



Gender Perception in Marketing Profession: Case Study of Female Dominance Factor Compared to Male in Marketing Field in Bali Tourism Industry

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ABSTRACT

This study aims to explore gender perceptions in the marketing profession in the Bali tourism sector, with a focus on female dominance and the factors that influence these gender perceptions. The method used is a qualitative approach with in-depth interviews with marketing practitioners in the Bali tourism sector. The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify patterns of gender perceptions and their implications for marketing practice. The results show that although women dominate the marketing profession, they still face barriers in accessing leadership positions and strategic decision-making. Gender perceptions and local social stereotypes also shape these dynamics. This study suggests the need for more inclusive policies and empowerment of women in the tourism sector to create a more equal work environment. In conclusion, it is important for the Bali tourism sector to adopt a more equitable gender perspective in the development of marketing strategies, in order to create positive changes in both policy and practice on the ground.

INTRODUCTION

Bali's tourism industry plays a very important role in the regional economy, contributing greatly to revenue and job creation. Not only does it have a positive impact on the economy, but it also serves as a platform that creates job opportunities for the wider community, including women. One of the fields that has a major influence on the success of the tourism sector is the marketing profession. In this sector, marketing is one of the main pillars that supports tourism destinations to market themselves, increase visibility, and attract more tourists. Therefore, the role of marketing in the tourism industry cannot be underestimated because it has a direct influence on the growth and sustainability of this industry (Mooney, 2020).

An interesting phenomenon in this sector is the tendency of female dominance in the marketing profession in Bali. This reflects a significant change in the dynamics of the local workforce, where women are increasingly involved in marketing and promotional activities in the tourism sector. Although there are clear successes in the participation of women in this profession, this phenomenon does not necessarily indicate overall gender equality in the world of work. The high participation of women in this marketing profession actually presents its own challenges, because even though many women work in marketing, they still face obstacles in achieving important positions, such as leadership positions and strategic decision-making. Therefore, although there is a dominance of women in this profession, this does not fully reflect the gender equality expected in the world of work (Tuyen et al., 2023).

One of the reasons why this problem occurs is the existence of gender bias that still strongly influences various aspects of work in the tourism sector. This phenomenon becomes more complex when explored more deeply from the perspective of gender representation and perception. In this case, marketing and branding in the tourism sector are often influenced by social constructions that are inseparable from the influence of gender stereotypes. This can be seen from how women are often identified with roles that are more administrative or service-oriented, while strategic roles and decision-making are more often carried out by men. This social construction in society often reinforces the view that the tourism sector is a more friendly workspace for women, when in reality there is still a significant gap in terms of recognition of the role of women in more strategic decision-making (Hess & Melnyk, 2016).

However, developments in Balinese society that have a unique cultural wealth and social norms, provide opportunities to incorporate local gender values into tourism marketing strategies. Marketing approaches that accommodate these gender values can increase the effectiveness of tourism destination promotion, but also have the potential to pose challenges if not accompanied by a more critical awareness of the potential for gender bias in local culture. Therefore, it is important to identify and address this gender bias so that the marketing strategies implemented can truly create equal opportunities for all parties, both women and men (Alarcón & Cole, 2019).

Despite numerous programs aimed at supporting gender equality in the sector, the reality is that the tourism sector is still influenced by social and

cultural values that shape public perceptions of the role of women in the industry. Women are often placed in less strategic positions, such as administrative or service roles, rather than in decision-making or policy-making positions. Therefore, this gap not only affects individual women working in tourism marketing, but also influences team dynamics and decision-making at the managerial level. Existing gender biases, both explicit and implicit, shape the professional environment and influence who has access to higher career development opportunities in the sector (Cuadrado et al., 2015).

Other factors that influence the gender gap in the tourism sector are the influence of technological developments, rapid flow of information, and the process of globalization which has also changed the way we view gender roles in work. In an increasingly connected and integrated world, where cross-cultural interactions are increasingly dominant, it is important for the tourism sector to adopt a more inclusive and gender-sensitive approach in managing human resources and developing marketing strategies. Efforts to empower women are a central issue that should not be ignored. This is important to ensure that women get equal opportunities in this sector, not only as implementers, but also as policy makers and decision makers in developing marketing strategies (Mooney, 2020; Mitra et al., 2022).

Empowering women in the tourism sector can not only increase their participation in employment, but also be an important factor in addressing the inequality that still exists in the industry. Therefore, it is important for tourism industry policies to support women's empowerment, by opening more space for them to participate in the formulation of marketing policies and strategies. This will help create a more equal and inclusive work environment, where all parties, both women and men, have the same opportunity to develop and contribute optimally (Mitra et al., 2022).

Despite many initiatives supporting gender equality, the tourism sector is still influenced by social norms that limit women's role in strategic decision-making. These gender stereotypes and biases hinder women from advancing to higher positions in organizations. In this context, this study aims to explore how gender perceptions influence marketing practices in the Bali tourism sector, focusing on female dominance and the factors that shape these perceptions. This study aims to provide a deeper understanding of gender relations in the marketing profession and suggest practical steps to create more equitable and inclusive policies in the tourism sector (Pasanchay & Schott, 2021).

Overall, this study not only contributes to the development of literature related to gender equality in the tourism sector, but also has the potential to encourage changes in policies and organizational culture towards a more equal and inclusive direction. In practice, awareness of the importance of gender perspectives in tourism marketing can open up greater opportunities for women to play a more active role in formulating marketing policies and strategies, and create sustainable positive changes in the Bali tourism sector (Alarcón & Cole, 2019).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender in the World of Work

The concept of gender in the workplace refers to the differences in roles, responsibilities, and social expectations set for men and women, which include not only differences in biological sex, but also social structures that influence fair treatment, interactions, and employment opportunities. Gender plays an important role in regulating access to employment, labor force participation rates, and career opportunities. Research by Yuliati et al. (2022) and Firmanda & Lukiasuti (2022) shows that gender inequality is still a structural problem that impacts wage gaps, promotions, and access to training and education in the workplace, where women are often hampered by deep-rooted gender biases to achieve strategic positions. In addition to institutional factors, cultural norms and social values also influence people's perceptions of gender roles in work, as explained by Hamid et al. (2023), where traditional views that consider men more suitable for strategic positions narrow the space for women's participation, especially in male-dominated sectors such as technology and leadership. Therefore, to achieve sustainable gender equality, reforms are needed in institutional policies and a more inclusive and gender-responsive work culture.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses a qualitative approach with a case study method to explore gender perceptions and female dominance in the marketing profession in the Bali tourism sector. A phenomenological approach is applied to understand the meaning and perceptions of individuals related to their experiences as men or women in the marketing workforce. This study aims to uncover the factors that shape gender dominance and contribute to science, especially in the study of gender and tourism marketing. Data were collected through in-depth interviews with marketing managers in the Bali tourism sector, who were selected based on the criteria of experience and gender roles. The data obtained were analyzed using thematic analysis to identify the main themes that emerged from the informant's experiences (Heriyanto, 2018; Salsabilla & Prasetyawan, 2022). In addition, the validity of the data collection instrument was evaluated using the Content Validity Ratio (CVR) to ensure the quality and relevance of the data collected (Pinasthika & Kaltsum, 2022).

RESEARCH RESULTS

Gender Perceptions Affecting Women's Career Opportunities and Access to Managerial Positions in Marketing in Bali's Tourism Industry

Gender perception plays a very important role in shaping the dynamics of access and career opportunities for women in the tourism marketing sector in Bali. The representation and experience of women in managerial positions are greatly influenced by how society views gender roles, both in social, cultural, and institutional contexts. A number of key interrelated factors, such as perceptions of gender equality, achievement motivation, and structural barriers, contribute to determining the extent to which women can actively participate in leadership positions in this sector.

First, perceptions of gender equality have a significant influence in determining the direction and strategy of individual career planning, especially for women. In the context of the Bali tourism industry, positive perceptions of equality can encourage women to participate more actively and confidently in taking strategic roles in marketing. A study conducted by Winahyu and Reskiputri (2023) showed that women who believe in equal career opportunities are more courageous in taking the initiative towards managerial positions. This is increasingly relevant in the highly competitive tourism industry environment, where women's representation in strategic decision-making is still relatively low. In addition, issues such as gender discrimination and potential sexual harassment in the workplace also contribute to psychological barriers that can reduce women's interest in entering the marketing field, especially in an environment that is still dominated by patriarchal values.

The second factor that also influences is achievement motivation, which is an important indicator in determining women's capacity to achieve managerial positions. According to the findings of Winahyu and Reskiputri (2023), women with high achievement motivation show a tendency to design their careers more proactively and planned. In the context of tourism marketing, the ability to demonstrate initiative, innovation, and leadership is essential to maintaining the competitiveness of a destination.

In this case, developing women's capacity through relevant marketing communication training, especially in tourist villages, is an important strategy in encouraging women's empowerment. Research by Adnyani and Irwanti (2023) confirms that improving communication skills can help women expand their business networks and strengthen their position in local tourism management structures.

The third factor that is no less important is the existence of structural barriers that reinforce gender inequality in the tourism sector. Gender role stereotypes that are still deeply rooted in Bali's social and cultural structures often prevent women from accessing managerial positions. Traditional norms that view leadership as a male domain create social pressures that hinder women from taking on leadership roles, especially in strategic sectors such as marketing. Ermayanti et al. (2023) stated that these cultural and social barriers affect women's self-perceptions, which ultimately reduce their self-confidence and readiness to compete in a professional environment. Therefore, structural transformation and changes in social paradigms are urgently needed to create a more inclusive space for women in the tourism sector.

Based on the description above, it can be concluded that gender perception plays an important role in shaping women's access and opportunities to managerial positions in the marketing field of the tourism industry in Bali. The three main factors of gender equality perception, achievement motivation, and structural barriers represent the complexity of the social realities that women must face in pursuing a professional career in this sector. Therefore, systematic efforts are needed through policies that support gender equality, strengthening women's capacity and motivation, and social

change strategies that challenge discriminatory norms. This approach is expected to create a fairer and more empowering work ecosystem for women in the tourism industry.

The Impact of Female Dominance in the Marketing Profession on the Career Development of Men and Women in the Bali Tourism Industry

The dominance of women in the tourism marketing profession in Bali has significant consequences for career dynamics and social structures in the workplace, for both women and men. This phenomenon reflects a broader social transformation in the tourism industry, while also opening up space to re-examine gender roles in the context of professionalism, representation, and economic empowerment.

First, from the aspect of work dynamics and organizational structure, the involvement of women in significant numbers in marketing positions creates a shift in the pattern of interaction between individuals and work approaches in a professional environment. Wirdawati et al. (2024) noted that the presence of women in strategic positions in the tourism sector is often associated with a more participatory and communicative management model. This approach also creates a more collaborative work culture that is open to collective participation, which in turn strengthens team cohesion and organizational productivity. In line with this, Rahmawati and Darwis (2023) stated that the dominance of women contribute to driving value change within the organization, where egalitarian and supportive leadership styles become more accepted and appreciated, including by male colleagues who were previously accustomed to more hierarchical and competitive leadership models.

Second, its impact on social perception and the formation of gender image in society is also an important concern. Balinese society, which still has patriarchal tendencies, is slowly beginning to experience a transformation in its perspective on gender-based role division. Prasiasa et al. (2023) show that the success of women in the tourism marketing profession not only changes the stereotype that women are less competent in managerial matters, but also forms a new narrative that women can be the main agents in industrial progress. This narrative indirectly encourages men to reconstruct their perceptions of the marketing profession and compete based on capabilities, not just gender identity. This phenomenon has a positive reciprocal influence in building a more equal and inclusive work ecosystem.

However, the negative impacts that arise cannot be ignored. Several studies, such as those presented by Widayani and Hartati (2015), highlight that increasing female dominance can lead to feelings of marginalization among men, especially those who are still bound by the concept of traditional masculine roles in the work structure. This can cause psychological challenges and obstacles in professional adaptation, so an organizational approach that is sensitive to these dynamics is needed.

Gender balance in organizational structures needs to be achieved through equitable human resource training and development policies, as well as providing equal opportunities for both genders to occupy strategic positions.

On the other hand, women's dominance in the marketing sector also shows progress in gender mainstreaming which has implications for the formation of cross-gender solidarity. Prasiasta et al. (2023) emphasize that women's success is not only a victory for one gender group, but also opens up broad collaborative opportunities. In practice, synergy between women and men in developing tourism marketing strategies has been shown to increase the effectiveness of destination campaigns, as well as enrich perspectives in capturing trends and preferences of tourists in the global market. Thus, a work environment that prioritizes cross-gender collaboration is an important foundation for strengthening the competitiveness of Balinese tourism in a sustainable manner.

Overall, the dominance of women in the tourism marketing profession reflects a complex structural change amidst the ever-evolving social dynamics of Bali. This phenomenon has multidimensional implications that are not only related to women's empowerment, but also demand adaptation and recontextualization of men's roles in the professional realm. Therefore, it is important for organizations and policy makers to design work systems that are responsive to these changes, by prioritizing the principles of equality, justice, and the development of individual potential without gender-based discrimination.

DISCUSSION

Gender perception plays a significant role in shaping women's access and career opportunities in Bali's tourism marketing sector. Women's representation in managerial positions is influenced by social, cultural, and institutional views on gender roles. A number of interrelated factors, such as perceptions of gender equality, achievement motivation, and structural barriers, influence women's participation in leadership positions. First, perceptions of gender equality greatly determine women's participation in the workforce. A study by Winahyu and Reskiputri (2023) showed that women who believe in equal career opportunities are more willing to take on strategic roles. However, gender discrimination and the potential for sexual harassment are still obstacles that reduce women's interest in pursuing a career in marketing, especially in an environment that is still dominated by patriarchal values.

Second, achievement motivation also plays a major role in determining women's capacity to achieve managerial positions. Women with high motivation tend to plan their careers more proactively. Adnyani and Irwanti (2023) stated that marketing communication skills training, especially in tourist villages, can strengthen women's positions and expand their business networks. This is important to encourage women's empowerment and improve their ability to compete in a competitive industry.

Structural barriers also play a significant role in gender inequality in the sector. Gender role stereotypes that are still deeply rooted in Bali often limit women from accessing managerial positions, especially in strategic sectors such as marketing. Ermayanti et al. (2023) showed that cultural norms that view leadership as a male domain create social pressures that hinder women from taking on leadership roles. Therefore, structural change and transformation of

social paradigms are very important to create a more inclusive space for women in the tourism sector.

Based on the description, it can be concluded that gender perception plays a major role in shaping women's opportunities to achieve managerial positions in Bali tourism marketing. Perceptions of gender equality, achievement motivation, and structural barriers are the main factors that influence women's access to higher career levels. Therefore, policies that support gender equality, strengthen women's capacity, and social change that challenges discriminatory norms are urgently needed to create a fair and empowering work environment for women. This will have a positive impact on creating a more inclusive work ecosystem and increasing the competitiveness of the Bali tourism sector (Widayani and Hartati, 2015; Adnyani and Irwanti, 2023).

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study shows that the dominance of women in the marketing profession in the Balinese tourism industry does not just happen, but is influenced by various social, cultural, economic, and technological development factors. Women are often considered to have better communication skills, high empathy, and interpersonal skills that are very relevant to the demands of work in the tourism marketing sector. In addition, Balinese cultural norms that place women in service roles also strengthen women's dominance in this field. Other advantages that support women's participation are work flexibility and increased access to education in the marketing field. However, even though women dominate quantitatively in the marketing profession, they still face barriers in accessing managerial or strategic positions. Strong gender perceptions in organizational and societal cultures mean that women are often considered more suitable for operational positions than leadership positions. These stereotypes create striking gender gaps in job promotions, decision-making, and professional recognition.

In addition, the dominance of women in the marketing profession also affects career dynamics, both for women and men. Women often have to fight against social stereotypes that place them in dual roles, namely as workers and housekeepers. On the other hand, the low representation of men in the marketing field indicates social barriers that consider this job more suitable for women, which ultimately limits diversity and inclusivity in the workplace. Even so, the contribution of women in Bali tourism marketing is very significant, especially in building the destination image, strengthening relationships with tourists, and creating more empathetic and contextual marketing strategies. Therefore, strategic steps from the government, educational institutions, and industry are very important to create a more inclusive and gender-equal work environment. Gender-based leadership training programs, fair recruitment policies, and social education on role equality need to be continuously developed. This research is expected to be an important reference for policy makers, academics, and industry players in understanding and addressing gender equality issues in the tourism sector, especially in marketing, to create a more equitable and sustainable industry.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Future research is recommended to expand the scope of this study by involving a larger sample size and including other regions or tourism sectors to provide broader comparative insights into gender perception in the marketing profession. Additionally, future studies may employ quantitative or mixed-method approaches to examine the influence of organizational culture, career advancement opportunities, and work-life balance on female and male participation in the marketing field within the tourism industry.

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