

WOMEN EMPOWERMENT IN TOURISM AND HOSPITALITY

CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES IN DIGITAL MARKETING



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Bentham Books

Women Empowerment in Tourism and Hospitality: Challenges and Opportunities in Digital Marketing

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ISBN (Online): 979-8-89881-750-3

ISBN (Print): 979-8-89881-751-0

ISBN (Paperback): 979-8-89881-752-7

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First published in 2026.

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FOREWORD

The book "Women Empowerment in Tourism and Hospitality: Challenges and Opportunities in Digital Marketing" explores how digital marketing can empower women in these industries. It aligns with global goals of gender equality and economic inclusion by highlighting the transformative role of digital platforms. Using a multidisciplinary approach, it blends research, case studies, and practical insights, covering themes like social media, female bloggers, and rural tourism. Featuring examples from Asia, Europe, Bangladesh, and India, the book offers strategies for businesses, policymakers, and women entrepreneurs to build skills, leverage technology, and create supportive networks.

This book brings together diverse expertise to offer a multifaceted view on the intersection of digital marketing and women's empowerment in tourism. Each chapter provides in-depth theoretical and practical insights, along with actionable recommendations for businesses, policymakers, and scholars. The contributors are commended for their commitment to advancing knowledge and promoting gender empowerment through digital strategies.

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PREFACE

The tourism industry plays a pivotal role in global economic development, and empowering women in the digital sector is essential to advancing women's empowerment through digital marketing. “Women Empowerment in Tourism and Hospitality: Challenges and Opportunities in Digital Marketing” is a comprehensive book that explores the challenges and opportunities women face in the tourism industry and offers transformative strategies for empowerment through digital marketing. This book explores the significance of digital marketing and women's empowerment in the tourism and hospitality industry. It delves into the challenges and opportunities that women face when using social media in the tourism sector.

This book combines research insights, case studies, and practical guidance to provide a roadmap for fostering digital marketing and promoting women's leadership in the dynamic world of tourism. This book proposal explores how women's empowerment through digital marketing is shaping the future of travel, hospitality, and the overall tourism experience. The proposed book is designed to serve as a comprehensive guide for industry professionals, scholars, and enthusiasts seeking to understand the profound impact of technological advancements on the tourism sector. It will offer a detailed analysis of the latest innovations, their implementation, and the resulting paradigm shifts within the industry.

Chapter 1: Women's Empowerment in Tourism: A Systematic Review of the Literature

The tourism sector plays a central role in the global economy, generating employment and promoting sustainable development. Although women represent a significant portion of the workforce in this sector, they still face structural challenges such as wage inequality, limited access to leadership positions, and precarious working conditions. This study performs a systematic review of the literature on female empowerment in tourism and hospitality, analysing the state of the art and outlining possible paths for future research. The research focused on two main subfields: Social Sciences and Business, Management, and Accounting.

Chapter 2: Role of women empowerment in tourism and hospitality through Digital Marketing: Global context

This chapter examines the connection between women's empowerment, the tourism and hospitality industry, and digital marketing. This study examines the ways in which various digital platforms serve as gateways to opportunities for women, thereby exploring the concept of women's empowerment. Technological advancements in digital marketing have lowered traditional barriers for women, enabling them to acquire businesses in tourism and hospitality. Studies conducted in Europe, America, and Southeast Asia have documented how women have used digital platforms to promote local tourism and hospitality services in their countries, thereby reaching a larger audience and increasing employment.

Chapter 3: Trends in Women's Empowerment Research: A Bibliometric Analysis of India

Over the past four decades, the realm of women's empowerment has witnessed significant evolution, capturing the attention of academic researchers worldwide. In line with this, our research aims to conduct a comprehensive bibliometric analysis that illuminates the key dimensions of women's empowerment literature, specifically within the Indian context. By meticulously examining 519 scholarly papers published between 1986 and 2022, sourced from the esteemed Scopus database, we aim to unravel the intricate interconnections, identify

thematic clusters, and explore the citation patterns to construct an insightful text-based map. This study is of great significance, as it sheds light on various aspects of the discourse on Indian women's empowerment.

Chapter 4: Gender Stereotypes in Tourism and Hospitality Sector at a Glance

Gender stereotypes have long influenced societal dynamics, including the tourism and hospitality sectors, where traditional roles and biases often dictate personnel and guest interactions. This paper explores the intricate relationship between gender stereotypes and the tourism and hospitality industry through a multifaceted analysis. The introduction sets the stage by highlighting the prevalence and significance of addressing gender biases in this domain. The ancient context delves into the historical emergence of gender functions and classical anticipations within the industry. The revelation of stereotypes examines how biases permeate personnel roles, leadership positions, and visitor perceptions.

Chapter 5: Digital Revolution: The Transformative Role of Social Media in Asian Women's Empowerment

The recent digital revolution has transformed societal formations and social communication standards, making social media the most crucial empowerment weapon. In Asia, where social, cultural, and economic conditions are varied and complex, social media platforms have become codified tools for women through platforms like Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, paving the way for Asian women's empowerment. The chapter examines the transformative potential of social media in promoting women's decorative rights in Asian Countries, with the aim of empowering it to interrogate entrenched patriarchal structures and catalyse positive social change.

Chapter 6: Role of Women Bloggers in Promoting Tourism Destinations

The tourism industry has undergone significant transformations in recent years, driven by the rise of digital technologies and social media platforms. One of the key drivers of this transformation has been the emergence of peregrinating bloggers, who have become influential voices in shaping tourist comportments and destinations. Among these bloggers, women have played a pivotal role in promoting tourism destinations, leveraging their unique perspectives, experiences, and online communities to showcase the magnetizations and cultures of sundry destinations.

Chapter 7: Role of Women Bloggers in Empowering Local Communities through Food Tourism

In the age of digital connectivity, blogging has become a powerful tool for storytelling, influencing, and community development. Within the tourism industry, women bloggers are carving out a significant space by showcasing cultural heritage, promoting sustainable practices, and supporting local economies. This chapter examines the role of women bloggers in tourism, the challenges they encounter, and their potential to transform communities and narratives within the global tourism landscape.

Chapter 8: The Role of Social Media in Shaping Hotel Decision-Making Among Female Tourists: A Study on Information Evaluation, Trust, and Visual Influence

This study explores how social media influences the hotel selection process for women consumers in Delhi/NCR, India, focusing on the evaluation stage, during which they search, compare, and choose hotels. The aim is to provide insights to help stakeholders in the Indian

hotel industry optimize social media platforms, emphasizing key factors in online hotel bookings. Using an exploratory qualitative approach, the study conducted 30 in-depth, semi-structured interviews with social media users, selected through non-random, purposive sampling.

Chapter 9: The Role of Digital Marketing in Driving Women's Success in Tourism and Hospitality

The integration of digital marketing in the tourism and hospitality sector has immensely helped create opportunities for women, including entrepreneurship, professional roles, and leadership. This chapter explains how digital transformation in hospitality and tourism helps women access opportunities, increase their career visibility, launch innovative startups, and overcome traditional barriers to success. It provides women with a way to advance their careers by utilising tools such as social media, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), and customer engagement, thereby building goodwill in the market.

Chapter 10: A Case Study on Empowering Women in Tourism: Leveraging Digital Marketing for Sustainable Development

The tourism industry serves as a powerful platform for empowering women, fostering inclusive economic growth, and promoting sustainable development. This case study, "Empowering Women in Tourism: Leveraging Digital Marketing for Sustainable Development," highlights the transformative impact of digital marketing on women-led tourism initiatives. It examines real-world success stories of organizations and brands that have enabled women to overcome socio-economic barriers and thrive in the tourism sector. Notable examples include the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India, which has utilized digital platforms to market handicrafts and local experiences, and Women in Travel CIC in the UK, which supports female entrepreneurs through mentorship and digital marketing training.

Chapter 11: Digital Entrepreneurship and Women's Work-Life Balance: A Transformative Paradigm

The advent of digital entrepreneurship has redefined professional landscapes, empowering women to transcend traditional barriers associated with work-life balance, societal norms, and financial limitations. Technology has revolutionised business models, enabling women entrepreneurs to harness digital platforms to create successful enterprises while simultaneously managing familial and personal responsibilities. This chapter delves into the convergence of leadership, digital business, and work-life balance, particularly examining the psychological, social, and economic challenges women entrepreneurs face. A compelling case study featured in this discussion is that of Priyanka Tiwari, a travel blogger and digital entrepreneur, whose robust online presence boasts over 2.78 million YouTube subscribers and 116,000 social media followers.

Chapter 12: Inspiring Women in Digital Business: Journeys of Leadership and Innovation

The digital business world is increasingly being shaped by women who are not only breaking glass ceilings but also redefining what it means to lead in a technology-driven era. From founding disruptive startups to scaling global enterprises, women leaders are leveraging digital tools, artificial intelligence, and data-driven strategies to create innovative solutions and drive economic growth (McKinsey, 2022). Their journeys are marked by resilience, adaptability, and a commitment to inclusivity, making them powerful role models for aspiring entrepreneurs.

Chapter 13: Balancing Self, Family, and Business: A Juggling Life among Female Business Leaders

The purpose of this study is to highlight the joys and sorrows, case studies, and strategies usually taken by women who become business leaders. This study used various literature that was considered applicable to describe the phenomena experienced by women who play two roles, namely in the domestic and public spheres. The results of this study aim to provide a holistic view of the experiences of women businesspeople. The case studies that follow are based on the experiences of women businesspeople who have been covered and featured in media releases.

Chapter 14: Applications of Tourism Technology in Contemporary Women's Entrepreneurship for Managing Handicraft Business

Women's empowerment primarily aims at self-realisation and at seeking support from local stakeholders. Women have set up Self-Help Groups (SHGs) to foster interaction with various stakeholders. This study aims to investigate the effects of technology on women's entrepreneurship in managing their handicraft businesses. The study's findings suggest that various internal and external factors drive the growth of handicraft businesses, promoting entrepreneurship and digital innovation.

Chapter 15: Women's Empowerment and Digital Marketing in Tourism in Madagascar and Indonesia

Digital marketing has become an important component of the business strategy to optimize sales and revenue, expand the market, and maximize the business's competitive advantage. It is vital for startups and small and medium enterprises, as it does not require a huge investment. Since the implementation of these marketing tools has become a significant component of the business strategy, having the ability and capacity to manage and master them is one of the keys to business success, especially for startups and SMEs. This chapter discusses the role of digital marketing in promoting sustainable tourism in rural tourism and gender equity. This chapter presents empirical evidence from rural tourism in Madagascar and Indonesia.

Chapter 16: In the best interest of the child: Norwegian approach to Parenting or Cultural Disparities? Through the lens of Netflix Special: Mrs. Chatterjee VS Norway

Media plays an important role in shaping and influencing our opinions and beliefs about different castes, religions, cultures, and communities. Media has certainly bridged the gap between what we already know and what we want to know. However, media also has several effects on its viewers. This is why it is always recommended that the content viewed be at the viewer's discretion. Our understanding of the film Mrs. Chatterjee VS Norway helps explain disparities across genders, cultures, and parenting. Movie analysis is one of the various elements of media psychology that help us view content mindfully, with a psychological perspective, and think beyond what we see on the screen, especially about how we process the content.

Chapter 17: The Wander Woman Effect: Connecting Gratifications to Intentions in Tourism Content Creation

This study explores how different types of gratifications—utilitarian, hedonic, content, and social—influence behavioral intention to follow recommendations from female travel influencers on social media. The research employed a quantitative approach, collecting data

from 206 respondents via an online survey. The data were analyzed using SPSS for regression analysis and WarpPLS for Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to test the proposed hypotheses. The results revealed that all four gratifications significantly impact behavioral intention.

Chapter 18: Addressing Gender Stereotypes in Tourism and Hospitality Sector: Best Practices and Policy Recommendations

This chapter aims to address the issue of gender stereotypes in hospitality and tourism management. The study examines contemporary gender ideas and provides pertinent examples from hospitality and tourism management. Moreover, this study also suggests a four-point critical agenda for gender research in tourism and hospitality. Emphasizing obstacles such as work-life balance issues, discrimination, and lack of mentoring, this chapter also explores the challenges and triumphs of women in leadership and entrepreneurial roles in this sector.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Through an interdisciplinary approach, this work addresses the intricate challenges, opportunities, and long-term goals of digital marketing for women's empowerment in the tourism industry. Women's empowerment and digital marketing are closely related in various ways, as digital marketing provides opportunities to amplify women's voices, increase their economic independence, and enhance their access to global markets. Digital marketing offers women the tools to start and scale businesses with minimal capital. Platforms such as social media, e-commerce websites, and content marketing enable women to promote products, services, or personal brands.

This book will be a significant contribution to the very limited knowledge in this identified research area. Potential research can be an added value for tourism management and organizational behavior aftermath such issues are deeply investigated.

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CHAPTER 1

Women's Empowerment in Tourism: A Systematic Review of the Literature

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Abstract: The tourism sector plays a central role in the global economy, generating employment and promoting sustainable development. Although women represent a significant portion of the workforce in this sector, they still face structural challenges such as wage inequality, limited access to leadership positions, and precarious working conditions. This study performs a systematic review of the literature on female empowerment in tourism and hospitality, analysing the state of the art and outlining possible paths for future research. The research focused on two main subfields: Social Sciences and Business, Management, and Accounting. The review was conducted using the Scopus database, with searches by article title, abstract, and keywords, categorization into subareas, filtering by documents published in the last five years, and delimitation by keywords, resulting in the selection of 59 documents. The study, of a descriptive and analytical nature, revealed that female empowerment contributed significantly to the evolution of tourism and hospitality in the years analysed. This theme is relevant and promising as an emerging line of research. The research identifies key aspects that generate scientific interest and outlines new directions for future research.

Keywords: Literature review, Tourism, Tourism development, Women, Women's empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

The tourism sector plays a central role in the global economy, generating employment and promoting sustainable development. Understanding the relationship between tourism and women's empowerment is essential for developing strategies that promote greater equity and inclusion in the sector. According to the World Tourism Organization (2013), tourism is “one of the

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major sectors in international trade and one of the main wealth creators for many developing countries. Tourism means jobs, poverty eradication, gender equality, and protecting and promoting our natural and cultural heritage.”

Female empowerment in the tourism sector contributes to meeting the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially Goal 5: Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls, and Goal 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth. Gender equality is a fundamental human right and a foundation for a peaceful, prosperous, and sustainable world. Despite progress in recent decades, achieving gender equality by 2030 remains challenging (United Nations, 2015).

In 2023, the tourism sector employed more women (58%) than men, a higher percentage than in other sectors of the non-financial business economy, where only 36% of those employed were women. However, one in four women working in the tourism sector works part-time (Eurostat, 2014).

Female empowerment is a concept that encompasses different dimensions: psychological, social, political, and economic (Scheyvens, 1999). Boley and McGehee (2014) argue that to understand empowerment through the context of tourism, it is important to analyse psychological, political, social, and economic issues. Boley *et al.* (2017) argue that women's empowerment in tourism should be investigated through several dimensions: political empowerment, psychological empowerment, social empowerment, economic empowerment, and the effect of tourism on the conservation of natural resources (environmental empowerment).

The bibliometric review allows us to identify evolution and trends in each scientific area, scientific standards, and research components (Donthu *et al.*, 2021). Conducting a bibliometric review of the literature on the relationship between female empowerment and tourism can be extremely valuable for several reasons: trend identification, contribution mapping, impact assessment, and promotion of new research. These points demonstrate the importance and value of a bibliometric review for understanding and promoting female empowerment in tourism.

This bibliographic review explores the leading academic research on this topic, analysing opportunities, challenges, and initiatives implemented to strengthen female empowerment in tourism. It aims to provide information on how tourism can serve as an instrument for women's empowerment, contributing to deepening and improving academic research and practical applications. The specific objectives are:

- Identify key trends and patterns in research on female empowerment in the context of tourism.
- Map the most significant contributions of authors and institutions.
- Facilitate the assessment of the impact of different studies and publications, identifying the works that have been most cited.
- Identify areas that require further investigation and gaps in existing literature.

This chapter is structured as follows: The next section details the research methodology employed in the study. Following this, the results are presented and discussed across various sections. Finally, the conclusions are derived from the results and discussion.

METHODOLOGY

This study conducts a systematic review of the literature on women's empowerment in tourism, analysing the state of the art and outlining possible directions for future research.

The bibliometric review was conducted using the Scopus database, filtering for documents published in the last five years (2019-2024). The following criteria were adopted to ensure that the selected studies were relevant and aligned with the theme: the search was conducted using the terms “women AND empowerment AND tourism” in titles, abstracts, and keywords. The search was refined and limited to the scientific areas of Business, Management and Accounting, and Social Sciences. It was further restricted to the keywords “Tourism,” “Tourism Development,” or “Women's Empowerment”. This search yielded 59 results, which were considered an adequate sample for the study. The selected articles were exported from Scopus and imported into the VOSviewer software.

The analysis was based on several parameters: number of articles, keyword co-occurrences, and citation analysis. In bibliometric research, co-occurrence refers to the frequency with which two or more elements appear together within a given dataset. This method evaluates the most recurrent elements in documents and identifies patterns, relationships, and associations among specific concepts. In the resulting VOSviewer mapping, connections represent the number of articles in which each element co-occurs with another. A higher frequency of co-occurrence is represented by larger bubbles or thicker lines, indicating a stronger association between keywords. The number of articles in which two keywords or two elements appear together, compared to their co-occurrence with other keywords or other elements, translates into a greater or lesser distance between the bubbles (Van Eck & Waltman, 2023). Citation analysis, which quantifies how often a specific article or author is cited in other publications, enables the assessment of its impact and influence within a given scientific field (Small, 2014).

CHAPTER 2

Role of Women-Empowerment in Tourism and Hospitality through Digital Marketing: Global Context

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Abstract: This chapter deals with the connection between women's empowerment, the tourism and hospitality industry, and digital marketing. This study examines the ways in which various digital platforms serve as gateways to opportunities for women, thereby exploring the concept of women's empowerment. Technological advancements related to digital marketing have lowered traditional barriers for women, where they have been able to acquire businesses related to tourism and hospitality. Studies conducted in Europe, America, and Southeast Asia have been able to document how women have utilized digital platforms for the promotion of local tourism and hospitality services in their countries, thus reaching a larger target audience and achieving increased employment. Additionally, women utilizing tools of digital marketing are able to generate higher income for themselves and become better at managing work-life balance due to the flexibility of digital marketing. Furthermore, this study also suggests how women's empowerment can be encouraged by implementing proper training programs while mentioning certain cultural barriers faced by women around the world.

Keywords: Cultural barriers, Digital marketing, Employment, Equal opportunity, Tourism and hospitality, Women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Women's empowerment has gained significant attention across industries in recent decades, with particular relevance in tourism and hospitality. International initiatives promoting gender equality highlight that empowering women is essen-

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tial for both industry sustainability and social progress. In the tourism industry, women's participation has been linked to employment generation, social inclusion, and community development, making their empowerment central to achieving sustainable and inclusive growth (Rodríguez-Vera *et al.*, 2025; Nikjoo, Seyfi, & Saarinen, 2025). Previous studies have revealed that when women in a country are politically and psychologically empowered, it has a positive impact on their involvement in the tourism industry (Elshaer, Moustafa, Sobaih, Aliedan & Azazz, 2021). Political and psychological empowerment further strengthens women's roles in the tourism industry by increasing autonomy, competence, resilience, and influence in decision-making processes (Ertac & Tanova, 2020; Boley & McGehee, 2014).

Previous studies show that using digital marketing tools can improve overall tourism business performance (Deb, Nafi & Valeri, 2024). Digital presence and technological skills have become critical in the hospitality sector, with women leveraging digital marketing to enhance visibility, drive organizational success, and contribute to post-pandemic recovery (Kapota, Giannoukou, & Halkiopoulos, 2023). Although previous studies highlight psychological and socio-economic aspects, research is still required to integrate digital marketing capabilities of women and their overall contribution to tourism performance in different parts of the world. Addressing these is crucial to understanding the full scope of women's impact in the tourism and hospitality industry. To better understand women's empowerment in the context of tourism and hospitality, it is important to consider political, psychological, and social aspects, which are validated in different cultures (Boley & McGehee, 2014; Boley, Maruyama, & Woosnam, 2015). This study would examine how women are empowered through the utilization of digital marketing tools and how they use their knowledge and skills in diverse cultural contexts and in the face of varied obstacles.

WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT THEORY

The term "empowerment" has received a great deal of attention in many fields such as psychology, planning/ development, and education. Everyone has discussed this term as a potential solution to social injustice. Empowerment describes the ability of "people, organizations, and communities to gain mastery over their affairs" (Rappaport, 1987). Women's empowerment is considered to be a crucial challenge in today's world. It is considered to be an important international goal. According to Kabeer (1999), who has contributed significantly to our understanding of the theory of women's empowerment, empowerment is defined as the process by which those who are deprived of the ability to make strategic life choices gain this ability. According to the theoretical framework of

women's empowerment, there are three interrelated dimensions, namely agency, resources, and achievements (Kabeer, 1999).

The dimension of resources includes material, human, and social resources, which improves the tendency of women to exercise their own life choices. The dimension of agency represents the ability to define one's own goals and being able to act upon them. Agency also includes negotiation, deception, manipulation, bargaining, as well as cognitive processes of analysis and reflection. Agency has negative and positive connotations- "power to" which refers individual's tendency to define their own choices in life, as well as the ability to pursue their goals. "Power over" refers to the tendency of individuals to override the agency of others through threat, coercion, and violence. Achievement, which is the third dimension, refers to the overall outcome of agency. While discussing different terms and concepts in previous literature related to the term "empowerment", the term "agency" is closest to understanding what the majority of writers consider to be the essence of empowerment (Malhotra & Schuler, 2005).

According to Malhotra and Schuler (2005), women's empowerment could be seen both as a process and outcome, where empowerment is defined as the ability of a woman to make their strategic life choices in a context where they were previously denied this ability. Socio-cultural, economic, legal, interpersonal, psychological, and political are several dimensions where women's empowerment is displayed. Rowlands (1997) has given too much emphasis to the term "empowerment". He is known to be a feminist and peace activist in the late 1970s. He explained that there are three total dimensions of power, namely "power to", "power with", and "power within" (Rowlands, 1997). "Power to" refers to the ability to act. For example, if a woman acquires new skills or gains education, she develops her power to make decisions and solve problems as well as create new opportunities for herself. The author further claims that one person gaining power doesn't mean that others will lose it. "Power with" refers to the achievement due to working collectively. This power focuses on the strength that is gained by working together. "Power within" refers to the sense of self-worth and self-confidence of an individual. Women who have higher self-confidence and self-worth are more capable of asserting their civil rights as well as resisting oppression. These internal transformations become an enabler for the changes taking place externally.

UTILIZATION OF DIGITAL MARKETING PLATFORMS BY WOMEN ENTREPRENEURS AND PROFESSIONALS

Women's role in the tourism and hospitality industry has significantly evolved over the decades, which has further impacted economic and social development.

CHAPTER 3

Trends in Women's Empowerment Research: Analysis of India

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Abstract: The field of women's empowerment has evolved considerably over the last forty years, which is why academic scholars worldwide have shown interest in this area. Based on the same premise, this study attempts to perform an extensive bibliometric study, enlightening the most important dimensions of women's empowerment literature in the Indian context. The 519 scholarly articles that we have selected in this study, all of which were published between 1986 and 2022 and located in the reputable Scopus database, will be analyzed thoroughly to reveal the interconnections and create thematic clusters, as well as investigate the citation patterns, to create a rich textual map. This research is very important because it clarifies many points in the discussion of the empowerment of Indian women. To begin with, we explore the discovery of the most highly referenced document, which is a valuable contribution and has had a lot of impact on the discussion of the subject in academia. In addition, we aim to establish the key journals that have played a key role in ensuring they publish the best research on women's empowerment as a way of demonstrating their commitment to this important area. As well, we will identify key keywords that come up as theme areas, and these offer very essential information on the areas of exploration being central to the literature. Moreover, we identify and mention high-profile scholars whose academic activity has contributed a lot to the debate on the empowerment of Indian women.

Keywords: Bibliometric analysis, India, VOSviewer, Women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

In the pursuit of women's liberation, it becomes evident that monetary incentives alone fall short in motivating women to engage in the transformative societal

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changes required (Kaur, 2021). A growing body of evidence highlights the imperative to address the intricate issue of women's empowerment, encompassing a web of national, regional, and local factors that shape women's capacity for organization and political mobilization, as a crucial prerequisite for substantial advancements in women's well-being (Asthana, 1996). Furthermore, it is essential to recognize that the mere provision of job opportunities does not inherently alleviate resistance or contribute to the successful resolution of violence against women. Instead, it becomes evident that factors such as education, social connections, and the societal fabric itself hold greater significance (Sen, 1999). The interplay of three fundamental influencers, society's mental models, families, and women themselves, exerts influence across six pivotal indicators: women's access to education and economic opportunities, their participation in household decision-making and management, their perceptions of their own status within their homes, and their overall health (Sharma &, 2016).

The concept of women's empowerment has ignited widespread curiosity and captured the scholarly realm, giving rise to a rich tapestry of research endeavors and an unceasing stream of scholarly articles delving into its multifaceted dimensions (Garikipati, 2006). With a span of 36 years, researchers have delved into diverse facets of women's empowerment, uncovering insights such as the transformative impact of empowerment programs on immunization rates (Janssens, 2011), the underlying factors that foster empowerment within Indian self-help group initiatives (Bali Swain & Wallentin, 2012), and the initiatives undertaken by states to empower women in rural communities (Lahiri-Dutt & Samanta, 2002). In the realm of women's empowerment, a notable gap exists in the literature: a comprehensive synthesis that amalgamates the plethora of studies and offers a novel perspective on this complex and crucial subject. The need arises for a research plan that not only benefits scholars but also serves as a guiding beacon for those at the forefront of women's empowerment initiatives. To address this pressing concern, we embark upon an integrative literature review, drawing inspiration from Torraco's (2005) guidelines, to shed light on the following study questions and pave the way for a deeper understanding of women's empowerment.

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The history of women's empowerment has been uncovered within the past 36 years, with two different studies providing the reader with two different approaches to the complex topic. Considering the contributions of these scholars, we combine their contributions to provide a more detailed picture of women's empowerment. The former study discussed the field of skill development, emphasizing its role in women's empowerment in the light of the fast-moving

technological changes. It highlighted the key role of organizations like NSDA and PMKVY and the necessity to combine skills development with secondary education. Besides, the analysis revealed that a number of key issues necessitate labor market reforms, such as the discrepancy between theory and practice, the quality of the skills acquired, the imbalance between the demand and supply in the labor force, the in-house training opportunities, and incentives to engage the students and employees. Lack of qualified teachers was also another huge issue in this scenario (Cabral & Dhar, 2019). The second paper was about the transformative role of self-help groups (SHGs) in facilitating women's empowerment, which showed that they play a significant role in the realization of multidimensional empowerment amongst the rural women. The results highlighted SHGs as empowering spaces that help women to break the boundaries and realize their full potential. The collective action of these groups helps to increase the socioeconomic well-being of women and develop a stronger sense of agency and autonomy (Mahato *et al.*, 2022).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research employed a two-fold methodological approach, combining a systematic literature review with the use of data-driven bibliometric maps generated through the VOSviewer program. VOSviewer, a powerful visualization tool developed by van Eck and Waltman (2009), enabled the transformation of bibliometric data into comprehensive and visually engaging representations, thereby facilitating the exploration of data patterns and interconnections for deeper analytical insights (Laengle *et al.*, 2018). To conduct the systematic literature review, a structured procedure aligned with the study stages proposed by Lele (2011) was followed. The Scopus database was selected as the primary source due to its extensive citation coverage and rigorous indexing standards (Lasda Bergman, 2012). The retrieval of data was conducted in January 2022, and the publications on the topic of empowerment of women in the Indian context were considered to perform the retrieval. This search strategy included the search terms: enlightenment of women and India, and also included phrases in quotation marks to enable the search strategy to include the studies that are not necessarily referring to the search terms, but are conceptually related. The search terms were used in the title of the articles, abstracts, and keywords so that the search term is comprehensive in identifying the documents. The initial search resulted in 683 documents. The further filtering procedures were to be used to reduce the sample of the Scopus database to include the most relevant and high-quality publications and to make the dataset as narrow and as scholarly as possible.

CHAPTER 4

Gender Stereotypes in Tourism and Hospitality Sector at a Glance

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Abstract: Gender stereotypes are not new to society, including the tourism and hospitality industries, where the old standards and prejudices tend to govern the relations between the personnel and the guests. The chapter will examine the complex connection between gender stereotypes and the tourism and hospitality industry in a multidimensional analysis. The introduction preconditions the importance of the issue through the identification of the widespreadness and importance of gender biases in this field. The historical background of gender roles and classical expectations in the industry is probed in the antique background. Security of stereotypes explores the way in which prejudices exist within the personnel role, leadership position, and the views of visitors. The consequences of these stereotypes are real, and their effects on employment performance, guest satisfaction, and company development are explained further. The paper uses case studies and social illustrations to assess the issue of the region-specific challenges and hail the achievements of breaking the traditional gender roles. The practical ways of promoting gender equity, such as organization methods and training programs, are also discussed in order to reduce biases. Also, the contribution of technology and innovation towards inclusivity is highlighted. The conclusion is a summary of important findings and calls upon industry stakeholders to become champions of change, which will put the tourism and hospitality industry in a more progressive and just future.

Keywords: Gender equity, Gender stereotypes, Leadership biases, Organizational strategies, Technology and innovation, Tourism and hospitality.

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INTRODUCTION

General Prognosis of Gender Stereotypes

Gender stereotypes are popular assumptions regarding the traits, roles, and behaviors that are considered to be suitable for males and females in society (Ridgeway, 2011; UNESCO, 2019). Such stereotypes are usually based on cultural, social, and historical traditions and affect the personal and professional lives of people. There are some stereotypes that are commonly associated with men, which include that they are strong, assertive, and career-oriented, whereas the stereotypes about women include that they are caring, emotional, and mainly caregivers (Eagly and Wood, 2012). Such strict expectations restrict opportunities, strengthen discrimination, and create gender inequity in different areas, such as education, jobs, and leadership (Gill, 2007). Despite the fact that the evolution and changes in society as well as legislation have already broken the traditional gender norms, ideas about stereotypes remain in a number of cultures and influence the behavior and attitudes. To eliminate these biases, education, policy-making, and social awareness should be pursued on an ongoing basis in order to achieve gender equality and inclusivity (UNWTO, 2019; World Economic Forum, 2020). This part gives a good background knowledge of the gender bias, and thus, a reader can understand the key concepts before delving into the analysis.

Importance of Increasing Gender Stereotypes in Tourism and Hospitality

The tourism and hospitality industry has been considered as one of the biggest employment sectors worldwide, but has been heavily affected by gender stereotypes that affect employment opportunities, work relationships, and the growth of the industry as a whole (Campos-Soria, Marchante-Mera, and Ropero-Garcia, 2011). The issues raised by these stereotypes are important to address to achieve inclusiveness, diversity, and economic development.

- a. **Improving Workplace Equality:** Traditionally, the tourism and hospitality sector assigned gender roles, and women were either in the front office, housekeeping, or customer service, while men were in the management and technical departments (Heilman, 2012; Baum, 2013). Stereotyping is a break and people will be able to follow their skills and interests without having to conform to societal expectations.
- b. **Promoting Diversity in Leadership:** Women have been underrepresented in leadership and executive roles, even though they constitute a large percentage of the workforce in the hospitality industry (International Labour Organization

[ILO], 2020). Addressing gender biases in a challenging way can provide equal chances of career advancement and increase the inclusion of the decisions in the decision-making processes (Pritchard, Morgan, & Sedgley, 2007).

- c. **Enhancing Service Quality and Innovation:** Diversity and gender inclusion in the workforce leads to creativity, invention, and enhanced problem-solving (Morgan, Pritchard, and Sedgley, 2015). Allowing equal roles will contribute to business and increase guest experiences.
- d. **Economic and Social Benefits:** Gender equity in empowering people is an aspect that leads to workforce efficiency and economic development (World Economic Forum, 2020). Gender diversity in organizations can lead to greater employee satisfaction, employee retention, and brand reputation.
- e. **Legal and Ethical Implications:** As the world becomes increasingly focused on gender equality, companies operating in the tourism and hospitality sectors are forced to conform to the international standards and labor regulations (UNESCO, 2019). Gender stereotypes not only require compliance, but they also increase Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) efforts (ILO, 2020).

Creating awareness of the gender stereotypes in tourism and hospitality is a crucial factor towards developing a progressive industry that is just. The sector can grow sustainably and inclusively by defying the roles and encouraging equal leadership opportunities, as well as increasing diversity in the workplace.

ANCIENT CONTEXT

The Gender Roles in the Tourism and Hospitality Industry Emerged in the 21st Century

Gender roles in the past defined the tourism and hospitality industry, as certain functions were usually distributed in accordance with the social norms (Ridgeway, 2011). These functions have changed over time through developments in social, economic, and legal spheres and have enhanced more inclusivity and diversity in the workforce in gender terms. In the past, women were confined to being employed in customer-oriented positions of housekeeping, front desk, and food service, whereas men were predominantly in managerial, technical, and security positions (Campos-Soria *et al.*, 2011). The nature of these traditional assignments was grounded in the views of physical strength, emotional intelligence, and caregiving skills. As a result of the growing awareness and changing policies, gender roles in tourism and hospitality have become diverse (UNESCO, 2019; UNWTO, 2019). Women are taking the leadership and managerial positions, and men are found in the customer service and

CHAPTER 5

Digital Revolution: The Transformative Role of Social Media in Asian Women's Empowerment

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Abstract: The recent digital revolution has transformed social structures and how people communicate, using social media as a powerful tool for women's empowerment. Across Asia, diverse and complex social, cultural, and economic conditions exist, yet digital platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and YouTube have become vital resources for women. These platforms enable women to share their experiences, reach wider audiences, and participate more actively in social and public life.

The chapter examines the evolving role of social media in promoting women's democratic rights in Asian countries, to empower women to interrogate deeply-rooted patriarchal norms and create positive social change. Using secondary data, the study integrates information acquired from peer-reviewed articles, publications, case studies, and statistical reports to assess the influence and limitations of social media on women's empowerment in different socio-cultural contexts. This chapter explores how women use social media to raise their voices and encourage community organisations.

The chapter addresses the barriers women face in using social media for empowerment and inclusion, including harassment, cyber abuse, the urban-rural divide, and limited digital literacy. It also examines how a growing number of social movements around gender equality (*e.g.*, #MeToo in India) have been used to raise awareness of gender issues and to influence policy. While social media presents significant opportunities for women's empowerment, achieving maximum impact requires ensuring that all women across Asia have access to these platforms. This can be accomplished through digital education initiatives and the creation of safe online spaces specifically designed for women.

Keywords: Asian countries, Challenges, Empowerment, Opportunities, Social media, Women.

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INTRODUCTION

Social media refers to digital platforms or networks on the internet that help users communicate or engage with communities in real time. From Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn to different online interactive digital applications that use engaging encounters to communicate experiences and opinions, access information, and circulate knowledge and information effectively. Social media is not only a powerful tool, but it is also bringing change in the business, government, and individual communities. It has evolved as an important component for communication, learning, commerce, activism, and political interaction, promoting global connections and sharing. The digital age has witnessed the expansion of social media's role to act as a catalyst for social change, especially towards the empowerment of women.

Women's empowerment has world-changing effects through social media by raising voices, affecting economic independence, and promoting societal changes. Online tools have opened up a world for women to challenge cultural customs and norms, support gender equality, and search for new opportunities in the new phase of digital spaces offered through social media sites such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn. The campaigns #MeToo and #TimesUp have raised public awareness regarding workplace harassment and violence against women and increased public accountability. The responses are through social movement activism (UN Women, 2019; Banet-Weiser, 2018). Through hashtags, digital media women can share their personal experiences with other women, and by sharing their stories, use digital activism to build new forms of collective communication about politics. While digital activism will not replace the typical shifts in institutions and law that are required for social movement success, it will serve an important function in maintaining the social agenda and raising awareness of social issues on digital media platforms.

In most of Asia, deeply- rooted societal realities and traditional practices have effectively restricted women from sharing public spaces, the labour force, and political engagement. But the rise of online spaces such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, TikTok, and LinkedIn has eliminated the barriers for women to come forward and think outside the box, in order to create new opportunities leading towards women's empowerment. The most significant change that social media has provided women is the ability to raise their voice and advocate for gender equality. The battle for gender equality has experienced resistance across the globe; however, it has also seen a significant response in many countries, such as India, China, and South Korea, to fight against sex trafficking, harassment, abuse, and sexual discrimination in the workplace. The rise of digital activism through online spaces has changed the standard of how we

look at gender-based violence and gender justice, with social media as a source to promote policy-making and legislative actions to support women's empowerment.

Social media has played an important role in providing women with the opportunity for economic empowerment through digital entrepreneurship and sales. Additionally, these platforms have allowed women to establish and promote their businesses outside of the bias of the traditional marketplace and, therefore, allow them to become financially independent without the constraints of gender stereotypes that exist in the marketplace. Women-led digital entrepreneurship in the internet era has significantly transformed income-generation opportunities and financial independence for women. Finally, the advent of social media has also bridged the gap for information and networking, with women now being able to access online courses, mentorship, and jobs *via* social media.

Women from Asian backgrounds, especially in the more conservative or inner districts of the continent, have resorted to finding opportunities out of the rat race *via* digital platforms to upskill, get in touch with professionals, and get opportunities that they are not going to be told to fit into society. Social media has also transformed women's attitudes towards socio-cultural norms in Asian countries. In societies where so many women struggled intensely to raise their voices against gender-based injustice, they found a home in social media, where they express their concerns, connect with others facing similar challenges, and collectively advocate for change. Digital communities, feminists, and women-led communities emerge. Several feminist spaces on digital platforms offer support in matters related to domestic violence, harassment, and workplace parity. These platforms have also played a key role in turning discussions on mental health, self-care, and women's holistic wellbeing, once considered taboo for large parts of Asia, into the norm. And speaking out for each of these iconic leaders, activists, and influencers, no one gets where they are without being part of a movement. There are legions of anonymous women, because of social media, who are changing the narrative on what role women can take in society. Whether political leaders or entrepreneurs, educators or artists, women are making the digital world shaping, inspiring, and empowering for generations to come. Social media has the potential to share stories, exchange ideas, and engage with the masses using online platforms, making it a transformative tool for promoting gender equality across Asian countries. There are multiple barriers that we have to deal with while using digital tools. Women have transformed how they interact with society while using digital platforms, laying the foundation for an inclusive and better future that allows women to raise their concerns, achieve success, and thrive in every aspect of their lives.

CHAPTER 6

Role of Women Bloggers in Promoting Tourism Destinations

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Abstract: Over the past few years, the tourism industry has experienced all these changes as a result, as digital technologies and social media infrastructures rising to the surface. The development of peregrinating bloggers has been among the major drivers of this change as they have become important in the shaping of tourist behaviours and destinations. Women have emerged as the key bloggers to market the tourism destinations with their specific worldviews, experiences, and online community to project the magnetisms and cultures of various destinations. The role of women bloggers in the tourist sector has become a vital ingredient due to the genuine, relatable, and interesting material that they post, which appeals to their readers and viewers. Their blogs, friendly media posts, and videos are very informative about the destinations, culture, and experience that they offer, and persuade and influence the choice of peregrinations of their readers. In addition, women bloggers have also played a significant role in facilitating sustainable tourism policies, cultural heritage, and local societies, thus helping to ensure that the characteristic identity of destinations is maintained. Although their contribution is increasingly becoming an important element in marketing tourist destinations, the role of women bloggers in marketing tourism destinations is not well researched. This gap in cognisance is what this research seeks to address as it seeks to understand the experience, perception, and strategies of women bloggers in marketing tourism destinations. This study aims to make its contribution to the existing insight on the complex relations among tourism, technology, and gender by analysing the influence of women bloggers on the tourist behaviours and locations. The research study is based on both primary and secondary data sources. The Research paper is founded on exploratory research.

Keywords: Destination marketing, Influencer marketing, Tourism marketing Strategies, Tourism promotion, Travel blogging, Women empowerment in tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

The recent years have seen tremendous changes in the tourism industry with the emergence of digital technologies and social media platforms. The emergence of peregrinating bloggers has been one of the significant factors that have led to this change, as it has become an effective voice in shaping the tourist demeanours and destinations. These bloggers have been the key agents in marketing the tourism destinations, and women have used their own voices, experiences, and online networks to present the magnetizations and cultures of various destinations. Female bloggers have also gained significant importance in the tourism sector because they are in a position to offer real, relatable, and relevant content that appeals to their followers (Mallick, A., 2021). Their blogs, social media posts, and videos are a good source of information about their destinations, cultures, and experiences that influence their decisions of peregrination and persuade their reader to visit the destinations (Monica Iorio, 2022). In addition to this, women bloggers have been instrumental in ensuring that sustainable tourism is being practiced, culture propagated, and the local community as well, and this has served to maintain the distinctness of destinations (Joobi V. P. & Dr. Satheesh E. K., 2018). Although women bloggers are becoming more prominent, the impact of bloggers on marketing tourism destinations has not been fully examined. This chapter will address this gap in the erudition by examining the experiences and perceptions of women bloggers, as well as how they plan to market tourism destinations. This chapter will contribute to a deeper understanding of the complicated relationships between tourism, technology, and gender by studying the role of women bloggers and how they influence tourist behaviours and tourist destinations (Beth Santos 2024). Female bloggers have emerged as strong voices during the digital age, and their influence on industries across the globe is great, as is their influence on tourism. The fact that they can produce captivating narratives, provide authentic experiences, and reach a wide range of customers has made them significant stakeholders in the marketing of tourism locations. Due to the convivial media and the internet, bloggers, especially women bloggers, have done away with the barriers and shown their resourcefulness and mastery in terms of narration, photography, and content generation. By writing about their own adventures, traveling to unusual locations, and providing useful advice on the peregrination, these bloggers have motivated millions of people to visit nascent places and cultures. The fact that women bloggers are authentic is one of the most impressive features. They give the reality that is genuine and attractive to the reader in a world where the content has been commercialised to an absolute extent. Their blogs may also include some unusual and less-travelled destinations, illuminating the local tradition, food, and culture that would otherwise remain unnoticed. This is not only boosting tourism in areas that are not well explored, but there is an additional effect on the conservation of cultural heritage. By

posting their experiences, women bloggers make a ripple effect that prompts their followings to explore similar homogenous destinations and sustainable tourism points (Alexandra Rodrigues Goncalves 2022). Furthermore, the female bloggers are significant in the discourse of the particular needs and interests of female travelers. In their content, they enable other women to perigrate easily and safely by sharing exhortation on solo travel, packing baggage, and negotiating cultural disparities. This has created another online society, and women are motivated to step outside their comfort zones and see the world. They have challenged the stereotypes and removed the barriers that exist in society, showing that travel is not limited by gender (P.R.Senutha & S. Nor Hafiza, 2017). Their attractiveness in terms of visuals of their blogs, as well as their social posts to the media, also contributes to their effectiveness. Having a keen interest in aesthetics, women bloggers act as reporters of a destination that has beautiful photography and interesting videos. These pictorial accounts stir the sense of wanderlust and leave the readers with a sense that they are living the journey themselves. The torrent of striking pictures and strong stories will result in highly shareable data that increases its presence and influence (Dr. Manoja Padyala & Mr. Sai Kiran Kallu, 2025). In addition to the partnership between women bloggers and tourism boards, travel agencies and local businesses have been using innovative marketing approaches. Through their influence, bloggers market places to specific individuals, thus bringing more foot traffic and economic magnification. Their honest reviews and suggestions are a combination of credibility to brands and destinations that establishes a sense of trust in the potential tourists, Madhupriya Srivastava (2025).

Significance of the Study

This research has paramount implications for the tourism industry, policymakers, and women bloggers themselves. By promoting the contribution of women bloggers to tourism promotion, this study seeks to:

1. Apprise strategies and policies in tourism marketing by exploiting the power of women bloggers.
2. Potentiate women bloggers to be more efficacious promoters of sustainable tourism practices and cultural heritage.
3. Contribute to a more nuanced understanding of the interconnections of gender, technology, and tourism.

Promoting Tourism Destinations

Women bloggers play an important role in the tourism industry. Their authentic voices and diverse perspectives inspire countless individuals to explore the world,

CHAPTER 7

Role of Women Bloggers in Empowering Local Communities through Food Tourism

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Abstract: With the advancement in digitalization, blogging has become one of the powerful tools mainly for storytelling, influencing, and community development. This has been seen in the tourism industry, where women bloggers are playing a significant role by showcasing cultural heritage, promoting sustainable practices, and supporting local economies. Therefore, this chapter aims to examine the role of women bloggers in tourism, the challenges they encounter, and their potential to transform communities and narratives within the global tourism landscape.

Keywords: Blogging, Digital, Feminism, Food blogs, Local community, Tourism, Women's empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

In recent years, food tourism has gained attention as both cultural and economic development in many regions worldwide are progressing upward, particularly in destinations that showcase their uniqueness through food identity. This is believed to be the reflections of how women bloggers have played important roles in promoting local foods, preserving cultural heritage, and empowering communities. They are making local food traditions and culinary practices popular in a particular location. Through exchanging stories, family recipes, and personal experiences, these women bloggers enable the strengthening of the authentic and cultural bonding within the communities, which is less often found in formal tourism marketing. For instance, women entrepreneurs in Bali have pre-

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served traditional Balinese cuisine and strengthened the local culinary identity by narrating it on blogging platforms (Yanthi *et al.*, 2016). This suggests that female bloggers' opinions and views raise awareness of female food entrepreneurs and their specialty recipes. Meanwhile, bloggers like Delicious Food Bali, *Balikalap Makan*, Food in Frame, and Epicurina support Bali's local culinary industry and tourism growth by promoting Balinese cuisine. Therefore, it is suggested here that food promotion through tourism encourages both the locals and foreign travelers to try it. Similarly, women in Ubud have used their culinary skills to market their city as a food destination by showing the value of local cuisine and ways to cook (Pitanatri, 2016).

On top of all that, women bloggers are also referred to as role models to others. The women are motivating and supporting each other to venture into food entrepreneurship. This indicates the significance of women bloggers in empowering women entrepreneurs in rural communities. Through this, job opportunities are widely open, and the local economy is expanding. With the help of social media, traditional culinary delights have been growing rapidly. From this review, it is evident that women bloggers are equally playing an important role in transferring the knowledge to both locals and international tourists to culinary destinations. Referring to the example in Ubud, women and other local culinary entrepreneurs have effectively advertised their food products through unpaid endorsements on social media and TripAdvisor. This empowerment is further evidenced by the accomplishments of women such as *Ibu Oka* and *Ibu Mangku*, who have established themselves in Ubud's culinary scene and not only support community development but also promote local food (Pitanatri, 2016).

The role of female bloggers is further explained in a recent study by Julijanti *et al.* (2024). Among the roles is the preservation of traditional culinary traditions through the promotion and documentation of local cooking methods, ingredients, and recipes. This pattern shows that women have played an important role in preserving the authenticity of traditional cuisine. Added by Julijanti *et al.* (2024), the traditional foods in places like Madura and Yogyakarta are among the specialties of the destinations that attract local tourists. Also, Julijanti *et al.* (2024) mention that due to the growth of food tourism there, the culinary sector has developed and provides more job opportunities for Madurese women. It has become a primary source of income for them. Interestingly, women who have culinary skills are committed to starting their food business. Therefore, it is notable that by storytelling these traditions on their blogs, bloggers directly promote cultural heritage appreciation and empower community education.

The promotion of food tourism by female bloggers helps local communities' economies expand. Bloggers are attracting tourists by eating local cuisine,

introducing locally based eateries, food vendors, and culinary practices. Dawson *et al.* (2023) argue that the rise in tourism-related income helps to maintain customs and boost local companies. Additionally, blogging about local food items and services can raise demand and open up new doors for business owners and craftspeople. This chapter argues that women bloggers have emerged as key actors in promoting culinary tourism. Their blogs are platforms to highlight local foods, unite the communities, and develop the local economy.

They are tremendous assets to the culinary tourism industry. They are recognized for their capacity to provide genuine and captivating content. Moreover, their enthusiasm for conserving cultural heritage is also valued. This highlights that women bloggers will probably play a bigger part in promoting food tourism. As digitalization rapidly advanced, it further opened up new avenues for economic growth and cross-cultural interaction. Table 1 below provides key insights from women bloggers in food tourism.

Table 1. Key insights from women bloggers in food tourism.

Region/Country	Key Contribution
Bali, Indonesia	Promoted local cuisine, preserved culinary identity (Yanthi <i>et al.</i> , 2016; Pitanatri, 2016)
Ubud, Indonesia	Empowered women entrepreneurs promoted a culinary destination (Pitanatri, 2016)
Indonesia	Preserved traditional culinary practices (Julijanti <i>et al.</i> , 2024)
Sri Lanka	Highlighted the potential of food tourism through digital media (Dawson <i>et al.</i> , 2023)

(Source: Author's Compilation)

Considering everything that has been discussed thus far, women have contributed significantly to the expansion of the tourism industry. However, this area of study receives less attention. There is also a limited number of studies focusing on women's efforts in promoting local cuisine. According to Khoso *et al.* (2023), women's empowerment is not only a social issue but also a critical component of tourism's sustainable development and economic growth. The present chapter aims to explore the various secondary sources of data information and literature analysis. Relevant books, journals, publications, book chapters, magazines, and news articles will be used as sources of data and information.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Trends in Food Tourism and Food Bloggers

Food tourism is known as one of the most promising tourism marketing in most parts of the world. In Asia, tourists take part in authentic and sustainable food tours and cooking workshops in travel destinations (Jolliffe, 2019). In recent

CHAPTER 8

The Role of Social Media in Shaping Hotel Decision-Making Among Female Tourists: A Study on Information Evaluation, Trust, and Visual Influence

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Abstract: The chapter focuses on the influence of social media on how women customers in the Delhi/NCR region of India would evaluate terms of hotel selection during the hotel selection process. It aims at providing an understanding that could help stakeholders within the Indian hotel industry to streamline the social media platforms by focusing on big things in online hotel booking.

The study method was qualitative research, which was exploratory in nature and comprised 30 in-depth semi-structured interviews with social media users whose selection was non-random and purposive.

The findings indicate that social media use is a significant determinant that influences search, decision making, and hotel reservations among female consumers to assist them in retrieving information, alternative value, and hotel bookings. Despite the negative and positive facets of social media, good ones outweigh the bad in the choice of a hotel. The article also examines the impact of circumstantial forces, which are related to the origins of social media content, and the degree of trust that women consumers have in influencing the hotel selection process.

The strategic information offered in this paper is about marketing and management of the hospitality industry in order to improve the knowledge of the hospitality industry on the role that social media plays in the decision-making process of women to select hotels. It highlights the complexity introduced by the number and types of social media sites and information sources in the quest to find information on the hotels and the decision-making patterns.

The research fills the gaps in the literature on the topic of consumer behavior and the utilization of social media by consumers in the hotel industry, shedding light on the impact that social media has on the hotel decisions of women. It uses in-depth interviewing to identify the important factors that are grounded in real-life experiences and situations.

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Keywords: Decision-making, Delhi/NCR, Hotel selection, Social media influencers, Women consumers.

INTRODUCTION

The popularity of social media and the access to user-generated content have transformed the behaviour of female travellers in terms of accessing information and choosing the hotel to reserve a room in. This change has revolutionized the travel industry, where women are reshaping the way they consume travel content, organize travel, and how they relate with hospitality brands. Traditional sources such as brochures and recommendations made by travel agencies are being supplanted by digital platforms (Kim and Ko, 2012; Litvin *et al.*, 2008). In the past, tourists relied on print information or word of mouth (Jansen, 2005; TGM Global Travel Survey, 2023). Nonetheless, social media has transformed the process of trip planning, providing incredibly much information, the opportunity to interact, and customized content (Skift, 2025; WTM Global Hub, 2025). In the modern world, social media plays a crucial role in such activities as the purchase of travel products, reviews, and information related to a particular location (Skift, 2025; Beautiful Destinations, 2025). Travel blogs and online reviews are usually considered to be more reliable than personal recommendations, especially when it is about an unknown destination (Epsilon, 2025; Travelport, 2025). ICT and Web 2.0 integration have also improved the dynamism and user-centred decision-making by the hotel (Ranjan and Read, 2023).

The Role of Social Media in Shaping Travel Decisions

Social media, Instagram, Facebook, TikTok, and YouTube are potent marketing platforms among female travelers as it provides aesthetic information enabling the user to tour the place before booking. Reviews on influencers and bloggers are detailed, emphasizing such points as the quality and the facilities of the rooms, which appeal to women who care about aesthetics, safety, and comfort. Social media also creates direct contact with the hotels and other travellers, hence creating credibility and community. As an illustration, the hotels capture their Instagram stories and live chats to walk around them virtually and address the issues in real-time, ensuring a custom experience.

The Shift from Traditional to Digital Sources

The demise of the ancient means, such as brochures, can be attributed to the ease and availability of the digital channel. Social media provides vibrant and updated information, and this is very helpful, especially to women who have a number of responsibilities. The reviews online enable women to make informed choices based on the experiences of other women. It has been revealed that women tend to

believe online reviews more than men when planning their trips, thus making it very important to work on a positive online image (Epsilon, 2025; Travelport, 2025).

The Influence of User-Generated Content

User-generated content (UGC): These are photos, videos, and reviews that are generated by users and are a major motivator of travel decisions. UGC is seen as more real and close, as it represents life experience instead of professionalized marketing communications. An example is an Instagram post or TikTok video that is very straightforward and inspires bookings. Even UGC enables the traveler to observe the fit of a hotel with their preferences, including sustainability or luxury. The emergence of UGC has resulted in a feedback loop that benefits the consumer and businesses.

The Impact of Changing Women's Consumer Behavior

The era of digital has resulted in a shift in consumer behavior, along with a reduction in free time, a change in the way of living, and a central tendency towards value-to-money experiences. Women travelers are more empowered and knowledgeable as they employ social media to dominate their travel preparations. They are concerned about safety, cleanliness, and facilities that are friendly to females, and such can be discussed on social media by the hotels. The emergence of solo female travel has only increased the role of such platforms in finding fellow travelers and gaining confidence.

Hotel Industry Problems and Business Opportunities

Although social media has advantages, it has its own woes, including the issue of reputation management online and competitiveness. To be unique, hotels will have to invest in active reputation management and develop interesting material. The opportunities are the presence of exclusive promotions, the behind-the-scenes content, and playing off consumer understanding to personalize offerings. The needs of female travelers can be used to stimulate loyalty and rebooking.

The Implication of the Research to be Conducted

However, in spite of the increasing popularity of social media, the literature has a gap where the effects of social media on the choice of hotel by female travelers have not been researched. Research on women and the views of hotel employees is not very common (Liu *et al.*, 2020; Kapoor *et al.*, 2022). More studies should be conducted to comprehend the impact of social media on female travelers and the threats and opportunities that it poses to the employees of the hotel.

CHAPTER 9

The Role of Digital Marketing in Driving Women's Success in Tourism and Hospitality

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Abstract: The integration of digital marketing in the sector of tourism and hospitality has immensely helped in creating opportunities for women, such as entrepreneurship, professionals, and leadership roles. This chapter will explain how digital transformation in hospitality and tourism helps women access various opportunities, increase their visibility in their careers, launch innovative startups, and overcome traditional barriers to success. It provides women with a way to advance in their careers by utilising tools such as social media, Search Engine Optimisation (SEO), and engaging with customers, thereby creating goodwill in the market.

Various case studies in this chapter show how women-led ventures in the sector of tourism and hospitality sectors, with the integration of digital marketing, helped women to empower them, expand their businesses in all parts of the world, and scale operations effectively. But with these benefits, women also face some challenges in the digital era, like a lack of digital skills, limited access to technologies, and gender bias that hinder women's participation.

In its conclusion, the chapter focuses on practical solutions to close these gaps, offering insights into the importance of digital literacy initiatives, mentorship programs, and supportive policies that encourage women to embrace and excel with digital tools. By showcasing the transformative role of digital marketing in reshaping gender dynamics in the tourism and hospitality sectors, this chapter emphasises its potential to foster inclusivity, drive economic empowerment, and promote sustainable growth for women across the globe.

The conclusion shows a brief overview of the whole study, which shows that various challenges are still faced by women, how the digital era brings a revolution to the tourism and hospitality sector, and much more. This chapter also talks about focusing on sustainability, economic tourism, and the safety of women across the world.

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Keywords: Digital literacy, Digital marketing, Empowerment, Hospitality, Women, Tourism.

INTRODUCTION

Importance of Digital Marketing in Tourism and Hospitality

Digital marketing performs a vital role in the tourism and hospitality sector by providing various cost-effective and useful strategies. Earlier, the marketing was very expensive, which involved televisions, radio, or print, but with the revolution in marketing, which is now named as digital marketing, with various platforms like social media, websites, and web browsers (Litvin *et al.*, 2008). These tools allow businesses to contact customers worldwide and expand their business internationally. Moreover, various digital marketing campaigns, such as Search Engine Optimisation (SEO) and Cost-Per-Click (CPC) models, are more efficient in providing results and economical. By the results given by these resources, entrepreneurs use their resources efficiently, target specific customers like luxury travellers, or those who want unique experiences. Digital marketing helps businesses to be competitive and innovative by making changes to their policies, services, and products that suit customer requirements, which automatically causes growth and produces goodwill for the business. By examining online marketing data, businesses may enhance their marketing strategies to get the best Return On Investment (ROI) (Fatima *et al.*, 2024).

Customers want tailored and prompt interactions in the current digital era. Live communication with travellers is facilitated by digital marketing for the tourism and hospitality industries. Social networking sites like X, Facebook, and Instagram are outstanding tools for communicating with potential visitors (Hanan & Putit, 2013). These platforms empower brands to establish ongoing customer relations and humanise their existence through answering questions, conducting interactive competitions, or revealing behind-the-scenes content. Another significant tool that enables customised communication is Email marketing. Businesses can improve customer satisfaction and boost repeat bookings by providing custom-made offers, booking reminders, or loyalty benefits guided by user preferences and past attitudes.

Reviews of customers and control over digital images are also a crucial component of tourism engagement. Travellers nowadays, before making any judgements, first go through the online reviews from various sites like TripAdvisor, Google, and MakeMyTrip (Baka, 2016). Online reviews have a great impact nowadays; one review can break or make a booking. Digital marketing also helps in maintaining goodwill, influencing customer decisions, and, based on customer feedback, they try to improve the services.

Digital marketing empowers businesses to get validated information about customers. Technologies help to monitor website performance in real time, like Google Analytics, which analyzes and provides valuable data about customer behaviour, taste, preferences, and buying patterns. The result of these facts is very important for making changes in products and services and maximizing marketing strategies in the sector of tourism and hospitality sector. For example, tracking booking times and most popular destinations can help businesses design ads that can directly hit the target of their ideal customers.

In conclusion, companies that have businesses in the sector of travelling and hospitality sectors must implement the use of digital marketing to stay competitive, innovative, engage with customers, and boost reservations. It is a very powerful tool for this industry as it gives reach to a globally available audience, which gives cost-effective advertising options, connecting with consumers in real time, and building a brand's goodwill. Nowadays, digital marketing is no longer a luxury, so businesses hoping for long-term success should implement the use of digital marketing, as tourists are becoming tech-savvy.

Women's Role in the Tourism and Hospitality Industries

Women play a significant and revolutionary role in one of the biggest and fastest-growing industries in the world, which is tourism and hospitality. Women have made significant contributions as employees, entrepreneurs, and leaders for the growth and success of these industries, even with many barriers like gender inequality and restricted access to leadership roles in many sectors.

Women in customer service, housekeeping, food and beverage services, event management, and tour guiding make up a major contribution to the human resources in tourism and hospitality. These positions are frequently viewed as flexible and approachable, providing women opportunities to balance family responsibilities. In hotels, restaurants, and travel agencies, women represent the majority of the frontline workforce in many countries, acting as the foundation for daily operations (Baum, 2013).

Apart from their usual responsibilities, women have a significant role in expanding industry, including eco-tourism, wellness tourism, and cultural tourism. Women's involvement in these industries seems to be important in building travelling and hospitality experiences more familiar, ethical, sustainable, and culturally aware. For instance, women are also involved in performing leadership roles in running small, locally owned tourism businesses that help in encouraging tourists about regional heritage, culture, and environmental preservation (Ashley *et al.*, 2007).

CHAPTER 10

A Case Study on Empowering Women in Tourism: Leveraging Digital Marketing for Sustainable Development

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Abstract: The tourist industry is instrumental in promoting the ideals of sustainable development, economic growth, and the empowerment of women. According to the case study “Empowering Women in Tourism: Leveraging Digital Marketing for Sustainable Development,” digital marketing has a significant impact on the empowerment of women in the tourism industry. It presents various success stories about different companies and brands that have helped women in coping with socioeconomic problems in the tourist industry. One such example is the Women in Travel CIC in the UK. It provides women entrepreneurs with the opportunity to learn digital marketing. Another example is the Self-Employed Women’s Association in India. It has helped women entrepreneurs in promoting handicrafts through digital marketing. Similarly, the case study highlights the role of Intrepid Travel. It provides women-only travel to assist women tour guides in underserved areas. Moreover, it highlights the role of Airbnb in the empowerment of women in the tourism industry. It has enabled women across the globe to promote cultural tourism. These stories highlight the significance of digital marketing in the empowerment of women in the tourism industry. They emphasize the significance of digital marketing in promoting the ideals of sustainable development. Apart from highlighting the significance of digital marketing in the empowerment of women in the tourism industry, the case study presents various options to address the socioeconomic problems in the tourist industry. These options include public-private partnership models. They highlight the significance of digital marketing in promoting the ideals of sustainable development.

Keywords: Cultural heritage preservation, Digital marketing, Female entrepreneurship, Sustainable growth, Tourism development, Women empowerment.

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INTRODUCTION

Approximately 3.9 billion people worldwide are women, making up nearly half of the global population. Despite this significant presence, women remain underrepresented in leadership roles across various industries. Only 31% of senior managerial positions worldwide are held by women, and even fewer occupy executive roles or own businesses, according to the World Economic Forum. However, the tourism sector presents a unique opportunity, as women constitute 54% of the workforce, according to the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). Yet, only a small number of these women hold leadership positions or own businesses in the tourism industry (UNWTO, the United Nations World Tourism Organization, 2023; World Economic Forum, 2023).

Tourism is one of the fastest-growing sectors globally, employing millions and representing about 10% of the world's GDP. While there is significant potential for women to benefit from this industry, institutional barriers, gender biases, and limited access to economic opportunities still hinder their progress. Many women in the sector occupy lower-paying jobs or work in the informal sector, rather than in managerial or owner roles. Digital marketing offers a powerful way to bridge this gap by enabling women to market their businesses, connect with global customers, and achieve financial independence without relying on traditional gatekeepers.

The tourism sector can drive sustainable development, inclusive economic growth, and women's empowerment. A case study titled "Empowering Women in Tourism: Leveraging Digital Marketing for Sustainable Development" shows how digital marketing has transformed women-led travel programs. It highlights real success stories from companies and brands that have helped women thrive in the tourism industry by overcoming socioeconomic challenges. Notable examples include Women in Travel CIC in the UK, which offers mentorship and training in digital marketing to female entrepreneurs, and the Self-Employed Women's Association (SEWA) in India, which has used online platforms to promote handicrafts and local experiences. The report also features initiatives by Intrepid Travel, which focuses on women-only tours to support female guides in underserved regions, and Airbnb, which empowers women hosts worldwide to offer unique cultural experiences. These programs illustrate how digital marketing strategies, such as social media campaigns, e-commerce platforms, and storytelling, have improved visibility, preserved cultural heritage, and increased market access for female entrepreneurs (Intrepid Travel, 2023; Airbnb, 2023; Association of Self-Employed Women (SEWA), 2023) (CIC, Women in Travel, 2023).

The internet revolution has transformed how businesses operate, allowing women in the travel industry to reach a larger audience. Digital marketing now provides women businesses with affordable ways to promote their products and services without large financial investments. Social media, SEO, content marketing, and partnerships with influencers have become essential tools for women to compete in the sector. Platforms like Facebook, Instagram, and TikTok enable women-owned travel agencies to connect with clients directly, build brand identities, and increase sales. Digital booking systems and online payment gateways have further improved access, allowing women in rural areas to participate in the global tourism economy.

Furthermore, digital marketing empowers female entrepreneurs to share their stories and showcase their expertise in the travel industry. Through engaging visual storytelling, video marketing, and blog content, women can create unique brand narratives that attract tourists interested in cultural experiences and sustainable travel. This digital exposure has significantly benefited initiatives like eco-tourism, community-based tourism, and experiential travel, providing economic opportunities for women who might otherwise struggle in the traditional job market. This aspect of digital marketing is particularly relevant in rural and indigenous communities, where traditional crafts, cuisine, and cultural heritage play a crucial role in tourism.

While digital marketing presents many opportunities, challenges remain. Financial constraints, societal stigma, and limited computer skills are among the obstacles many female entrepreneurs face. Women in developing countries often lack the technology and internet access necessary to use digital marketing tools effectively. Additionally, gender biases in business and tourism can make it difficult for women to grow their businesses and achieve long-term financial independence. In male-dominated areas like adventure tourism, guide services, and transportation, women frequently encounter barriers in establishing themselves.

Addressing these issues will require several interventions. First, community-based training programs should be developed to equip female entrepreneurs with the knowledge and skills to use digital marketing effectively. Governments and non-governmental organizations should work together to ensure women can access financial resources for their tourism businesses, receive business development training, and participate in digital literacy programs. Public-private partnerships can play a vital role in bridging the digital divide by providing affordable technology solutions and internet access in underserved areas.

CHAPTER 11

Digital Entrepreneurship and Women's Work-Life Balance: A Transformative Paradigm

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Abstract: The advent of digital entrepreneurship has redefined professional landscapes, empowering women to transcend traditional barriers associated with work-life balance, societal norms, and financial limitations. Technology has revolutionised business models, enabling women entrepreneurs to harness digital platforms to create successful enterprises while simultaneously managing familial and personal responsibilities.

This chapter delves into the convergence of leadership, digital business, and work-life balance, particularly examining the psychological, social, and economic challenges women entrepreneurs face. A compelling case study featured in this discussion is that of Priyanka Tiwari, a travel blogger and digital entrepreneur, whose robust online presence boasts over 2.78 million YouTube subscribers and 116,000 social media followers. Through strategic engagement with digital platforms, she has cultivated a sustainable career while maintaining personal equilibrium. Her journey highlights the transformative impact of technology, innovative branding, and time management techniques in overcoming the challenges of the industry.

Beyond individual narratives, this chapter evaluates the broader implications of digital entrepreneurship for women, underscoring the significance of technological advancements, professional networks, and policy interventions in fostering sustainable women-led enterprises. In the digital era, success extends beyond financial prosperity; it embodies resilience, flexibility, and empowerment principles that are reshaping contemporary entrepreneurship for women.

Keywords: Business models, Digital entrepreneurship, Financial constraints, Technological advancements, Success stories, Technological advancements.

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INTRODUCTION

The digital revolution has unlocked new avenues for entrepreneurship, allowing women to transcend conventional constraints and redefine their professional success on their own terms. Increased access to digital tools, remote work capabilities, and social media influence has revolutionised entrepreneurial strategies, enabling women to launch and scale businesses without the barriers imposed by traditional business models.

The shift to digital platforms has significantly altered the economic landscape, providing women with unprecedented opportunities to build independent careers and financial stability. Unlike traditional businesses that require substantial capital and physical infrastructure, digital entrepreneurship enables women to establish enterprises with minimal investment, often from the comfort of their homes. This accessibility has led to a surge in female-led businesses across various industries, ranging from fashion and beauty to technology and education.

Women like Falguni Nayar, the founder of Nykaa, and Vineeta Singh, CEO of Sugar Cosmetics, have successfully harnessed digital platforms to build thriving enterprises. Their journeys demonstrate the power of e-commerce and social media in driving consumer engagement and business scalability. Similarly, global influencers such as Chiara Ferragni have leveraged personal branding to create multimillion-dollar fashion and lifestyle businesses.

In addition to e-commerce and brand collaborations, content creation has emerged as a powerful tool for women in the digital economy. Social media platforms such as YouTube, Instagram, and TikTok have enabled women to share knowledge, promote products, and cultivate communities that support their entrepreneurial endeavours. This transformation has led to the emergence of a new breed of entrepreneurs- digital influencers who command significant economic power through brand sponsorships, affiliate marketing, and personal branding.

One of the most notable success stories in the digital entrepreneurial sphere is Priyanka Tiwari, a travel blogger and social media influencer who has leveraged digital platforms to construct a thriving career. Her substantial following across YouTube and social media exemplifies how women can navigate the digital business landscape and achieve financial independence while maintaining a work-life balance.

This chapter provides a comprehensive analysis of Priyanka Tiwari's entrepreneurial journey and situates it within a broader discussion on the role of digital business in enhancing women's economic participation. It examines the

opportunities, challenges, and strategies that define women's success in the digital entrepreneurial ecosystem.

Review of Literature

Digital entrepreneurship has emerged as a pivotal area of research, particularly concerning women's economic empowerment and work-life balance. According to Nambisan (2017), the proliferation of digital technologies, including e-commerce platforms, social media networks, and digital marketing tools, has transformed how businesses are established and expanded. Digital platforms are noted to lower traditional barriers to entrepreneurship by providing accessible, cost-effective means for market entry and expansion (Chen *et al.*, 2018; Davidson & Vaast, 2010). Research conducted by Alsos, Ljunggren, and Pettersen (2016) indicates that women are particularly drawn to digital entrepreneurship due to its inherent flexibility, which supports the management of business operations alongside domestic responsibilities. Similarly, McAdam and Marlow (2013) highlight that digital entrepreneurship offers pragmatic solutions for women aiming to achieve work-life balance by offering adaptable working conditions.

Despite the considerable benefits of digital entrepreneurship, several challenges have been documented. Continuous online engagement, essential for maintaining digital visibility and competitiveness, has been associated with heightened stress and burnout, as noted by Moser, Tumasjan, and Welp (2017). Furthermore, Shelton (2006) asserts that while digital platforms offer flexibility, they also contribute to intensified work-related stress owing to expectations of constant availability. Such challenges are especially pronounced among women entrepreneurs who balance professional and personal responsibilities, often leading to adverse psychological effects (Anderson *et al.*, 2019).

Empirical studies have also focused on successful female digital entrepreneurs, including Falguni Nayar of Nykaa and Vineeta Singh of Sugar Cosmetics, whose ventures have capitalised on digital platforms for branding, marketing, and sales (Chakraborty, 2020). Evans (2020) and Kuschel & Lepeley (2016) highlight how technological literacy, skill development, and strategic digital marketing are critical factors enabling women to establish and sustain profitable businesses. However, Anderson *et al.* (2019) argue that disparities in access to technological resources and skills persist, creating significant barriers to equitable participation in digital entrepreneurship.

Although substantial progress has been made, gaps remain in understanding the sustainability of women-led digital ventures. While numerous studies emphasise the benefits of digital entrepreneurship for women, limited research examines the long-term mental health implications of the persistent online presence required for

CHAPTER 12

Inspiring Women in Digital Business: Journeys of Leadership and Innovation

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Abstract: Women are increasingly contributing to the digital business industry, not only by shattering glass ceilings but also by redefining what it means to lead in a technology-driven era. Women leaders are using digital technologies, artificial intelligence, and data-driven strategies to develop new solutions and promote economic growth, from starting disruptive startups to scaling multinational organizations (McKinsey, 2022). Their experiences are distinguished by perseverance, adaptability, and a dedication to diversity, making them excellent role models for aspiring entrepreneurs.

This is about the success tales of women who have turned problems into opportunities in the digital business world. It highlights their distinct leadership approaches, such as collaborative decision-making, compassionate mentorship, and a focus on long-term success. This analysis identified the essential variables driving their performance by examining their tactics, such as harnessing AI for market insights, establishing diverse teams, and promoting customer-centric innovations. These stories not only commemorate their accomplishments but also offer practical advice to the future generation of female digital business leaders.

Keywords: Artificial intelligence, Digital entrepreneurship, Inclusivity, Innovation, Leadership, Resilience, Success stories, Women in business.

INTRODUCTION

The Transformative Power of Women's Leadership

In the swiftly changing digital environment, women are emerging as transformative leaders who are not only engaging in technology innovation but

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fundamentally redefining the corporate ecosystem. Their multifaceted accomplishments include leadership, entrepreneurship, and the creation of technologically advanced solutions to global problems. These journeys are supported by a deep story of fortitude, ingenuity, and strategic vision that transcends conventional leadership bounds (Hewlett *et al.*, 2020). In addition to overcoming structural obstacles, female leaders are fostering inclusive, creative ecosystems that promote long-term development.

The digital revolution has provided women with unparalleled chances to redefine leadership and creativity. As they navigate historically male-dominated industries, women are using digital technologies such as artificial intelligence (AI) and data-driven methods to make significant contributions. Their leadership exemplifies a paradigm change, replacing hierarchical and rigid paradigms with collaborative, human-centered approaches. This shift empowers female leaders to build organizations that value diversity, empathy, and long-term impact. According to Forbes (2024), the top 100 female leaders hold \$33 trillion in economic influence, demonstrating their expanding importance in shaping global sectors.

In this regard, the digital business sector is a manifestation of human potential rather than just technological progress. Women leaders are questioning preconceived notions, crafting innovative narratives, and developing answers to difficult societal and economic problems. According to the United Nations Conference on Trade and Growth (2022), women's empowerment in digital entrepreneurship has a transformative moving ridge effect on global innovation, poverty alleviation, and economic growth. This assessment highlights the vital role that women will play in determining the direction of the digital economy.

Digital entrepreneurship goes beyond technology tools and represents a deeper reimagining of technological engagement through human-centric approaches (Nambisan, 2021). Since their leadership frequently incorporates emotional intelligence, cooperative problem-solving, and sustainable innovation, female entrepreneurs are in a unique position to promote such approaches. These components are essential for tackling the many issues of the digital age, such as global economic inequality and technical accessibility.

In conclusion, the increase of women in digital leadership is a revolutionary force in the global economy. These leaders are paving the way for a more just and sustainable future by developing creative and inclusive ecosystems. Their experiences demonstrate the importance of vision, adaptation, and resilience in rethinking what it means to be a leader in the digital age.

The Global Leadership Forecast 2023 data (Fig. 1) emphasizes how critical it is to promote inclusive leadership and close the gender gap in leadership positions:

- The Function of DEI Programs: 35% of women hold leadership positions in organizations with strong DEI efforts, compared to 25% in those without. This discrepancy demonstrates the important role DEI programs play in developing pipelines for gender-diverse leadership.
- Reducing Gender Gaps in Leadership Development: There is a significant disparity in expertise with profit and loss management. Just 67% of women in senior leadership positions have managed profit and loss responsibilities, compared to 79% of men. Profit and diminished accountability frequently act as crucial stepping stones to the program's success based on gender.

The necessity for organizations to emphasize DEI programs and establish fair leadership development routes is reinforced by this research. Businesses may develop diverse leadership teams that represent the needs and goals of today's workforce by tackling systemic hurdles.

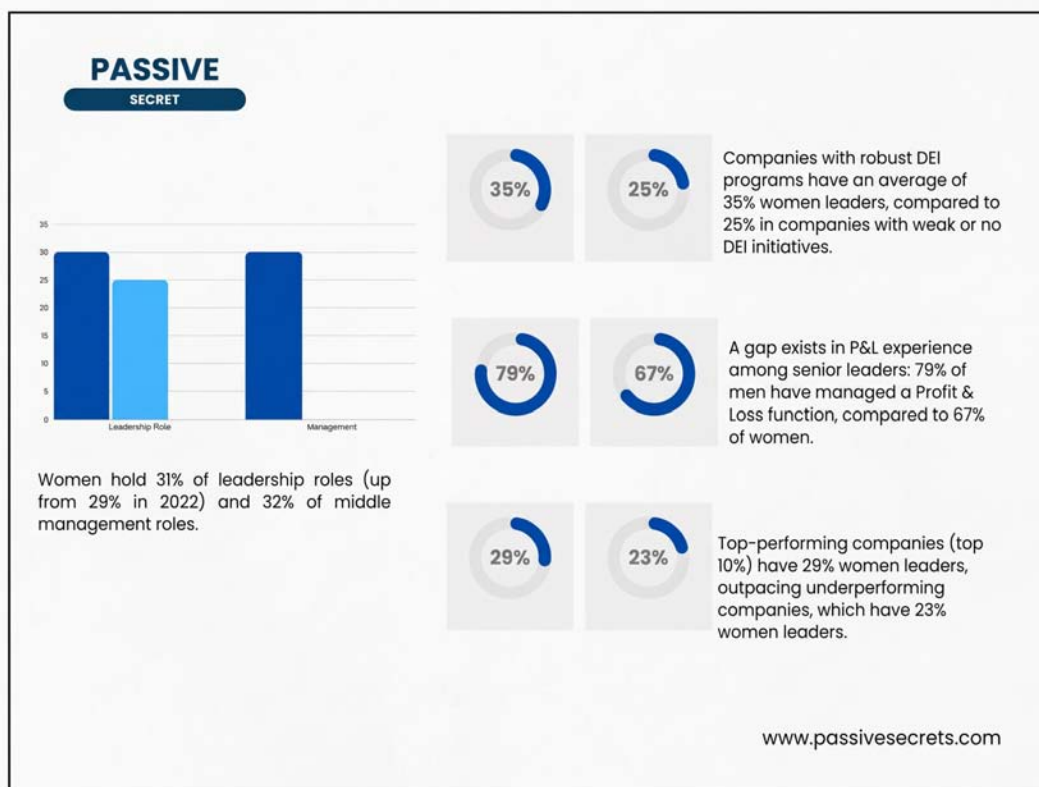


Fig. (1). Gender gaps in leadership development.
Source: development dimensions international (DDI, 2023).

CHAPTER 13

Balancing One's Self, Family, and Business: A Juggling Life among Female Business Leaders

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Abstract: The purpose of this study is to highlight the joys and sorrows, case studies, and strategies usually taken by women who become business leaders. This study used various literature that was considered to be able to be applied to describe the phenomena experienced by women who play two roles, namely in the domestic sphere and the public sphere. The results of this study aim to provide a holistic view of the experiences of women businesspeople. The case studies raised come from a number of experiences by women businesspeople that have been covered and featured in a number of media releases.

Keywords: Business leaders, Businesspeople, Domestic sphere, Public sphere, Women.

INTRODUCTION

Women have been present in the public sphere as leaders, and their numbers have grown over time and filled most of the existing industries. Women leaders in male-dominated industries experience internal identity asymmetry, which becomes less salient with time and power, but it remains a challenge during personal and professional identity transition (Meister, Sinclair, & Jehn, 2017). Historically, the presence of women in the midst of society as leaders began during the Industrial Revolution. During this period, women entered the public sphere as workers, especially in jobs that required skills that did not require high competence or manual labor due to economic pressures, so that women stepped in to help meet the household needs by working. Research found that the mere presence of women in leadership roles leads to increased organizational trust and fair treatment, regardless of the gender or industry (Joshi & Diekmann, 2021).

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Then, gradually, there was a feminist movement that tried to fight for women's rights in the public sphere, especially demanding equal treatment between women and men. Gebrihet *et al.* (2024) found that feminists support gender equality and achieving equal individual rights and liberties for women and men. This then triggered the courage of women to compete with men to be in important positions in organizations. Women are more likely than men to be appointed to leadership positions associated with increased risk of failure and criticism when the organization's performance is declining (Haslam & Ryan, 2008).

In developed countries, businesses have been incredibly open to the presence of women. Research discovered that proportional representation, labor force participation, and cultural standing positively influence women's representation in national legislatures in developed countries (Matland, 1998). To promote women's representation, there is still a great need for openness from society, so this has triggered the emergence of the glass ceiling concept, which assumes that there are limitations that prevent women from reaching top positions in organizations or companies due to hindrances from a number of sides, and these obstacles are known as a glass ceiling. A glass ceiling is hindering women's rise to power, and this has been explored in politics and industries (Folke & Rickne, 2016; Zhang & Basha, 2023).

The challenges faced when this glass ceiling occurs are related to the material value obtained by women. According to a number of studies, it is still not the same as men. Research found a glass ceiling exists for women, but racial inequalities among men do not follow a similar pattern, suggesting that "glass ceilings" are a distinctively gender phenomenon (Cotter, Hermsen, Ovadia, & Vanneman, 2001). One of the factors that triggers the inequality of income levels is that men are considered heads of households, so they need more material support than women, while women, even though they work, are considered single women who do not have any dependents. Research revealed that the female share of the household income is negatively related to women's heavy involvement in housework, and this relationship does not change when women earn more than their partners (Magda, Cukrowska-Torzewska, & Palczynska, 2023). In other words, although efforts to participate in the public sphere have grown, there are a number of obstacles that actually make women seem to have no problems from the domestic side.

The conditions of women who act as breadwinners in the family are also quite interesting to study, and this appears in a number of studies where women are considered to be able to "replace" the social function played by men (Araújo-Vila *et al.*, 2021). Then, if there are women who have careers and are able to reach the peaks of their positions in an organization while on the other hand also play the

role of housewives, there is a big possibility that these women will replace the social function of men, especially if they have to face demands from the extended family which is known as the “sandwich generation” as they have to bear the burden of the family because they are considered to have advantages compared to others. Research found that women in the working “sandwich” generation use strategies like living with integrity, doing what they love, and remembering why to achieve and maintain a role balance (Evans *et al.*, 2016). However, because of the dynamics faced by women, this is what then gives color to the leadership style shown.

Several studies have highlighted differences between men and women in terms of leadership style. Research discovered that female leaders are more transformational than male leaders and engaged in more contingent reward behaviors (Eagly, Johannesen-Schmidt, & Van Engen, 2003). These differences certainly depend on the individual’s background and the type of organization. However, society also plays a role in shaping a person’s leadership style, and women are no exception. Stereotypical gender role expectations and cultural worldviews can influence women’s leadership style, which can be more collaborative and transformational compared to men’s (Chin, 2013). In this case, according to the author, it would be easier to study the leadership style usually displayed by women who are in important positions in their organizations. Rosener (2011) detected that women leaders practice “interactive leadership” that would make it possible to encourage participation, sharing power and information, and making people feel important. For example, Estee Lauder, Indra Nooyi, and many others are often mentioned in case studies of women’s leadership in the world. Interestingly, organizations with female CEOs are more likely to innovate and engage in creative activities, leading to more environmentally friendly business practices (Khushk, Zengtian, & Hui, 2023).

In terms of data, the number of women entering as leaders in businesses has increased over time, and one piece of data that can be used to visualize the condition of women is in one of the documents released by the World Economic Forum on the Global Gender Gap Index, which states that Europe has the highest gender parity (World Economic Forum, 2022), and the data indicates the existence of a glass ceiling that still occurs in several parts of the world. Even in the report, although women are starting to dominate positions in employment, participation in employment globally is still low. Women’s participation in the labor force varies widely among countries, with industrial countries showing a 10% increase and developing countries showing a 7% decrease over the last 20 years (Psacharopoulos & Tzannatos, 1989). Research discovered that female leaders in Kazakhstan face challenges balancing Western neo-liberal values with traditional

CHAPTER 14

Applications of Tourism Technology in Contemporary Women's Entrepreneurship for Managing Handicraft Business

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Abstract: Purpose: Women's empowerment primarily aims at self-realisation and at seeking support from local stakeholders. Women have set up self-help groups (SHGs) to foster interaction with various stakeholders. This study aims to investigate the effects of technology on women's entrepreneurship in managing their handicraft businesses.

Methodology: To achieve the objective, this study employs a qualitative research design, which involves collecting secondary data from previous studies, review papers, and industry reports published in peer-reviewed journals.

Research Limitations: This study is focused on women's entrepreneurship in the Indian context. So, it is not easy to generalise its findings to other countries worldwide. Further studies will be needed to cover the global context.

Social Implications: Future studies should include women's entrepreneurship in different sectors to benefit society. This research may influence future studies by exploring other aspects of entrepreneurship across various regions of India and in less developed countries.

Findings: The study's findings suggest that various internal and external factors drive the growth of handicraft businesses, promoting entrepreneurship and digital innovation.

Originality/Value: This study could offer a fresh perspective on women's entrepreneurship and handicraft businesses in the tourism sector. It could help policymakers to revive the economy and expand the handicraft industry with entrepreneurial and technological ingenuity.

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Keywords: Digital innovation, Handicraft business, Handicraft industry, Tourism technology, Women entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Similarities and differences between men and women are also defined by their value systems and social structures, as well as their body functions, which have led to the rise of acceptable and preferred behavioural norms. Social forms, including rules, laws, conventions, social norms, and economic indicators, shape various behavioural patterns that engender the dissimilarities between men and women, thereby evaluating the range of powers and rights of certain groups (Vujko *et al.*, 2019). The power of women depends on financial assets, and this act of gaining greater control over their own lives or situations is known as Women's Empowerment (WE). When it comes to changing circumstances, women's empowerment is among the core topics associated with changes in power dynamics in virtually all countries worldwide (Agarwal, 1997).

With women's empowerment, women, jointly or independently, become goal-oriented and well-informed actors who support or take the initiative to overcome gender inequality (Cole, 2018; Rao, 2011). Women's empowerment is the approach to realising gender equality (Reddy *et al.*, 2003; Floro, 1995) and is a way of awakening. Women's empowerment is reflected strongly in self-help groups (SHGs), which enable women to achieve more control over resources, for example, holding intellectual resources like data, information, ideas, and higher self-knowledge in a community, at home, nation, and society (Orser *et al.*, 2006; Hashemi *et al.*, 1996).

In recent years, digital transformation has emerged as a major catalyst for empowering women in rural entrepreneurship. The adoption of digital tourism platforms has expanded market access by connecting women-led handicraft businesses directly with tourists and global consumers, helping them bypass intermediaries and enhancing income opportunities (Hussain & Khan, 2025). However, despite these benefits, systemic challenges such as limited digital literacy, socio-cultural constraints, and poor access to digital devices continue to restrict rural women's full participation in the digital economy (Silalahi *et al.*, 2025; Abdullah *et al.*, 2025). These digital divides reflect underlying inequities in rural contexts that must be addressed for inclusive empowerment.

Women's empowerment is a key issue in the development and growth of developing countries worldwide. As the social position of women improves, both as individuals and as a group, women's self-employment could become a political matter, transforming and challenging current power dynamics. Being part of a group provides women with visibility and the necessary tools to improve

(Soroushmehr *et al.*, 2012). Tourism technology further supports socio-economic empowerment by enabling women artisans to market heritage crafts, engage in online learning communities, and build entrepreneurial networks through platforms like Facebook, which serve as tools for personal development and business growth (Ditta-Apichai *et al.*, 2023). Digital entrepreneurship is also recognized as a transformative force that helps women challenge restrictive social norms and redefine their societal roles, reflecting broader social innovation in tourism development (Pécot *et al.*, 2024; Wang *et al.*, 2025).

All such examples have shown that a strategic relationship with local stakeholders is unequivocally needed for women's empowerment in the tourism sector in rural areas. According to Timothy (2007), connections among local stakeholders are important because they can promote equality between men and women in the local community. This is mainly due to conventions of power in traditional societies, which are primarily patriarchal and based on the male gender. This ultimately leads to the situation where many women are forced to quit their jobs or even divorce due to their increased participation and authority in local decision-making (Cornwall, 2003). However, rural women still face several barriers in adopting digital tourism technology, including a lack of skills, weak infrastructure, poor logistics support, and restricted mobility, which increase operational costs and limit competitiveness (Farroñán *et al.*, 2024; Rao *et al.*, 2021). These challenges highlight the need for continuous capability-building and technology access to strengthen women's participation in digitally enabled tourism markets.

The unfavourable economic conditions are closely linked to the challenges and delays in transition in developing countries, and the last international economic crisis occurred a decade ago, creating more favourable conditions for entrepreneurship among women. Additionally, there are plenty of gender inequalities acting as problems when it comes to entering entrepreneurship in business development and management. COVID-19 further accelerated digital technology adoption in tourism, forcing stakeholders to explore virtual engagement approaches and technology-driven marketing solutions to sustain cultural and handicraft sectors during mobility restrictions (Ndou *et al.*, 2022; Gretzel *et al.*, 2020). This transformation pushed government programs like NRLM and digital community platforms to strengthen women's participation in digital markets and tourism-linked handicraft supply chains (Pandey & Gupta, 2022; Chakraborty *et al.*, 2024; Rice *et al.*, 2023). Altogether, tourism technology, policy support, and SHG networks form a collaborative ecosystem that enhances handicraft visibility and retailing while promoting sustainable tourism development (Azharunnisa *et al.*, 2022; Katongole, 2025). Thus, this study positions digital tourism platforms as a lever for rural women's empowerment,

Women's Empowerment and Digital Marketing in Tourism in Madagascar and Indonesia

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Abstract: Digital marketing has become a crucial component of business strategy to optimize sales and revenue, expand market reach, and strengthen competitive advantage. It is particularly important for startups and Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), as it does not require a substantial investment. As these tools increasingly shape business strategy, the ability to manage and master them has become a key factor in business success, especially for startups and SMEs. In the tourism sector, the use of digital marketing tools is even more essential. Women also play a central role in the tourism industry and are major stakeholders in rural tourism. Empowering women by improving their digital literacy, particularly in digital marketing, is therefore critical. This chapter explores the role of digital marketing in supporting sustainable rural tourism and advancing gender equity. It presents empirical evidence from rural tourism contexts in Madagascar and Indonesia. Readers may gain valuable insights from these case studies, while practitioners can use them as benchmarks for designing and evaluating rural tourism initiatives in similar settings.

Keywords: Digital marketing, Indonesia, Madagascar, Rural tourism, Women empowerment.

INTRODUCTION

Women's entrepreneurship initially expanded in countries where women began gaining equal rights and professional opportunities in the late 20th century. As globalization accelerated and the information age introduced widespread internet

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access, even in remote areas, women in developing nations also started establishing their own businesses, including within traditional societies (Zeidan, 2024). Kurniawan *et al.* (2025) highlight the pivotal role of women entrepreneurs in narrowing the gender inequality gap and contributing significantly to economic development. Their participation is essential for driving economic growth, creating job opportunities, reducing poverty, and advancing key sectors such as education and human development, particularly in developing countries (Sajjad, 2020). Therefore, empowering women to develop the confidence to become entrepreneurs is essential.

While women entrepreneurs play a key role in economic development, they continue to face systemic barriers. One of the major obstacles is gender inequality. Persistent gender gaps across various sectors, along with ongoing violence against women, remain significant barriers to gender-inclusive development. These fundamental issues are closely linked to indicators of gender equality and women's empowerment, such as employment, discrimination, violations of the rights of marginalized communities, violence against women and vulnerable groups, health, and education (Siscawita, 2020). In contrast to developed nations, gender disparities remain deeply rooted across many cultures, and this issue is more pronounced in developing countries (Ahmed *et al.*, 2001). Furthermore, these challenges extend to digital literacy, as well as low awareness and adoption of new technologies and innovations. The implementation of digital marketing among entrepreneurs, particularly women in developing and rural areas, continues to lag behind. This is largely because many women entrepreneurs prioritize immediate or short-term benefits. Despite these challenges, the important contributions of women cannot be overlooked. Women entrepreneurs play a crucial role in wealth creation, national progress, poverty reduction, and employment generation (Neumeyer, 2019). Without women taking the lead as entrepreneurs, economies cannot achieve complete and sustainable success (Sajjad, 2020).

Building on this, the increasing presence of women entrepreneurs in the tourism and hospitality industry brings both opportunities and challenges. Entrepreneurship enables women to navigate constraints in formal employment, such as unequal wages and limited leadership roles. However, societal expectations related to gender continue to influence their participation in this sector. Many women entrepreneurs operate small-scale, family-owned, or home-based businesses, which provide financial independence yet often reinforce conventional gender roles. In developing nations, where gender disparities are more prevalent, empowering women entrepreneurs is crucial for promoting inclusive economic growth, reducing poverty, and advancing gender equity. At the same time, digital marketing has become vital for the sustainability and

growth of women-led Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) and startups. Although many entrepreneurs recognize the importance of digitalization, effectively implementing and integrating digital marketing strategies remains a challenge. Women entrepreneurs, in particular, must leverage digital marketing to expand their networks, increase market reach, and engage in knowledge-sharing. Digital tools enhance business visibility, facilitate connections with suppliers and customers, and improve target market strategies. However, limited digital literacy, inadequate infrastructure, and restricted access to digital resources continue to hinder their ability to fully maximize these opportunities.

This chapter examines women's entrepreneurship in developing countries, with a focus on gender roles in entrepreneurship within the tourism industry. It also presents case studies of women entrepreneurs in Indonesia and Madagascar, highlighting the challenges and barriers associated with adopting digital marketing strategies, as well as their potential benefits. Furthermore, this chapter offers insights relevant to developing countries and aims to enrich the existing literature on women's entrepreneurship. Ultimately, it provides practical recommendations for women entrepreneurs regarding the implementation of digital marketing in the tourism sector.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Women and Entrepreneurship

Entrepreneurship has been recognized for its role in stabilizing the social structure of nations and has long been viewed as an indicator of economic progress (Abegaz *et al.*, 2023). According to Patra and Kumari (2025), early studies on entrepreneurship can be traced to Adam Smith (1776), followed by Jean-Baptiste Say (1845), Joseph Schumpeter (1934), and Everett E. Hagen (1962). Although scholarly interest in entrepreneurship dates back to the 17th century, the volume of research in this field has expanded considerably over the past four decades (Patra & Kumari, 2025). Entrepreneurship contributes to national development by fostering a culture of innovation, strengthening competition, and creating new employment opportunities to address unemployment challenges (Foelster, 2000).

In recent years, female entrepreneurial activity has increased significantly. Current statistics highlight women as key drivers of economic growth across many global economies (Ahmad *et al.*, 2014). Female entrepreneurship contributes to development through job creation, economic growth, innovation, and greater diversity in entrepreneurial ecosystems (Ali, 2018). Countries with high overall entrepreneurial activity tend to also exhibit high rates of women's entrepreneurial participation (Ali, 2018). Although Henry *et al.* (2016) note that women-led businesses represent one of the fastest-growing entrepreneurial

CHAPTER 16

In the Best Interest of the Child: Norwegian Approach to Parenting or Cultural Disparities Through the Lens of Netflix Special: Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway

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Abstract: Media plays an important role in forming and affecting our opinions and beliefs about different castes, religions, cultures, communities, *etc.* It is certain that the media has bridged the gap between what we already know and what we want to know. However, the media also has several effects on its viewers. This is why it is always recommended that the content viewed be at the viewer's discretion. Our understanding of the film Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway helps explain disparities across genders, cultures, and parenting. Movie analysis is one of the various elements of media psychology that helps in viewing content mindfully, with a psychological perspective and thinking beyond what we watch on the screen, more essentially, of how we process the content. The focus of the movie identifies the convergence of the child-rearing practices, welfare policies, patriarchal roles, and cultural norms. The purpose of the current study is to identify the central themes in the movie and the conflicts and conflict management techniques used by the main characters of the story, *i.e.*, Mrs. Debika Chatterjee and her husband, Anirudh Chatterjee. The data was collected through the qualitative analysis (documentary). The movie centers on main themes such as Personal Ambition vs. Duty towards Family, Conservatism vs. Assimilation, Procedure vs. Empathy, and more. The movie highlights internal and external conflict management techniques used by the main character, such as compromise, accommodation, and competing. The findings of the study suggest a greater need for cultural sensitivity and for understanding child-rearing practices and diverse family backgrounds to safeguard the family's well-being.

Keywords: Child rearing practices, Conflict management, Conflicts, Cultural disparity, Gender disparity, Parenting.

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INTRODUCTION

The media plays an important role in shaping and influencing our opinions and beliefs about different castes, religions, cultures, and communities. This media includes newspapers, books, journals, movies, and the most trending of them all, social media. It is certain that the media has bridged the gap between what we already know and what we want to know. However, the media also has several effects on its viewers. This is why it is always recommended that the content viewed be at the viewer's discretion. With widespread internet access, people are exposed to vast amounts of content that shape their worldviews, emotions, and cultural perspectives. While media can serve as an educational tool, it also has the potential to reinforce stereotypes, spread misinformation, and create cultural misunderstandings. Media is a powerful force that shapes societal perceptions, influences cultural narratives, and plays a key role in informing the public about important issues. Over the years, it has evolved from traditional forms such as newspapers, books, and radio broadcasts to more dynamic and interactive platforms like television, cinema, digital news portals, and social media. This transformation has increased accessibility to information and created new avenues for people to engage with global events in real time. However, while the media has the ability to educate, inform, and connect societies, it also has the potential to misrepresent, sensationalize, or distort facts, often leading to stereotypes, cultural misunderstandings, and biases.

The role of media extends beyond just reporting events—it actively influences how people interpret reality. Media psychology explores how different forms of media affect human thoughts, emotions, and behaviors. One such critical aspect is how films, in particular, create narratives that shape public opinions on social, cultural, and political issues. Films are not merely a source of entertainment; they are powerful storytelling tools that can challenge stereotypes, bring attention to injustice, and spark social change. A well-crafted movie has the ability to raise awareness about issues that might otherwise be overlooked, such as gender inequality, domestic violence, legal injustices, and cross-cultural conflicts.

A compelling example of this is the Bollywood film *Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway*, which highlights the complex relationship between parenting, cultural identity, and legal systems. Based on a real-life case, the movie presents an emotionally charged narrative that sheds light on the struggles of an immigrant mother fighting against a foreign child welfare system. The film brings attention to how cultural differences in parenting styles can lead to misunderstandings and how rigid legal structures may fail to accommodate diverse family dynamics. This raises an important question: should parenting be judged solely through the lens

of a single culture, or should policies adapt to accommodate different cultural values?

Cross-cultural differences in parenting have long been a subject of debate in psychology and social sciences. Parenting norms vary widely across countries, with some societies emphasizing independence and self-sufficiency, while others prioritize familial bonds and collective caregiving. Norway's child protection policies, for instance, are rooted in the principles of individualism, child autonomy, and strict laws against physical punishment. In contrast, many South Asian cultures value collectivism, where extended family members are actively involved in raising children, and practices such as feeding children by hand are seen as acts of care rather than neglect. The film challenges audiences to critically evaluate how cultural biases influence legal decisions and whether these biases result in unfair treatment of immigrant families.

Furthermore, *Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway* touches on broader themes of gender inequality, domestic abuse, and systemic discrimination. The protagonist, Debika Chatterjee, not only battles an unfamiliar legal system but also faces oppression within her own household. Her resilience and determination to fight for her children make her story a powerful representation of women's empowerment. The film serves as a reminder that gender-based discrimination is not just a product of outdated traditions but also embedded within institutions that fail to recognize the struggles of women, particularly those from marginalized communities.

By analyzing films like *Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway* through a psychological and sociocultural lens, we can better understand how the media influences public perception and policy-making. Studying the themes presented in such movies allows us to engage in meaningful discussions about social justice, human rights, and the need for more inclusive legal frameworks. This paper aims to explore the central themes of the film while examining the conflicts, biases, and psychological impacts associated with them. Through this analysis, we hope to gain a deeper understanding of the intersection between media, psychology, and cultural diversity in legal systems.

Our understanding of the film *Mrs. Chatterjee vs Norway* explains the disparities across genders, cultures, and parenting. Movie analysis is one of the various elements of media psychology. It helps in viewing content mindfully, with a psychological perspective and thinking beyond what we watch on the screen, more essentially, of how we process the content. Media psychology explores how individuals interact with and interpret media, and how these interactions shape personal identity, social behavior, and cultural attitudes. When analyzing a film, it

CHAPTER 17

The Wander Woman Effect: Connecting Gratifications to Intentions in Tourism Content Creation

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Abstract: This chapter will examine the impact of various forms of gratifications, such as utilitarian, hedonic, content, and social, on shaping behavioral intent to notice the recommendations of social media female travel influencers. The study was quantitative and used a sample that contained 206 respondents through an online survey. The proposed hypotheses were tested by means of SPSS to conduct a regression analysis and using WarpPLS to run a structural equation modeling (SEM). The findings indicated that all four gratifications have an extensive effect on behavioral intention. Utilitarian gratification was the most influential predictor, and then came hedonic gratification and content gratification, but the least influence was social gratification. This model accounted for 77 percent of the variance in behavioral intention ($R^2 = 0.77$). The research is an extension of the Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) in the tourism industry. It demonstrates that practical and entertainment-based gratifications are the main motives for people participating in travel influencers' activities. The results set actionable recommendations for influencers, marketers, and tourism brands. These lessons revolve around the need to balance content that is value-driven with entertaining and compelling formats that would lead to audience engagement. This study examines influencer marketing as applied to female travel influencers. It helps to comprehend the motivation of the audience and its behaviors in this region.

Keywords: Behavioral intention, Digital tourism, Female content creators, Travel influencers, Uses and gratifications theory.

INTRODUCTION

Social media has a major effect on the tourism business. It affects how tourists find, plan, and share their experiences. Travel behavior is affected by digital or social media content. Social media influencers are important in influencing

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decision-making and promoting travel destinations. (Palos-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021). The Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) provides a useful framework for understanding how social media content serves audiences. It also shows how these gratifications result in actions (Moon & An, 2022). In tourism, social media gratifications are classified as content, utilitarian, social, and hedonic. Each gratification affects how audiences feel about influencers, content creators, and the recommendations they give (Malik *et al.*, 2024).

These days, female travel influencers have gained popularity in the tourism business. Some popular names for female travel influencers and travel content creators include Brinda Sharma, Tanya Khanijow, and Akanksha Monga. They create visually appealing and interesting travel content in the form of Reels, YouTube Shorts, Vlogs, and Personal Blogs. The content resonates with their followers and target audiences (Nikolaeva, 2023).

According to Wijaya *et al.* (2024), female influencers promote honesty and trust. This influences travel choices and destination preferences for people who follow them. Female influencers build an emotional bond with their followers through storytelling and their personal brand. This leads to greater involvement of the audience and their intention to visit promoted locations (Nikolaeva, 2023; Wijaya *et al.*, 2024). Travel bloggers and content creators today act as a bridge between places and prospective tourists. Consumer behavior is also influenced by suggestions and first-hand experiences (Iorio, 2022).

The literature on influencer marketing is abundant. Studies have yet to establish the wavelength of the desired gratifications that motivate consumers to view female travel influencers. The way these gratifications relate to behavioral intentions is unknown (Geng *et al.*, 2023). Some past studies have identified how social media engagement affects the marketing of tourism. It demonstrates how trust, authenticity, and perceived credibility contribute to consumer preference (Palos-Sánchez *et al.*, 2021; Malik *et al.*, 2024).

The study employs the UGT to better understand social media involvement. It also encourages influencer-driven travel advertisements.

This research relies on UGT to better understand social media engagement and advance the idea of influencer-led travel advertising. The findings will provide marketers, promoters, and travel firms with useful information on the tourism industry. It examines the importance of different gratifications in determining the perceptions and behavior of the audience with female travel content creators. It is directed by the following important questions:

RQ1. How do content, utilitarian, social, and hedonic gratifications influence audience perceptions toward female travel content creators?

RQ2. How do audience opinions about female travel content providers affect their intention to follow trip recommendations?

The study will aim to comprehend the influence of digital tourism influencer marketing. It is useful to identify the behavioral consequences that follow and to focus on enhancing knowledge of the reasons the audience is interested in the work of female travel influencers. The findings of the current study can provide marketers, influencers, and travel businesses with insights about the tourism industry. The obtained insights may serve in the optimization of content strategies aimed at growing the audience engagement and affecting the travel choices (Geng *et al.*, 2023; Malik *et al.*, 2024).

LITERATURE REVIEW

Uses and Gratifications Theory (UGT) in Tourism Content Creation

The theory offers an effective basis for assessing the use of social media. Individuals engage with social media content by interacting with it actively to derive satisfaction. These satisfactions are information-seeking, amusement, social network, and self-disclosure (Filipović, 2012; Moon and An, 2022; Chung and Jeong, 2024).

YouTube and Instagram are information sources that are useful to the traveler. This enables users to share experiences, organize trips, and record ideas (Pike *et al.*, 2019; Bu *et al.*, 2020). Digital content has the potential to affect travel behavioral intentions and choice. The latter can be achieved with the help of visual and engaging videos and posts (Mutlari *et al.*, 2023; Mqwebu, 2024). To learn the digital advertising strategy in the tourism sector, one must understand UGT. It displays the decision-making processes and the psychological factors that impact content engagement.

The Role of Female Travel Content Creators

The female travel influencers play a significant role in tourism marketing. They offer genuine, real, and attractive material. Female influencers have a higher chance of persuading the audience due to the perceived content authenticity (Nikolaeva, 2023; Wijaya *et al.*, 2024). They develop emotional relations with their followers that affect the way audiences are engaged and impact their travel choices (Iorio, 2022; Basco *et al.*, 2021). Influencer-created content motivates followers to visit locations that are posted by the influencer. This offers real,

CHAPTER 18

Addressing Gender Stereotypes in Tourism and Hospitality Sector: Best Practices and Policy Recommendations

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Abstract: The tourism and hospitality sector represents the largest global industry, accounting for 10% of the world's GDP, and it has contributed to the widespread popularity of tourism as a leisure activity globally. However, it continues to be affected by gender stereotypes that influence worker participation, career advancement, and customer expectations. It is a prominent aspect of gender inequality that discusses ideas about the qualities and behaviours associated with specific genders. It shapes expectations and interpretations of social behaviour perpetuated socially, culturally, and organizationally. This chapter aims to address the issue of gender stereotypes in hospitality and tourism management. The study examines contemporary gender ideas and provides pertinent hospitality and tourism management studies examples. Moreover, this study also suggests a four-point critical agenda for gender research in tourism and hospitality. Emphasizing obstacles such as work-life balance issues, discrimination, and lack of mentoring, this chapter also explores the challenges and triumphs of women in leadership and entrepreneurial roles in this sector. Though programs supporting *Diversity, Equality, and Inclusion* (DEI) have gathered steam, gender gaps in leadership roles remain. Finally, the chapter addresses best practices and plans to eliminate gender stereotypes. These include gender-sensitive training, corporate social responsibility projects for workplace equality, inclusive hiring rules, and leadership development programs. Emphasizing the need for sustainable, inclusive, and bias-free practices for long-term sectoral development, the chapter ends with policy recommendations and future research areas to help a more gender-equal business.

Keywords: Diversity, Equality, Gender stereotypes, Gender research, Inclusion, Hospitality, Tourism.

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INTRODUCTION

Gender stereotypes are a fundamental aspect of all social processes across several dimensions, constituting a perpetual focus of academic research (Morgan & Pritchard, 2019). The growing involvement of women in the workforce is progressively altering societal perceptions and explicit attitudes towards female professionals (Pardal *et al.*, 2020). However, prior research indicates that several employed women experience everyday employment inequality (Bobbitt-Zeher, 2011). However, they continue to engage in and are rededicated to organizational success. Gender stereotypes are societal impressions and expectations placed on people that assign roles, qualities, and activities (Dashper, 2020). Deeply ingrained in society, this philosophy has been noted historically in many diverse cultures. Men have always been seen as the family's breadwinners and women as the house's managers, separating their jobs into public and private worlds (Eagly *et al.*, 2000). Historically, men first had access to economic resources and education, while women were limited to domestic chores during the Industrial Revolution (Eagly & Karau, 2002). Likewise, the colonial patriarchal system strengthened these ideas by limiting women's rights and thereby supporting these impressions. These preconceptions affected personal lives, social mobility, and employment chances. Gender stereotypes restrict individuals' possibilities and conduct. Men are presented as emblems of leadership and bravery, whereas women are sometimes seen as soft, kind, and limited to the house (Powell & Butterfield, 2015). These impressions impede human growth and cause social and financial disparities.

In the tourism and hospitality sector, where men's and women's employment is split depending on conventional roles, gender stereotypes are prevalent. While men are more likely to be found in managerial, technical, and security-related employment, women in this sector are commonly found in service-based roles, including reception, housekeeping, and customer service (Baum, 2013). Although the occupation is female, with a 70% female workforce, males continue to occupy most management roles and get higher compensation for equal labour (Baum & Cheung, 2015; UNWTO, 2019). These kinds of responsibilities not only affect the work experience but also help to define consumer expectations. For instance, it is typical to find a smiling lady at the hotel reception desk while a guy is chosen to be the establishment's general manager. This stereotype causes consumers to believe that women are more polite and service-oriented, whereas men are better at leadership and decision-making (Pritchard & Morgan, 2017). Therefore, gender-based positions affect the company's organisation and build obstacles for women to accomplish professional excellence (Bonet *et al.*, 2020). Furthermore, gender preconceptions influence employees' subjective experiences and professional growth. Men have greater possibilities in strategic and administrative

activities; women are relegated to jobs needing “soft skills,” such as hospitality and event management (Mooney, 2020). Along with affecting career possibilities, this disparity results in salary differences and fewer women in leadership roles. This limits the chances for female employees to grow professionally and adds more emotional stress.

The primary goal of this study is to investigate gender stereotypes in the hospitality sector and examine how they affect workplace dynamics. Additionally, the study aims to pinpoint the social, cultural, and organizational elements influencing men's and women's employment positions. The study also seeks to offer recommendations to support gender inclusion so businesses can grow more equitably (Mooney & Ryan, 2009; Mooney, 2020). This study includes several tourist and hospitality sector sub-sectors, including hotel management, travel agencies, tourism services, and the food business. The chapter will examine three main research questions:

1. In the travel and hospitality sector, how do gender preconceptions affect occupational roles and dynamics?
2. Do gender-based expectations restrict workers' chances for professional growth, hiring, or promotion?
3. What policy changes might help India's urban tourism and hospitality sector achieve gender equality?

GENDER REPRESENTATION IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM: A GENDER-AWARE LITERATURE REVIEW

Gender stereotype denotes a simplistic categorization of male and female traits. In the hospitality sector, biological gender preconceptions lead to occupational segregation (Eagly *et al.*, 2000). Male employees predominate over female employees in leadership positions within the hotel industry (Liu *et al.*, 2020). Due to the growing significance of expressive leadership, leaders are expected to exhibit expressive ability and optimistic representation (Peng *et al.*, 2014). Emotive control is, nevertheless, perceived as a womanly attribute (Gartzia *et al.*, 2018). Consequently, it is feasible to integrate traditionally male headship with womanly emotionality while fostering emotive leadership. Risman's (1998) “*Gender as a Social Structure theory*” observed that discrimination based on gender runs at three levels: **individual, interpersonal, and institutional**. On a personal level, gender is linked to the growth of internalized knowledge of masculinity, femininity, and self-image. People are shaped for distinct roles through the socializing process. Gender roles are reinforced at the interpersonal level by relationships, whereby different expectations are placed on people even in similar roles (Risman, 1998). This prejudice is evident at the institutional level

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