

Factors Influencing Women Entrepreneur's Involvement in Tourism and Its Impact on Sustainable Tourism Development in Nepal

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Abstract

This study examines the factor influencing women entrepreneur's involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable development in Nepal. Tourism involvement is selected as dependent variable. Similarly, perception of women work, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support are selected as independent variables. The study is based on 124 respondents. To achieve the purpose of the study, structured questionnaire is prepared. The correlation coefficients and regression models are estimated to test the significance and importance of selected factor influencing women entrepreneur's involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable development in Nepal.

The study showed that perception of women work has a positive impact on tourism involvement. It means that better perception of women work lead to an increase in tourism involvement. Similarly, self-efficiency has a positive impact on tourism involvement. It indicates that an increase in self-efficiency leads to an increase in tourism involvement. Moreover, empowering leadership has a positive impact on tourism involvement. It means that an increase in empowering leadership leads to an increase in tourism involvement. Likewise, psychological empowerment has a positive impact on tourism involvement. It shows that the increase in psychological empowerment leads to an increase in tourism involvement. Further, financial support has a positive impact on tourism involvement. It shows that an increase in financial support leads to an increment in tourism involvement in Nepal.

Keywords: tourism involvement, perception of women work, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment, financial support.

1. Introduction

Entrepreneurship is the creation or extraction of economic value. Timmons (1986) stated entrepreneurship to be an ability to create and build something from practically nothing. Mukherjee (2016) referred entrepreneurship as the qualities which are required to innovate and start a new enterprise accept the challenge and bear the risk. Further, Khoo *et al.* (2023) stated that women tourism entrepreneurs can and have been empowered through utilising digital technologies and digital platforms.

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similarly, Zapalska & Brozik (2014) stated that female entrepreneurs are a group of women who have broken away from traditional roles to explore new avenues of economic involvement. Likewise, Moreover, Ekpe *et al.* (2010) defined that women empowerment means marginalizing power in women and girls so that they can play a significant role in the society. The study stated that women empowerment is not only as human right, but also, they are a pathway for achieving the millennium development goal and sustainable development. Similarly, Kabeer (1999) defined women's empowerment as women's ability to make strategic life choices where this ability had been previously denied.

Bhagyalakshmi (2004) explained empowerment in the context of women's development is a way of defining, challenging and overcoming barriers in a woman's life through which she increases her ability to shape her life and environment. Moreover, Kyle *et al.* (2003) contended that tourism involvement refers to individuals' motivation, interest, and arousal to tourism activities and products. Further, Chhay (2011) defined empowerment of women as a major outcome of microfinance as empowerment refers to an enhancement of power of an individual or a group. Moreover, Rao (2011) defined woman entrepreneur is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent and a strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women. Furthermore, Hutchings *et al.* (2020) stated that there is a practice of gender inequality in the tourism industry due to social and cultural restrictions about women's role in the community.

Samad and Alharthi (2022) showed that perception of women works, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support significantly and positively influenced women entrepreneurs' involvement in tourism. Similarly, Buhsell (2008) concluded that successful business women need to empower other women entrepreneurs who are not as visible. Likewise, Zapalska & Brozik (2014) stated that the development of entrepreneurship by women has been a major step to increase female participation in the process of economic development, providing employment opportunities and improving their economic. Furthermore, Kim *et al.* (1997) described that people's involvement in tourism is enduring, and there are no specific time frames for their attitude towards tourism activities. Similarly, Wang & Bansal (2012) stated that women entrepreneurship is a precondition for comprehensive economic developments and policy to bring women into the mainstream of society.

Baniasadi and Naghavi (2022) showed that there is a significant relationship between the expansion of rural tourism and ecotourism in these villages. Likewise, Naser *et al.* (2009) investigated the factors affecting women entrepreneurs. The study found that the financial support from the government especially in the form of start-up capital is an important factor that motivates women to establish their own businesses. Similarly, Jahan (2022) showed that tourism sector is one of the key sectors in India providing a lot of opportunities for women to state their own entrepreneurial activities. Furthermore, Figueroa (2022) indicated that there is a considerable blurring of the approaches of established entrepreneurs in particular sustainability and entrepreneurship. Similarly, Reddy (2012) showed that women entrepreneurship is an economic venture which helps to uplift the economic condition of people within a short period of time, especially from the point of view of employment generation.

Bhuvaneshwari & Annapoorani (2013) stated that woman entrepreneur is an adult who owns and runs an enterprise, especially a commercial one, often at personal financial risks. According to Bhardwaj *et al.* (2011), entrepreneurship given the significant importance to its visible impact in wealth creation and employment generation. Likewise, Drucker (1994) explained entrepreneurs need to understand and apply the principles of successful innovation because there are plenty of entrepreneurial opportunities within the areas of change. The study illustrated entrepreneurship and entrepreneurship with numerous examples of innovations. Furthermore, Ertac & Tanova (2020) showed that the well-being and flourishing of these women entrepreneurs influence their participation and further involvement in the sector. The study found that managing and coordinating microfinance opportunities for rural development to support women's empowerment and well-being. Iwu & Nxopo (2015) showed that entrepreneurship is considered to be a major vehicle for socioeconomic development and a viable option for mainstream integration.

Ribeiro *et al.* (2021) stated that entrepreneurship orientation positively influences firms, social ties, resource acquisition, and performance. Similarly, Shah *et al.* (2021) confirmed that the male dominating society, structural barriers, and overt discrimination are the critical factors that create difficulties for women entrepreneurship. Furthermore, Figueroa (2022) indicated that gender differences are observed, notably in societal perceptions of risk aversion. Further, Dong and Khan (2023) explored the role of female empowerment in sustainable rural Tourism development. The study found women's empowerment mediates the relationship between these factors and

sustainable development of rural tourism, which also positively impacts sustainable community, economic, environmental, and cultural development. According to Bhagyalakshmi (2004), there is a negative impact of gender-based discrimination in entrepreneurship and creating shared value for female tourism entrepreneurs.

Martini *et al.* (2020) showed that elements of authenticity, experientiality and innovation are shown to be characteristic of female entrepreneurship. Further, Afrin *et al.* (2008) stated that women entrepreneurship as a positive step for self-help, self-employment, home business, and so on. Moreover, Sherpa *et al.* (2019) stated that people's perceptions can influence their actions, beliefs, and responses to natural hazards and associated risks. Guo *et al.* (2022) stated the multiple paths toward rural tourism entrepreneurship who examined tourism entrepreneurship in rural destinations. The study found the capital factors who were relevant to tourism entrepreneurship. Further, Dan and Shimiz (2022) stated that the opportunities from the family organization setting have greatly mobilized women into family tourism entrepreneurship.

Jahan (2022) showed a significant difference between the profile of women entrepreneurs and factors influencing development of women entrepreneurship in tourism sector. The study found that female entrepreneurship, creating shared value, empowerment in tourism and the neutralizing effect of gender-based discrimination. Moreover, Figueroa (2022) focused especially on the individual characteristics of risk, personal attitudes to entrepreneurship and behavioural control. Likewise, Morshed and Haque (2015) showed that the women entrepreneurs have more control over resources, social mobility, social activities, participation in household decision, participation in health-related decision, knowledge about women's right etc. than that of the housewives. Furthermore, Ertac & Tanova (2020) showed that the well-being and flourishing of these women entrepreneurs influence their participation and further involvement in the sector. Moreover, Samad and Alharthi (2022) analysed untangling factors influencing women entrepreneurs' involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable tourism development. The study found that women entrepreneurs' involvement in tourism (WEIT) significantly and positively impacted tourism involvement.

In the context of Nepal, Sharma (2015) stated that there is a significant relationship between socio-economic, psychological, communication, and entrepreneurial with women entrepreneur. Similarly, Upadhaya *et al.* (2022) explained that local people's socioeconomic and demographic characteristics

significantly influenced their perceived impacts of ecotourism. Likewise, Devkota *et al.* (2021) examined conveying impetus for fostering tourism and hospitality entrepreneurship in touristic destination. The study found that the evidence of westernization from the perspective of foreign tourists in touristic city-Pokhara, Nepal. Further, Bhandari *et al.* (2023) analysed women owned tourist enterprises looking to improve their operations. The study found that the important implication for women owned tourist enterprises looking to improve their operations.

Paudel Khatiwada *et al.* (2017) examined household livelihood strategies and implication for poverty reduction in rural areas of central Nepal. The study found a negative and significant relationship of total land holding on the choice of higher returning. Likewise, Upadhyay (2020) created a positive interaction between host and tourist for achieving and maintaining sustainable tourism in a destination. Moreover, Xheneti *et al.* (2019) showed that women's increased participation in the global workforce. Likewise, Dwibedi (2015) found that women entrepreneurship has a tremendous potential in empowering women and transforming society. Further, Shah *et al.* (2021) stated that the male dominating society, structural barriers, and overt discrimination are the critical factors that create difficulties for women entrepreneurship to bring success to economies. Likewise, Nyaupane *et al.* (2018) explained that tourism brought mixed, mostly positive and some negative, sociocultural, economic, and ecological outcomes in both communities.

The above discussion shows that the empirical evidence varies greatly across the studies on the factors influencing women entrepreneur's involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable development. Though there are above mentioned empirical evidence in the context of other countries and in Nepal, no such findings using more recent data exist in the context of Nepal. Therefore, to support one view or the other, this study has been conducted.

The main objective of the study is to examine the factors influencing women entrepreneur's involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable development of Nepal. More specifically, it examines the relationship of women work, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support with tourism involvement in context of Nepal.

The remainder of this study is organized as follows: Section two describes the sample, data and methodology. Section three presents the

empirical results and the final section draws the conclusion.

2. Methodological aspects

This study is based on primary data which were gathered from the 124 respondents which mainly deals with the factors influencing women entrepreneur's involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable development of Nepal.

The Model

As a first approximation, this study assumes that tourism involvement depends on several dimensions (perception of women works, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support). Therefore, the regression model used in this study takes the following form:

$$TI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 PWW + \beta_2 SE + \beta_3 EL + \beta_4 PE + \beta_5 FS + \epsilon_i$$

Where,

TI= Tourism involvement

PWW= Perception of women work

SE= Self-efficiency

EL= Empowering leadership

PE= Psychological empowerment

FS= financial support

Perception of women work was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "Women's work in tourism is acceptable in the community"," Women's work in tourism does not conflict with cultural norms and traditions in the community" and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha = 0.780$).

Self-efficiency was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include "I will be able to achieve most of the goals that I have set for myself", "When

facing difficult tasks, I am certain that I will accomplish them” and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha=0.871$).

Empowering leadership was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “My leaders assign me responsibility”, “My leader encourages me to take initiative”, and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha=0.890$).

Psychological empowerment was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am proud to be a resident of a tourist destination country”, “I feel special because individuals travel to see my country’s attractions”, and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha=0.825$).

Financial support was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “Entrepreneurship is a traditionally male professional and women should not pursue it”, “A woman starts her own entrepreneurial activity because she has desire to contribute to society by opening more job positions”, and so on. The reliability of the items was measured by computing the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha=0.816$).

Tourism involvement was measured using a 5-point Likert scale where the respondents were asked to indicate the responses using 1 for strongly agree and 5 for strongly disagree. There are 5 items and sample items include “I am feeling a bit lost when making choices from a variety of tourism activities”, “Choosing a tourism activity is rather complicated”, and so on. The reliability of the feature was measured by computing the Cronbach alpha ($\alpha=0.773$).

The following section describes the independent variables used in this study along with hypothesis formulation.

Perceptions of women’s work

Perception of women’s work refers to how individuals value women’s ability to undertake activities and functions, such as venturing into the

tourism industry. Aghazamani et al. (2020) stated that cultural aspects significantly determine the female perception of empowerment. Elshaer *et al.* (2021) explained that social empowerment significantly influences tourism involvement that provides security to women working in tourism, and the community appreciates them working freely. Furthermore, Hutchings *et al.* (2020) reported that in many Islamic countries, including Middle Eastern countries, there is a practice of gender inequality in the tourism industry due to social and cultural restrictions about women's role in the community. According to Alsawafi (2016), the perception of women's work has positive views of women working in the tourism sector, particularly in government jobs. Based on it, this study develops following hypothesis:

H₁: There is a positive relationship between perception of women work and tourism

Self-efficiency

Self-efficiency refers to an individual's belief in their ability to succeed in a particular objective and perform well. Yoopetch (2020) described that self-efficiency plays a crucial role in determining tourism involvement. Mahat (2003) stated that the study used Self-efficacy to determine entrepreneurial intention related to tourism involvement. Figueroa-Domecq *et al.* (2020) highlighted the individuals, irrespective of gender, have the ability and potential to succeed in entrepreneurial activities in any geographical and social context. Elshaer *et al.* (2021) explained that women are secure working in tourism, and people appreciate them working freely. Based on it, this study develops following hypothesis:

H₂: There is a positive relationship between self- efficiency and tourism involvement.

Empowering leadership

Empowering leadership encourage employees to share their opinions for fostering a creative workplace climate and achieve management innovation to respond to fast-changing environments. De Bloom *et al.* (2010) stated that participative leadership stimulated an atmosphere of innovation at the workplace but had a negative effect on innovative behaviour. Ahmad & Arshad (2021) stated that empowering leadership encourage employees to share their opinions for fostering a creative workplace climate and achieve management innovation to respond to fast-changing environments. Huertas-

Valdivia *et al.* (2019) explained that empowering leadership plays a crucial role in determining workers' engagement and involvement with their work. Based on it, this study develops following hypothesis:

H₃: There is a positive relationship between empowering leadership and tourism involvement

Psychological empowerment

Psychological empowerment (meaning, competence, self-determination, and impact) is perceived by employees; to examine whether leadership, trust, and organizational culture function as the antecedents of empowerment; and to look into whether empowerment influences job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Cheong *et al.* (2019) stated that psychological empowerment significantly influences tourism involvement. Boudrias *et al.* (2004) stated that psychologically empowered female entrepreneurs become more independent in shaping the tourism role, which permits them to accomplish their tasks professionally and align their values with the organizational tasks. Elshaer *et al.* (2021) highlighted that psychologically empowered women involved in tourism are more satisfied and have a feeling of pride. Based on it, this study develops following hypothesis:

H₄: There is a positive relationship between psychological empowerment and tourism involvement

Financial support

Financial support is instrumental in subsequent success of women entrepreneurs. Afrin *et al.* (2008) revealed that there is a positive a significant relationship between financial support and encouragement for rural women entrepreneurs. Dwivedi (2013) revealed that financial support like loan on low interest rate and training program at minimum or no fees charge have a significant and a positive impact on successful women entrepreneurs. Likewise, Ahmed *et al.* (2010) showed that financial service and support have a positive and a significant relationship with women starting a new business. Goyal and Yadav (2014) found that there is a significant impact of financial support on women entrepreneurship in developing countries. Based on it, this study develops following hypothesis:

H₅: There is a positive relationship between financial support and tourism involvement

3. Results and discussion

Correlation analysis

Table 1 shows the computation of Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients matrix of factors influencing women entrepreneur’s involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable tourism development in Nepal.

Table 1

Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients matrix

This table presents Kendall’s Tau coefficients between dependent and independent variables. The correlation coefficients are based on 124 observations. The dependent variable is tourism involvement (TI). The independent variables are Perception of women work (PWW), Self-efficiency (SE), Empowering leadership (EL), Psychological empowerment (PE) and Financial support (FS).

| Variables | Mean | S.D. | TI | PWW | SE | EL | PE | FS |
|-----------|-------|-------|-------|---------|---------|---------|---------|----|
| TI | 1.780 | 0.632 | 1 | | | | | |
| PWW | 1.975 | 0.734 | 0.520 | 1 | | | | |
| SE | 1.770 | 0.722 | 0.482 | 0.372** | 1 | | | |
| EL | 1.728 | 0.696 | 0.526 | 0.451** | 0.556** | 1 | | |
| PE | 1.627 | 0.583 | 0.500 | 0.378** | 0.588** | 0.643** | 1 | |
| FS | 1.780 | 0.772 | 0.605 | 0.527** | 0.385** | 0.595** | 0.492** | 1 |

Note: The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent levels respectively.

Table 1 shows the Kendall’s Tau correlation coefficients of dependent and independent variables. The study indicates that perception of women works (PWW) is positively correlated to the tourism involvement indicating that perception of women works (PWW) increases tourism involvement. Likewise, self-efficiency (SE) is positively correlated to the tourism involvement. This implies that decrease in Self-efficiency (SE) leads to the increase in tourism involvement. Similarly, empowering leadership (EL) is positively correlated to the tourism involvement. It indicates that higher the empowering leadership (EL), higher will be the tourism involvement. However, psychological empowerment (PE) is also positively related to the tourism involvement that leads to the increment of tourism involvement. Moreover, financial support (FS) is positively correlated to the tourism involvement that indicates that increase in financial support leads to the increase in tourism involvement.

Regression analysis

Having indicated the Kendall's correlation coefficients, the regression analysis has been computed and the results are presented in Table 2. More specifically, it shows the regression results of perception of women work, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support on tourism involvement.

Table 2

Estimated regression result perception of women work, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support on tourism involvement

The results are based on 124 observations using linear regression model. The model is $TI = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{PWW} + \beta_2 \text{SE} + \beta_3 \text{EL} + \beta_4 \text{PE} + \beta_5 \text{FS} + \varepsilon$ where the dependent variable is tourism involvement. The independent variables are Perception of women work (PWW), Self-efficiency (SE), Empowering leadership (EL), Psychological empowerment (PE) and Financial support (FS).

| Model | Intercept | Regression coefficients of | | | | | Adj. R ² | SEE | F-value |
|-------|---------------------|----------------------------|---------------------|---------------------|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|---------|---------|
| | | PWW | SE | EL | PE | FS | | | |
| 1 | 0.722 (5.594) ** | 0.536 (8.746) ** | | | | | 0.452 | 0.46820 | 101.765 |
| 2 | 0.953 (7.046) ** | | 0.467 (6.934) ** | | | | 0.278 | 0.53743 | 48.075 |
| 3 | 0.953 (7.046) ** | | | 0.467 (6.934) ** | | | 0.288 | 0.53743 | 50.446 |
| 4 | 0.699 (5.187) ** | | | | 0.664 (8.516) ** | | 0.370 | 0.50239 | 72.517 |
| 5 | 0.759 (6.915) ** | | | | | 0.552 (10.088) ** | 0.452 | 0.46820 | 101.765 |
| 6 | 0.440 (3.326) ** | 0.417 (6.698) ** | 0.291 (4.597) ** | | | | 0.470 | 0.46042 | 55.179 |
| 7 | 0.721 (5.317) ** | | | 0.319 (3.910) ** | | | 0.355 | 0.50825 | 34.520 |
| 8 | 0.596 (4.348) ** | | | 0.226 (2.682) * | 0.488 (4.855) ** | | 0.400 | 0.48995 | 41.713 |
| 9 | 0.490 (3.971) ** | | | | 0.345 (6.034) ** | 0.394 (6.034) ** | 0.512 | 0.44184 | 65.073 |
| 10 | 0.672 (5.626) ** | | | 0.143 (1.744) * | | 0.465 (6.314) ** | 0.461 | 0.46431 | 53.260 |
| 11 | 0.273 (2.044) * | 0.382 (6.483) ** | | | 0.462 (6.226) ** | | 0.529 | 0.43410 | 69.570 |

Notes:

- Figures in parenthesis are t-values.
- The asterisk signs (**) and (*) indicate that the results are significant at one percent and five percent level respectively.
- Tourism involvement is dependent variable.

Table 2 shows the regression results s that the beta coefficients for

perception of women work are positive with the tourism involvement. It indicates that perception of women work has positive impact on the tourism involvement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Westbrook and Woods (2009). Likewise, the beta coefficients for self-efficiency are positive with the tourism involvement. It indicates that self-efficiency has positive impact on the tourism involvement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Lee and Hwang (2016). In addition, the beta coefficients for empowering leadership are positive with the tourism involvement. It indicates that empowering leadership has a positive impact on the tourism involvement. This result is consistent with the findings of Fornell (1992). Further, the beta coefficients for psychological empowerment are positively related with the tourism involvement. It indicates that psychological empowerment has a positive impact on the tourism involvement. This finding is consistent with the findings of Wang *et al.* (2004). Moreover, the beta coefficient for financial support are positive with the tourism involvement which indicates that financial support has positive impact on the tourism involvement. This result is consistent with the findings of Chi (2008).

4. Summary and conclusion

Woman entrepreneur is a person who accepts challenging role to meet her personal needs and become economically independent and a strong desire to do something positive is an inbuilt quality of entrepreneurial women. Women entrepreneurship as a positive step for self-help, self-employment, home business, and so on.

The study attempts to analyse the factor influencing women entrepreneur's involvement in tourism and its impact on sustainable development in Nepal. The study is primarily based on primary sources of data collected from 124 respondents.

The major conclusion of this study is that higher the perception of women works, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support, higher would be the tourism involvement. The result shows that perception of women work, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support are positively correlated to the tourism involvement. This indicates that perception of women works, self-efficiency, empowering leadership, psychological empowerment and financial support of the women provided by respondent leads to the growth of the tourism involvement. The study also concludes that the most influencing factor is financial support followed by psychological empowerment that

explains the tourism involvement.

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