

The Impact of Tourism Development on Gender Role Transformation and Fisherfolk Welfare in Sanur, Bali

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Abstract

Tourism development in Sanur has reshaped the economic and social dynamics of coastal fishing communities. This study analyzes how tourism influences gender role transformation and the welfare of fisher households using a quantitative design with survey data from 120 respondents. Multiple regression results show that tourism significantly contributes to livelihood diversification and increases women's participation in income-generating activities such as small trading, culinary services, and tourism support services. These changes positively affect household welfare, with livelihood diversification acting as a key mediating factor. However, the shift in gender roles remains limited, as cultural norms continue to restrict women's involvement in major household decisions. The findings highlight that while tourism enhances economic resilience, it does not automatically create gender equality. Therefore, gender-inclusive policies, training access, and support for women's entrepreneurial activities are essential to ensure that tourism growth leads to more equitable and sustainable welfare outcomes in coastal communities.

Keywords: tourism development; gender roles; livelihood diversification; household welfare; coastal fishing communities

INTRODUCTION

Coastal communities rely heavily on marine resources to support their daily livelihoods, particularly small-scale fishing households whose economic security depends on fishing activities and related sectors. In areas where tourism grows rapidly, the social and economic foundations of fishing communities often shift as new livelihood opportunities emerge and traditional occupations decline. Sanur, one of Bali's oldest and most established tourist destinations, is a clear example of a coastal area experiencing

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such transitions. The expansion of tourism—ranging from hospitality services to marine recreation—has reshaped not only income structures but also the distribution of roles within fishing households (Ruting, 2024).

Gender dynamics are central to understanding these changes. Prior research highlights that gender norms influence men's and women's access to assets, economic activities, and decision-making authority within fishing communities (Bene & Prouty, 2019). Although women have long contributed to post-harvest processing, marketing, household financial management, and small-scale enterprise, their roles have often been informal or undervalued within community structures (Peniwati & Nugraha, 2020). In Indonesia, several coastal livelihood programs have attempted to integrate gender considerations, yet many remain only partially effective due to limited attention to deeper structural inequalities (Stacey & Gibson, 2019).

Tourism introduces both opportunities and challenges for coastal economies. Studies indicate that tourism development can enhance local income, diversify household livelihoods, and expand employment options, including for women who may engage in processing seafood for tourists, running micro-businesses, or participating directly in tourism services (Ratnasary et al., 2023). At the same time, tourism can intensify competition for coastal space, raise living costs, and create unequal access to new economic benefits, which may disadvantage certain household members or reinforce existing gender disparities (Yudasmara, 2019). Evidence from other coastal tourism regions suggests that improved welfare outcomes often coexist with increased work burdens and shifting family roles (Sutopo & Wibowo, 2022).

In fishing households specifically, tourism-driven economic shifts can lead to redefined responsibilities for men and women. Men may reduce their time spent at sea and turn to tourism-related work such as boat operation for tourists, guiding water-based activities, or joining hospitality employment. Women may take on new income-generating roles in tourism or expand their involvement in seafood marketing targeted toward visitors (Kinseng & Satria, 2023). These changes influence household well-being not only through increased income but also through changes in workload, bargaining power, and economic resilience. Comparative studies show that livelihood transitions in coastal tourism destinations affect gender relations and welfare outcomes in complex ways that vary by community and household context (Williams & Porter, 2023).

Given this complexity, a quantitative approach is essential to assess how tourism affects gender role transformations and the welfare of fishing households in Sanur. Earlier research using regression-based models demonstrates that quantitative analysis can effectively measure how tourism participation correlates with household welfare indicators such as income, assets, and access to services (Arifin et al., 2021). Therefore, this study seeks to generate empirical evidence on the extent to which Sanur's tourism



growth influences gender roles and welfare outcomes among its fishing families, providing insights that can support more inclusive and gender-responsive coastal development policies.

METHOD

This study employed a quantitative research design to examine how tourism development in Sanur influences gender role changes and the welfare of fishing households. A quantitative approach was selected because it allows researchers to measure variations across households, test statistical relationships, and generate generalizable findings regarding socioeconomic patterns in coastal communities (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). This design is especially relevant for livelihood and gender studies in fisheries, where measurable indicators such as income, division of labor, and asset ownership are commonly used to examine welfare outcomes and social change (Arifin et al., 2021).

The research was conducted in the coastal area of Sanur, Bali, an urbanized tourism destination where fishing remains a livelihood for many local households. Sanur presents an ideal case for examining tourism–fishery interactions because traditional fishing communities coexist with a rapidly expanding tourism industry, including hotels, marine recreation services, and beach-based enterprises (Ruting, 2024). The target population included all registered fishing households in the Sanur coastal zone. A “fishing household” was defined as a household where at least one member engages in fishing, fish processing, or other marine-based activities, consistent with classifications used in coastal livelihood studies (Bene & Prouty, 2019).

A stratified random sampling approach was applied to ensure that households from the three main coastal segments of Sanur—Sanur Kaja, Sanur Tengah, and Sanur Kauh—were proportionally represented. Stratification was necessary because each area shows different levels of tourism exposure and fishing activity, which could influence gender roles and welfare differently (Kinseng & Satria, 2023). A total sample of 120 households was determined using the Slovin formula with a 5% margin of error, a method commonly applied in socioeconomic surveys of coastal populations (Stacey & Gibson, 2019). Households were randomly selected within each stratum using a household listing provided by local fisher groups.

The primary data collection instrument was a structured household questionnaire developed based on indicators from previous studies on gender, tourism, and coastal livelihoods. The questionnaire was divided into four sections: (1) demographic characteristics, (2) involvement in fishing and tourism activities, (3) gender division of labor, and (4) welfare indicators. Indicators of gender role change were operationalized through measures of task allocation, income contribution, decision-making participation,



and time use, following frameworks used in gendered fisheries research (Peniwati & Nugraha, 2020). Welfare was measured using multidimensional indicators, including income, housing conditions, access to education and health services, and asset ownership, consistent with the livelihoods approach used in coastal studies (Williams & Porter, 2023).

To ensure validity, the questionnaire items were adapted from previously validated tools in livelihood and gender studies and then contextualized for the Sanur setting. Expert review was conducted with three researchers specializing in gender and coastal development to evaluate content accuracy and relevance. A pilot test involving 15 households was carried out to refine the wording and structure of the questionnaire. Feedback from the pilot test led to adjustments in question clarity and sequencing. The independent variable in this research was tourism involvement, operationalized as:

- (1) household participation in tourism-related work;
- (2) proportion of household income derived from tourism; and
- (3) frequency of engagement in tourism activities.

These indicators follow established methods in tourism–community welfare research (Sutopo & Wibowo, 2022). The dependent variable was household welfare. Welfare indicators included monthly income, savings, ownership of productive assets, housing quality, and access to education and health services, similar to welfare metrics used in coastal livelihood studies (Arifin et al., 2021). Gender role change served as a mediating variable and was measured through shifts in labor division, decision-making authority, and women’s economic participation, referencing the frameworks of Peniwati and Nugraha (2020) and Williams and Porter (2023).

Descriptive statistics were used to summarize demographic characteristics, levels of tourism involvement, and patterns of gender role change. Inferential analysis was performed using multiple linear regression to assess the influence of tourism involvement on both gender role shifts and household welfare. Regression analysis was selected due to its effectiveness in identifying linear relationships among socioeconomic variables in coastal communities (Arifin et al., 2021). Mediation analysis was applied to test whether gender role changes acted as an intermediary variable between tourism involvement and welfare outcomes.

RESULT

A total of 120 fishing households in Sanur participated in the survey. The findings are presented in three parts: (1) descriptive statistics of key variables, (2) results of regression analysis evaluating the effect of tourism involvement on gender role changes and household welfare, and (3) mediation testing to determine whether gender role changes serve as an intermediary variable linking tourism involvement to welfare



outcomes. The demographic profile shows that the average age of household heads was 46.7 years, while the average household size consisted of 4.2 members. Approximately 63% of households reported involvement in at least one form of tourism activity, such as operating boats for marine tourism, working as guides, selling processed seafood to tourists, or running small tourism-related businesses.

Table 1. Summary of Key Findings

Variable / Model	Coefficient (β)	p-value	Interpretation
Tourism $\rightarrow$ Gender Role Change	0.482	<0.001	Tourism involvement significantly increases gender role equity and women's participation
Tourism $\rightarrow$ Household Welfare	0.417	<0.001	Tourism participation increases income and welfare levels of fishing households
Gender Role Change $\rightarrow$ Household Welfare	0.351	0.008	More equitable gender roles significantly improve household welfare
Mediation (Tourism $\rightarrow$ Gender Roles $\rightarrow$ Welfare)	Z = 2.94	0.003	Gender role change partially mediates the effect of tourism on welfare

The results indicate that tourism development in Sanur has played a substantial role in reshaping the economic and social dynamics of fishing households. The high percentage of households engaged in tourism suggests that fishery-based communities have adapted to changes in coastal economic structures. Increased participation in tourism has created opportunities for income diversification, leading to higher household welfare levels. More importantly, the findings reveal that tourism triggers significant shifts in gender roles. Women increasingly participate in tourism-related income activities, exhibit higher economic contributions, and share greater responsibility in household decision-making. These shifts demonstrate increased gender equity within fishing households.

The regression results confirm that tourism positively influences both gender role change and household welfare, while gender role change itself positively affects welfare. The mediation analysis further strengthens the argument that tourism not only elevates welfare directly through enhanced income opportunities but also indirectly by empowering women within the household structure. These results are consistent with previous studies showing that livelihood diversification through tourism can create more inclusive

economic outcomes in coastal communities (Arifin et al., 2021; Williams & Porter, 2023). The partial mediation effect highlights the importance of gender in shaping welfare improvements, reinforcing the need for gender-sensitive coastal development policies.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study demonstrate that tourism development in Sanur has generated multidimensional changes in gender roles and the welfare dynamics of coastal fishing households. Although tourism provides new livelihood opportunities, it simultaneously reshapes traditional divisions of labor and decision-making structures within fishing families. The increase in women's involvement in tourism-related economic activities, such as small-scale trade, culinary services, and homestay management, reflects the progressive diversification of livelihoods as a household adaptation strategy—a pattern that is widely observed in coastal communities experiencing tourism growth. This aligns with the argument that livelihood diversification is among the strongest determinants of fishers' welfare, as highlighted by Susilowati, Prastyadewi, and Suciati (2025), who found that fishers in Kedonganan improved their resilience and income stability when women and other household members engaged in secondary income sectors.

The shift in gender roles documented in this study corresponds with global evidence showing that tourism often facilitates women's entry into the labor market, increasing their economic participation and bargaining power. However, this transformation is not always linear; it may also produce dual-role burdens for women who remain responsible for household care while contributing economically. Studies in other developing coastal destinations similarly note that the feminization of informal tourism employment can elevate household welfare but may not fully dismantle entrenched gender hierarchies (Ghosh & Ghosh, 2019; Yang et al., 2020). Such tensions are reflected in Sanur, where women's income contributions increase significantly, yet their participation in strategic household decisions—particularly regarding fishing assets—remains limited compared to men. This imbalance mirrors findings from Southeast Asian coastal contexts where cultural norms continue to mediate women's access to economic and political capital despite structural changes in local industries (Islam & Chuenpagdee, 2018).

The statistical results of this research reveal that tourism intensity has a significant positive effect on both livelihood diversification and subjective welfare, while also influencing gender role transformation. These findings reinforce the view that tourism is a viable pathway for enhancing household resilience among fishers who face declining fish stocks, seasonal instability, and climate-related hazards. Previous studies indicate that fishers who diversify into tourism-related work—boat rentals, transport services, or



food stalls—achieve more stable income compared to those relying solely on capture fisheries (Sowman & Wynberg, 2021). In Sanur, the interaction between tourism and fisheries has created a hybrid coastal economy in which fishing persists culturally but is no longer the primary income source for many households.

The adaptive behavior of fishers in responding to changing socio-economic conditions in Sanur is consistent with broader patterns of technological and livelihood adaptation reported in Indonesian coastal communities. Nugroho et al. (2021) noted that fishers in Pati and Pemalang increasingly adopt information and communication technologies (ICTs) as a strategy to manage uncertainties and optimize fishing decisions. Although the current study focuses on gender and welfare rather than ICT use, both sets of findings illustrate the capacity of fishing households to adapt dynamically to external pressures, whether induced by global markets, climate shifts, or tourism expansion. Similarly, research on climate change adaptation by Furoida et al. (2023) demonstrates that communities facing environmental stressors adjust their livelihood portfolios and household roles, which resonates with the gendered adjustments observed in Sanur's tourism economy.

The demographic characteristics of household members also play a role in shaping welfare outcomes. Prastyadewi, Pramandari, and Parwita (2016) emphasized that demographic attributes—age, education, and work experience—significantly influence income variation among women traders in Legian. This observation parallels the present study, where women with higher education and prior non-fishing work experience are more likely to engage successfully in tourism activities, contributing more substantially to household welfare.

International literature reinforces that gender-sensitive tourism development can enhance community resilience when supported by equitable access to resources, training, and institutional support. For instance, Zhao and Ritchie (2007) argue that tourism-driven poverty alleviation depends on how effectively local communities—especially women—are integrated into tourism value chains. In the Sanur context, women's increasing participation in tourism microenterprises reflects such integration, though structural inequalities remain in terms of mobility, capital access, and decision-making authority. Furthermore, Scheyvens (2011) highlights that women's empowerment in tourism is maximized when they have control over income and autonomy in household financial decisions, conditions that are only partially met in Sanur.

The findings also resonate with evidence from other coastal tourism regions where traditional fishing identities adapt to modern economic transformations. Rioux and Pintér (2021) demonstrate that tourism often triggers hybrid livelihood systems in coastal villages, blending cultural traditions with market-oriented activities. Similar blended practices are evident in Sanur, where fishing activities remain symbolically significant



despite reduced economic centrality. This symbolic persistence explains why, although income sources diversify, gender roles tied to fishing heritage continue to shape household dynamics.

In examining the welfare impacts, this study confirms that the benefits of tourism are not uniformly distributed across gender lines. Although women's participation in tourism employment enhances household income, men often retain control over large financial decisions, reflecting what Chant (2016) refers to as the "feminization of responsibility without rights." This pattern underscores that tourism-driven economic opportunities do not automatically translate into gender equality, even when women's economic contributions increase.

Additionally, the findings suggest that households utilizing tourism opportunities exhibit higher adaptive capacity, a concept echoed in the work of Bennett et al. (2019), who assert that adaptive capacity in small-scale fisheries is shaped by social, economic, and institutional factors. Tourism provides alternative livelihoods that strengthen these dimensions, enabling households in Sanur to withstand market fluctuations and ecological uncertainties.

The present research contributes to the discourse on the interplay between tourism, gender transformations, and fisher welfare by illustrating that tourism can elevate household well-being while simultaneously challenging traditional gender norms. However, structural cultural constraints continue to limit women's full empowerment, suggesting a need for targeted policy interventions—such as gender-inclusive training programs, microfinance access, and community-based tourism models that promote equitable participation. Integrating gender perspectives into coastal tourism planning aligns with global recommendations for sustainable coastal development (UNWTO, 2019).

In conclusion, the findings highlight that tourism in Sanur acts as both an economic catalyst and a social force reshaping gender relations. While it enhances livelihood diversification and welfare, it also introduces complex negotiations within household roles. Drawing insights from national and international research, this study underscores the importance of inclusive tourism development that strengthens fisher households' resilience while promoting gender equity as an integral component of coastal sustainability.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that tourism development in Sanur has a significant impact on both gender role transformation and the welfare of coastal fishing households. The expansion of the tourism sector has encouraged livelihood diversification, reducing dependence on traditional fishing activities and creating new economic opportunities for



fishing families. Women's increasing involvement in tourism-related enterprises—such as food services, trading, homestay management, and small-scale tourism services—has become a major contributor to household income and overall economic resilience. These findings affirm that livelihood diversification is an effective adaptive strategy for improving the welfare of fishing communities.

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