or the economic challenges faced by women. The analysis offers a momentary depiction at a certain moment, which may not accurately represent dynamic changes that take place over time. Hence, the reported findings may not accurately represent enduring patterns or the influence of recently introduced measures. Secondly, due to the failure to take into account several crucial factors, it is plau-

sible that other unquantified variables, such as government assistance, tourism infrastructure, or the impact of technology, also exert effect on the outcomes. These constraints indicate that the findings of this study should be construed with prudence and should be supplemented by research that take into account other pertinent factors.

Considering the described constraints, we suggest two areas for further investigation. Firstly, a longitudinal study. A potential future study might be undertaken in a longitudinal manner to assess the temporal evolution of the correlation between women's empowerment, sense of belonging, and engagement in tourism. Longitudinal studies offer a more profound understanding of how shifts in economic, social, and political aspects impact women's participation and the long-term viability of destinations. Furthermore, it is recommended that future studies investigate the impact of governmental laws and regulations on the empowerment of women within the tourist industry. This entails examining the impact of fiscal regimes, training initiatives, and small company restrictions on the participation of women in the tourist sector. Gaining a deeper comprehension of the function of policy enables decision-makers to create more efficient approaches to assist women entrepreneurs in tourist areas.

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