

Status of Women in Tourism Industry: The Case Study of Baratang Island and Swaraj Dweep (Havelock) Island, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, India

By

Gaurab Dhali

Research Scholar, Department of Geography, School of Social Sciences and Languages,
Lovely Professional University, Punjab

Email: djlaone7@gmail.com

ORCID ID: [0000-0001-6069-7186](https://orcid.org/0000-0001-6069-7186)

Sajad Nabi Dar

Assistant Professor, Department of Geography, School of Social Sciences and Languages,
Lovely Professional University, Punjab

Ratan Mazumdar

Associate Professor, Department of Geography, Jawaharlal Nehru Rajkeeya Mahavidyalaya,
Port Blair, Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Abstract

Women are entering into new sectors of job opportunities in this modern era. The tourism industry rose as a new source of economy to generate income and sustain their livelihood. The development and influence of this industry vary from one region to another. The study presents that women's contribution to the tourism sector is not the same as in the Baratang and Swaraj Dweep islands due to their geographical, economic, historical, and social configurations differences. These factors have been assessed through a systematic study of the degree of influence on the demographic, economic and social status of women. Simple quantitative methods have been used for the analysis of data collected through a structured field survey and interview. The research outcome also added that the social hurdles is the major determinant factor that women are less participated in the island economy generally and in the tourism sector especially.

Keywords: Tourism Industry, Women Participation, Island Economy, Population Composition.

Introduction

The woman is a fundamental element of a progressive society that consists near half the population of the world. They play a major role in domestic work as well as in outside jobs. Due to the rigid social customs and stereotype rituals present in the different parts of the present societies. There is two-third women population of rural India is economically unutilized despite their potential. The overall contribution of women in work is nearly two-thirds of working. Moreover, only they just get 10% of the total income for these works and receive 1% of the total property (Shettar, 2015). In a developing country like India, the economic contribution of women's productive work is significantly less in number than its male counterparts (Census of India, 2011). But this stigma was not present in all the ages in Indian history. Ae ancient times women also get equal roles in different occupations like business, military, agriculture, and politics in society (Bhattacharya, 1991). But in the medieval period in India, women lost their

rights to equality in different sectors of the economy due to depravedness and stereotypes. This rigidity causes inferior conditions for women in society. Despite the liberty and democratic rights that have been provided for all in this modern period, women do not get a significant position in society (Thanavathi, 2018). Later post-modernization time (1980-90) the functional role of women dramatically changed. Women are entering into new sectors of job opportunities. Tourism is one of the new sources of income and employment opportunities. Women empowerment become a need of time, even in the year (2014-18) almost half of the 111 countries belonging to the World Trade Organization (WTO) members had implemented trade policies in support of women (Boghossian, 2019). They need a socio-economic thread to connect the mainstream of society through their economic contribution. In this regard, tourism plays a pivotal role to eliminate poverty from the prevalent society by creating employment opportunities in hospitality and its allied activities.

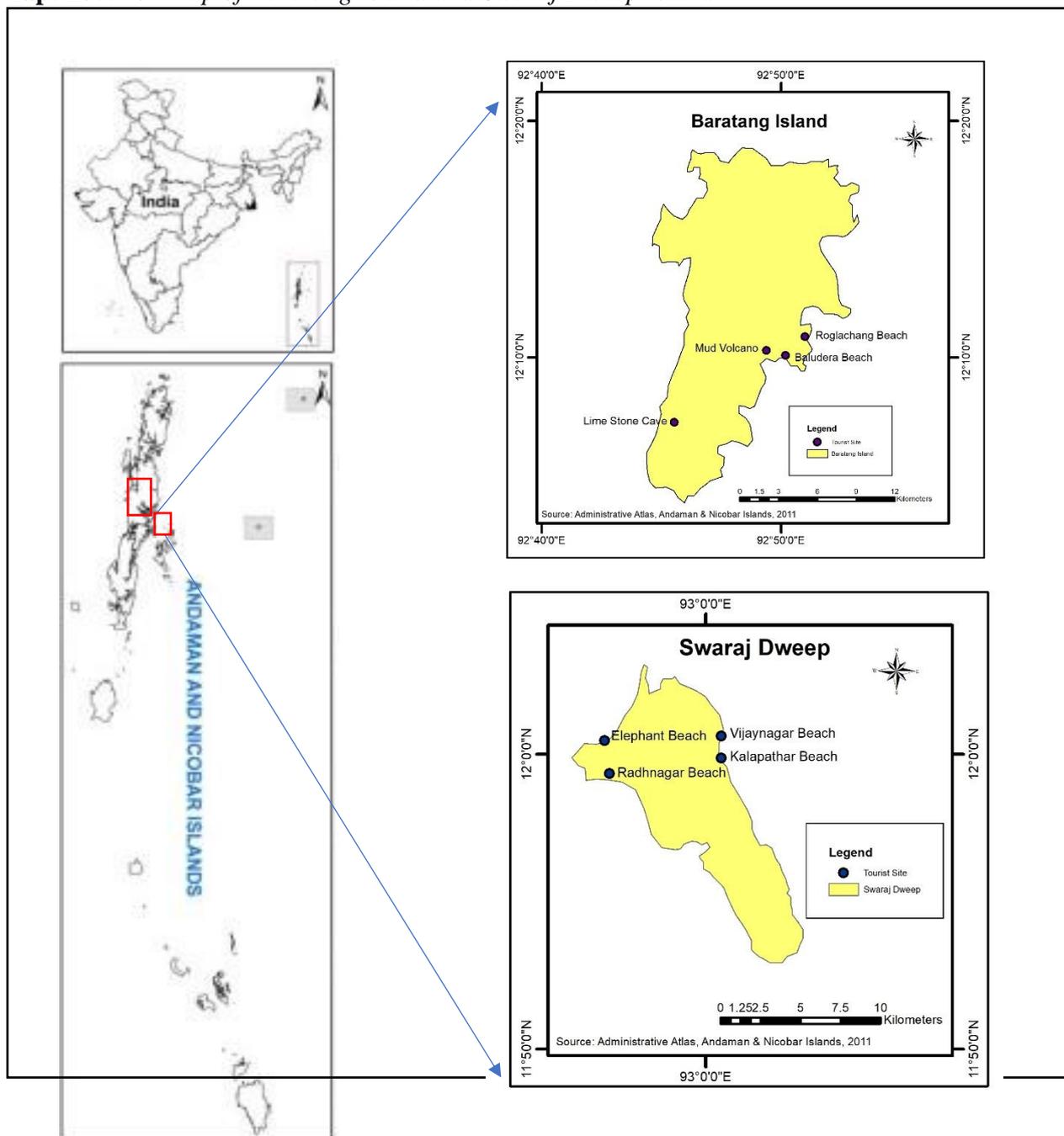
Hence this study is approached as a systematic inquiry into the women's participation to contribute to the economic development of Swaraj Dweep (Havelock Island) and Baratang Island. Both of these islands are famous tourist destinations in the Andaman & Nicobar Islands (ANI). These islands are lies 1200 km far from the Indian mainland in Bay of Bengal (Map 1). These islands are having different geographic, geology, history, demographic composition, and tourism sites. It attracts a large number of domestic and foreign tourists next to the Port Blair (Capital City of ANI) region. The tourism industry provides the opportunity for employment gaining and profit making for both males and females at the destination through various sections of tourism services. The people of these islands facilitated tourism through activities and services i.e., transportation (Tourist cabs, buses, cars, rented bikes, scooters, bicycle small boats), hotels and restaurants, accommodation, amusement services, etc. But the participation of both gender is different as per their quantity and nature of work. This study has enquired about women's participation in different sectors of tourism and hospitality on each island and further, their comparative analysis has been done from one island to another. The comprehensive analyses of the elements of both islands have given their background for economic participation and identified the factors that determine their participation in tourism.

Image: Working women in (A) Baratang Island, (B) Swaraj Dweep Island in Tourism Sector.



Source: *Field Study*

Map: Location map of Baratang Island and Swaraj Dweep Island



Source: Administrative Atlas, Andaman & Nicobar Islands, 2011

Literature Review

(Mkhize & Cele, 2017) studied the intersection of race and gender with the tourism industry. They found the gender inequality remains a dominant element in tourism. There is a large number of female participations in tourism studies and the academic sector. Apart from this many studies have found that the societal perception is that tourism is a female profession (Xiong, Chen, Okumus & Fan, 2022). Because tourism is much more related to the work of hospitality service and women are socially trained for this kind of work by their nature. But in the ground of reality, it has found that generally, they are paid less and lower level of job

(Mousa, Abdelgaffar, Salem, Elbaz, & Chaouali, 2023). Social roles and stereotypes make women work primarily at home and family income factor becomes

secondary. A married woman has to ask permission of her husband or elder laws. Many studies found that despite of their active participation as a job in the tourism industry they do not get into the high managerial posts and entrepreneurship (Cicek, Zencir, & Kozak, 2017). According to Frauen NFI, Drossier, 2019) the lack of self-confidence is one of the major reasons to not get in the field of leadership. There is much work has been done in qualitative analysis of women economic participation in the tourism sector (Figueroa-Domec, Jong, & Williams, 2020). Presently the role of women has been fast shifting from primary to tertiary (service) sector (Aldakhil, Abro, Islam, & Zaman, 2018). A social problem like gender stereotypes could be eliminated through human resource management, policy intervention and implication which opening the new avenue for women enterpreuer and employment in tourism sector (Hutching, Moyle, Chai, Garofano, & Moore, 2020). The literature review has found the works have been done for women empowerment regarding the economic status of Indian women. Trade policies and international plans are also formulated for the inclusion of women in the different sectors of the economy. There are major strategies that have been discussed for the same purpose but very few works have been done in tourism as a medium for women empowerment in potential regions. Especially there is no work has been found for women participation in tourism industry and its influence on their socio-economic condition. This work has been done to fill those research gap through fulfilled by these objectives:

1. Identify the nature and characteristics of work performed by women in tourism development.
2. Assess the potential of their work according to their respective islands.
3. Compare the function and status of women engaged in the tourism industry.

Database and Methodology

This study assessed its enquiry through using both primary and secondary data. The primary data has been used for about introduce the physical, social, economic and demographic characteristic of the both islands. The secondary data has been collected by the field survey and in-depth interview from the women participated in different sectors of tourism industry at their respective islands. The close ended questions have been asked through the help of questionnaire and open-ended questions have asked regarding their livelihood conditions. At the of data collection there is total 20 women have been surveyed. There is 10 women have been surveyed from each island. The questionnaire is having both qualitative and quantitative nature of questions which asked about their preliminary information during the interview and about their socio-economic assets. Here the interview has conduct to know their problems and prospect while working in tourism industry. Moreover, apart from these working women of tourism the interview also conducted from the relevant tourism stakeholders i.e., tourists, tour operators, and government official about their views upon the women participation in tourism industry. Quantitative data analysis done through simple arithmetic analysis while qualitative data analysis been done through the content analysis method.

Data Analysis

Demographic Aspects

Demographic characteristics of a region deal with the features of the population of the study area. It also includes age, sex, educational qualification, religion, language and all other

personal details related to an individual respondent. The Swaraj Dweep and Baratang islands are having 6342 and 5686 (Census of India, 2011) number of populations respectively.

Table 1: *Demographic characteristics of Swaraj Dweep and Baratang Islands, 2011.*

Type of Population	Category	Swaraj Dweep Island	Baratang Island
Aggregate Population	Male	3495	2919
		55.34 %	51.33 %
	Female	2820	2767
		44.65 %	48.66 %
	Total	6315	5686
Working Population	Male (Numbers)	2335	1547
	Male (Percentage)	87.38 %	72.22
	Female	337	625
		12.61 %	29.17 %
	Total	2672	2142
Proportion Working Female among total Female Population	Female	337	625
	Female (Percentage)	5.33	10.99
	Total Female Population	2820	2767

Source: *Census of India, 2011*

The demography wise data is showing that the women work contribution is very low in both of the islands. The total economic contribution of women in Swaraj Dweep Island is only 12.61% while in Baratang Island it has 29.17% but their proportion is very low in compare to the total population of those respective islands (5.33% and 10.99% respectively). In Baratang island women are engaged in construction-related work and their contribution to the tourism industry is significantly low than the women of Swaraj Dweep, who are mostly engaged in business opportunities (Table 1).

Table 2: *Demographic characteristics of working women in the tourism sector of Swaraj Dweep and Baratang Islands.*

Sample No.	Swaraj Dweep Island					Baratang Island				
	Family Members		Nos. of working members in the family	Nos. of female working members in the family	Residency	Family Members		Nos. of working members in the family	Nos. of female working members in the family	Residency
	Male	Female				Male	Female			
1.	02	03	02	01	Own House	02	01	02	01	Rent House
2.	02	01	01	01	Rent House	02	01	01	01	Rent House
3.	02	01	01	01	Own House	02	02	01	01	Rent House
4.	03	02	03	01	Own House	03	01	01	01	Rent House
5.	04	03	02	01	Own House	02	01	02	01	Rent House
6.	02	01	01	01	Rent House	02	01	01	01	Rent House
7.	01	01	01	01	Own House	02	02	01	01	Rent House
8.	02	03	02	01	Own House	03	01	01	01	Rent House
9.	02	02	01	01	Own House	02	01	02	01	Rent House
10.	01	02	02	01	Own House	02	01	01	01	Rent House
Total	21	19	16	10		09	05	05	04	

Source: *Primary Data, 2022*

Age

For the women who work in the tourism sector the mean age is more or less as 40 and 43 years in both Swaraj Dweep and Baratang Islands respectively but the women of Baratang Island are involved in the tourism industry are more aged than the women of Swaraj Dweep Island with a slight difference. The good opportunity and well-established infrastructures and permanent residency of the place are the major factors that the women of Swaraj Dweep Island engaged in tourism activity at an early age.

Residence Permanency

The most of the women of Swaraj Dweep Island engaged in the tourism industry are having their own home while the women of Baratang Island engaged in tourism mostly reside in rented houses (Table 2).

Profession

Most of the women of both islands engaged in a business activity like the vendor of some items like coconut, soft drink, snacks, fruits, souvenir items etc. The women of Swaraj Dweep Island are also selling materials like souvenirs and printed garments while the women of Baratang Island only focused on selling food and beverages items. The mean working hours of them are similar to 9-10 hours but the range of the working hours is found comparatively long among the women working in Baratang Island. They want to increase their wealth day by day increment by enhancing the quality and quantity of their goods. The professional works in tourism for women are only limited to Swaraj Dweep Island due to having more exposure to the availability of resorts, restaurants, and water sports.

Family Structure

The women engaged in tourism activities are the main breadwinner of the family. The numbers of male members are exceeding in most of the family but their economic contribution is less than these women (Table 1). Most of these women are not having other sources of income so they have joined to work in this sector. Bettlenut cultivation is another source of income for the women of Swaraj Dweep Island. In Baratang Island, the other sources of income for these women are their husband's job or any other part-time work. These facts reveal that the women engaged in the tourism sector by the chance rather than their choice.

Economic Aspects

Personal Details (Daily Income)

The daily income of the women belongs to both of the islands is approximately Rupees 500 (1 US Dollar = 82.71 Indian Rupees). The maximum of them earned only enough to sustain their family. Their annual income is less than Rupees 2 lakh (Table 3). The women engaged in beverage selling activities like coconut and lemon juice vendors earn more income than other vendor women. The reason behind this fact is due to the tropical island climate and travelling the tourist get exhausted while they travel in the presence of scorching sun. Coconut water and lemon juice are very suitable beverages to rejuvenate them and these products are taking very little time to consume. Hence the demand for these beverages is high than other tourism products in these islands.

Assets (Wealth)

Only 30% of the women of Swaraj Dweep owned two-wheelers and 80% are having their own house over there while the women of Baratang Island nor possess any type of vehicle neither have their own house.

Table 3: Economic Characteristics of Swaraj Dweep and Baratang Islands

Sample No.	Swaraj Dweep Island		Baratang Island	
	Nature of Work	Annual Income (In Rupees)	Nature of Work	Annual Income(In Rupees)
1.	Banana Selling	60000	Breakfast Vendor	144000
2.	Green Coconut Selling	60000	Green Coconut Selling	216000
3.	Fruit Salad Selling	80000	Snack Shop	144000
4.	Restaurant Owner	60000	Snack Shop	180000
5.	Souvenir Selling	90000	Breakfast Vendor	144000
6.	Tourist Garment Vendor	60000	Green Coconut Selling	216000
7.	Tourist Garment Vendor	60000	Snack Shop	144000
8.	Fruits and Spices vendor	70000	Snack Shop	180000
9.	Lemon Juice Vendor	80000	Breakfast Vendor	164000
10.	Reservation Executive	200000	Green Coconut Selling	216000

Source: Primary Data, 2022

Social Aspects

The women of both islands want to enhance their social status through economic activities in tourism. Through these activities they will be able to get respect and self-dependency in their family as well as in their neighborhood. Tourism influenced the socio-economic structure of both islands but in a different way. The way of thinking has changed in some women engaged tourism in Swaraj Dweep Island while significant changes in perspectives of the women of Baratang Island have not found. The women disclosed the fact regarding their job, that it is their best suitable job in the sector of tourism at their respective islands.

Result and Discussion

The good availability of infrastructure and accessibility to tourism resources determine the involvement of the local population generally and the women of that region especially. The women who engage in both of the islands are belongs to early adult age group. They have the sole responsibility to generate income to fulfil their family needs. The residence permanency of that area impacts their economic condition and their business. The women in Baratang Island mostly expend their earning in their house rent, consequently they are having less saving than women of Swaraj Dweep. The women who are involved in tourism activity in Swaraj Dweep Island are having their own houses and some of them having vehicles. These properties help them to save their money, time and labor. The women of Swaraj Dweep Island and Baratang Island are mostly engaged in different vendor types of business and rarely 10% of them are engaged in professional services in the tourism sector. They earned a daily average income of

Rupees 500 while their mean annual income is less than Rupees 200000 by performing a hardworking job through their 9 to 10 hours daily. Both of the islands are best suitable for the beverage business for the women in the sector of tourism because of the small investment, great return, low risk of failure, quick consumable along suitable business according to the climate of these islands. They also have been asked about the functioning efficiency of tourism industry in their islands. They shared that the tourists usually face the problem of high prices and lack of transportation in Swaraj Dweep Island in peak tourist season. Baratang Island does not have sufficient accommodation facilities for the tourists who visit over there. Women are often asked about these problems by tourists received in these islands. The women of both of these islands mostly engage in vendors like selling beverages, snacks, souvenirs, garments, foods, fruits (Image) and professional jobs like receptionist, reservation executive, office bearers, waiters and water sports service providers. More than 80% of these women in these islands are engaged in the business of tourism goods. They have restricted themselves to some conventional type of work and do not think about work in any other sector. Even though they are satisfied with their current job. The Stakeholders added their views that nature of tourism and tourism resources are different among both of islands. The Baratang Island is famous for wonders of nature and receiving tourists from the Indian mainland while Swaraj Dweep Island is famous for world-famous beaches and both Indian and foreign origin tourists visit there in large number. The women of Swaraj Dweep Island mostly received the tourist customer who visits Radhanagar and Elephant beach while the women of Baratang Island receive the tourist who visits the Lime Stone Cave (Map). The tourists who visit Swaraj Dweep Island mostly asks about the tourist places of these islands while in Baratang Island they ask about accommodation facilities for them. The women of both islands are suggested the same nature of the job to do for women whatever kind of business they usually related with. Most of them not thinking out of the traditional nature of job in tourism. They are usually feeling hesitation to do any new start up due to the social stigma and fear of economic risk.

Problems

The women engage in the tourism business are facing the following problems in these islands:

1. Most of them are engage in vendor type of business than any other professional job in tourism.
2. They do not get sufficient income due to these activities to the small level of business outlets.
3. They work completely in inorganized way. There are no co-operatives or unions of working women in tourism sector.
4. Most of the women who are engaged in the tourism activity are belongs to poor economic background. Mostly, no other family members contribute to their work neither in any other tourism activities.
5. There are no organizations or self-help groups to directly help them to engage them in the tourism sector. Especially in Baratang Island, fewer numbers women engaged in tourism activities because they do not have an adequate place to do their business over there.
6. Some of them are running their vending business in unauthorized spaces. The authorities may be evacuated them any time by the government order which will influence on their sole source livelihood.

Suggestions

Women are the most vulnerable population in society. But some orthodox norms and social stigma make them to participate in different aspect of society. They need special provisions to get attention to provide them equity in society. The women in the tourism sector are in miserable conditions in Swaraj Dweep and Baratang Island and based on the present study, some suggestions are given to improve their business status in the tourism sector are the following:

1. The government and non-government organizations have to initiate the skill development and awareness program for introducing new employment and entrepreneurship opportunity for women in the tourism sector. Profession like receptionist, housekeeping, front office, divemaster, kayaking, tour operating, cooking, laundry services are very suitable for women in the tourism sector (Chand, Singh, Parappurathu, Roy, & Kumar, 2015).
2. The quality and quantity of the selling goods should improve. In addition, they can also do part-time business or any other job at different times to get an extra income.
3. The capable family members can contribute to help to run their business and establish a new job. The maximum number of working population increase the family income. Especially a woman from the same family and relatives can help or provide assistance to make their business profitable.
4. A sustainable tour package that will involve all the tourism sites of the island could benefit the people of the entire region.
5. The local authority should provide space to these women in establishing their business activities. The authority should thoroughly inform them about the loan and different schemes in banking facilities to help in their business.

Conclusion

The work participation of women is less in economy of the islands in generally and tourism in specially. The aggregate work participation of women is less in Swaraj Dweep in compare to the women's in Baratang Island but the net income of the women of Baratang Island is very low due to the lack of other economic assets. The women of these islands are mainly vendors of consumable goods and petty items. These types of businesses are conventional and having less risk in nature. They confined themselves to a particular type of job and did not like to take the risk to perform any other new type of economic activity. The main factors of determining their limitation to do new opportunities are lack of tourism education and work, lack of association, and fear of economic risk to involve in new tourism avenue.

Bibliography

- Aldakhil, A. M., Abro, M. M., Islam, T., & Zaman, K. (2018). The Impact of Tourism and Finance on Women Empowerment. *Journal of Policy Modeling*. [https:// doi.org/ 10.1016/ j.jpolmod.2018.12.001](https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jpolmod.2018.12.001)
- Bhattarcharya, S. (1991). Economic Rights of Ancient Indian Women. *Economic and Political Weekly*; 26(9/10), 507-512. <https://www.jstor.org/stable/4397402>
- Boghossian, A. D. (2019). Trade Policies Supporting Women's Economic Empowerment: Trends of WTO Members. *Economic Research and Statistics Division, WTO*, 2. <https://doi.org/10.30875/eda9a0d4-en>
- Britannica Encyclopedia, 2019

- Chand, S., Singh, S., Parappurathu, S., Roy, S. D., & Kumar, A. (2015). Explaining the status and scope of eco-tourism development for livelihood security: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. *International Journal of Sustainable Development & World Ecology'* 22(4), 335-345. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13504509.2015.1050478>
- Cicek, D., Zencir, E., & Kozak, N. (2017). Women in Turkish tourism. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management*; 31, 228-234. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2017.03.006>
- Dung, I. D., & Rajamohan. (2016). Exploring the status and scope of eco-tourism development for livelihood security: Andaman and Nicobar Islands, India. *St. Theresa Journal of Humanities and Social Science*; 2(1).
- Figueroa-Domec, C., Jong, A. d., & Williams, A. M. (2020). Gender, Tourism & Entrepreneurship: A Critical Review. *Annals of Tourism Research*; 84, 1-13.
- Gomes, T., & Blake, A. (2020). Tourism as a Driver for Promoting Gender Equality? A Case Study of the participant of women in Tourism Labour Market in Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh. *Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Issues*; 2(2), 178-189.
- Kothari, C.N. (2017). *Fundamentals of Research Methodology*, New Delhi
- Mkhize, G., & Cele, N. (2017). The Role of Women in tourism in Kwazulu-Natal: Case studies from the South Coast of Kuzulu Natal. *Agenda*, 128-139. <https://doi.org/10.1080/10130950.2017.1371527>
- Mousa, M., Abdelgaffar, H., Salem, I. E., Elbaz, A. M., & Chaouali, W. (2023). Religious, contextual and media influence: determinants of the representation of female tour guides in travel agencies. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-05-2022-0650>
- Shettar, R. (2015). A Study on Issues and Challenges of Women Empowerment of India. *IDSR Journal of Bussiness and Management*, 17(14), 13-19.
- Stacey, J. (2015). *Supporting Quality Jobs in Tourism*. OECD Tourism papers, 2013/02, OECD Publishing, Paris. <https://doi.org/10.1787/23071672>
- Thanavathi, C. (2018). *Status of Modern Women in India: Gender, Women, and Society*. V. L. Media Solution Publishing House, Delhi.
- Xiong, W., Chen, S., Okumus, B., & Fan, F. (2022). Gender stereotyping and its impact on perceived emotional leadership in the hospitality industry: A mixed-methods study. *Tourism Management*, 90, 104476. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104476>