

Beyond the ‘Third Shift’: Gender-Responsive Tourism, Women’s Cultural Custodianship and Social Equity in India

Arup Kumar Baksi^{1*}, Subhashree Sanyal²

¹Professor, Aliah University, Kolkata, baksi.arup@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9206-3994>

²Assistant Professor (III), Visva-Bharati, Santiniketan, subhashreesanyal@gmail.com, ORCID ID: <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-1570-5992>

*Corresponding Author

Keywords

- Gender-Responsive Tourism
- Tourism Value Chain
- Feminist Political Ecology
- Intersectionality
- Equity

Abstract

Understanding and assessment of sustainable and responsible tourism have a predominant focus on economic and environmental parameters and their cumulative impact on tourism value chain and governance. However, in this process, the critical and non-linear aspects of gender, culture and society have seldom surfaced as a complex-mix. This has resulted in a skewed framework of sustainable and responsible tourism where major academic work attempted to balance out ecology and economy to ensure sustainability and undermined the actor (gender) and agency (cultural and social) engagements. This study assumes that lack of gender-responsive framework would continue to advocate an inequitable tourism value chain dominated by patriarchal governance structures. Further, the practice of cultural and heritage traditions, as part of the tourism value chain, also suffers from acknowledging the true custodianship of such practices and preservation. The problem lies in the systemic marginalization of women and other non-binary individuals from the tourism value chain, thereby, limiting their socio-cultural agency and devalue their role in cultural custodianship.

Grounded in a theoretical synthesis of Feminist Political Ecology and Intersectionality, this study investigates how gender-responsive tourism can trigger a transformative change in equitable gender participation and recognition in tourism value chain. The aims to study the gendered division of labour in tourism initiatives and document the role of women in safeguarding cultural traditions. Additionally, it seeks to develop a participatory model for gender-responsive tourism praxis. The study, conducted across three diverse tourism destinations in the state of West Bengal, namely, Birbhum, Bankura and Darjeeling, used an equal-status exploratory mixed method design. Findings indicated that lack of gender-responsive outlook led to inequitable distribution of benefits, suppressed visibility and non-viability of women-led cultural enterprises. The proposed participatory model for gender responsive framework puts women as agents of cultural custodianship for equitable and inclusive participation in the tourism value chain. This is implicated for the non-

binary gender continuum too. Future research would explore the scalability of the proposed model and its applicability to other geographical contexts facing similar gendered challenges in tourism developments.

1. Introduction

Contribution of tourism towards India's economic development, social transformation and cultural sustainability has been profound. UNWTO's (2013) tripartite framework focusing on economic viability, environmental integrity and social equity has ensured that 'sustainable tourism' gets considerable attention both in academia and practice. However, one could observe a marked imbalance in this triangulation in Indian context. Over prioritization of economic viability, articulated through employment generation, livelihood support and foreign currency earnings and environmental integrity focusing on bio-diversity preservation and waste management have relegated the pillar of social equity to a perfunctory checkbox (Sarkki, Pihlajamäki, Rasmus, and Eronen, 2023). In fact, the issue of social inequity is well manifested in the context of its gendered dimensions.

This study aims to address the systemic inequity and marginalization of women and non-binary individuals from the core tourism value chain. This exclusion is not merely an issue of livelihood parity as it limits their socio-economic agency and sidelines their role as critical custodians of intangible cultural heritage (ICH) and its practice. The marginalization pushed the women into low-paid and invisible segments of the tourism industry, such as care-giving, familial labour, informal vending, housekeeping etc. The decision-making positions remain predominantly male-dominated (Figueroa-Domecq et al., 2015). This gendered division of labour perpetuates the existing economic disparities. This gender-skewed marginalization has severe consequences for cultural sustainability and resilience. Women are often the primary advocators of intangible cultural heritage, including knowhow related to folk arts, crafts, oral histories, culinary traditions and rituals (UNESCO, 2001). When developmental approaches in tourism ignores or commodifies these contributions without ensuring equitable benefits and decision-making power for women, it not only perpetuates social injustice but also risks the gradual erosion of authentic cultural expressions. Under these circumstances the tourism narrative gets shaped by the male gaze, presenting a filtered and inaccurate representation of local culture. Therefore, without an integrated gender-responsive framework, the policy-driven initiatives of sustainable tourism in India risk reinforcing the very inequities. This study assumes that addressing this gap is not an optional add-on but a mandatory reconfiguration to ensure that tourism, in Indian context, becomes truly transformative and sustainable.

2. Review of Literature

The World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) defines sustainable tourism as ‘tourism that takes full account of its current and future economic, social and environmental impacts, addressing the needs of visitors, the industry, the environment and host communities’ (UNDP-WTO, 2005). Sustainable tourism has been well researched and has branched out in several forms, such as, ecotourism, responsible tourism, pro-poor tourism etc. (Sharpley and Harrison, 2019). The initial model and frameworks of sustainable tourism acknowledged the social dimension of tourism, however, the operational aspects remained aligned with environmental and economic parameters. Community-based tourism (CBT) emphasized on social cohesion to foster local empowerment in tourism development and sustainability (Altinok, 2024). However, the critical feminist worldview revealed that CBT has a tendency to assume ‘community’ as a homogenous entity and masking the issues of intersectionalities and intra-community power structures, particularly those based on gender (Momsen, 2019). UNWTO (2022) acknowledged that gender mainstreaming could set the gender-targeted approaches to sustainable tourism. Alarcon and Cole (2019) observed that gender-responsive initiatives could ensure equity-based participation of the entire gender continuum in tourism. However, the economic evidence for gender equality in tourism is yet to be consolidated. Additionally, the engagement and remuneration of men and women in tourism industry remain discriminated. Studies conducted in Nepal (Gurung, 2008) and Kerala, India (Panda, 2018), showed that even in successful CBT initiatives, women's labour was often exploited, their access to resources was constrained and they were shunned from decision-making positions in governance structures. The marginalization of women and other non-binary gender from the core functionalities is also reflected in the tourism value chain.

Studies consistently exhibited that women are overrepresented in the informal and unorganized sectors of tourism (Ferguson and Alarcón, 2015). Studies conducted in the Himachal Pradesh and Rajasthan, India, provided evidence for women having limited financial control and restricted market-related decision making, though, they are actively engaged in handicrafts and homestays (Joshi, Mishra, Jamal and Janotra, 2005). The extant literature, however, lacks a systematic investigation into how this gendered division of labour intersects with the role and participation of women in cultural & heritage tourism.

The imbalanced gendered power relations embedded in the tourism sector have been well studied (Gentry, 2007; Schellhorn, 2010; Vandegrift, 2008; Duffy et al., 2015; Ferguson, 2011; Tucker and

Boonabaana, 2012). However, there has been a failure to consider differential impacts or consequences of tourism developments on men and women.

The study was grounded in the theories Feminist Political Ecology (Rocheleau, Thomas-Slayter and Wangari, 2013) and Intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1989). The Feminist Political Ecology offered a framework for understanding the mediating impacts of gender orientations and involvement on the nature and pattern of human interactions with the environment and resources. The theory assumes that the gendered power structure shapes the control over and access to resources and acquire knowledge from the same.

In the context of tourism, which is deeply entangled with natural and cultural resources, the theory of Feminist Political Ecology would support us in understanding that how gender is deterministic of: (i) the hierarchical stratification of labour and associated financial and social benefits in tourism industry, (ii) the appreciation and acknowledgement of women's knowledge of cultural heritage and (iii) decision-making authority at household, community and policy levels. The theory moves beyond a simplified version of 'add women and stir' approach to question the power-core that advocates and controls gendered outcomes (Truelove, 2011). The intersectionality scales up this issue as it is believed that "the complex social inequalities fostered by intersecting systems of power are fundamentally unjust" (Collins, 2015).

Intersectionality, coined by Crenshaw (1989) and developed further by black feminist scholars serves as an analytical tool for understanding how multiple axes of social stratification, such as gender, caste, class, ethnicity, and age, are interconnect to create unique experiences of the privileged and the oppressed.

Tourism literature did not surface the deployment of intersectionality as a framework of analysis, although, researchers have argued in its favour in the context of methodological rigor and its potential to reconfigure socially constructed 'gender concept' in alignment with externally imposed and individually chosen points of identification, such as ethnicity, race, caste etc. (Cole, 2017; Jamal and Hollinshead, 2001; Swain, 2002). Empirical study conducted by Henrici revealed that women craft-sellers (part of the tourism industry in Peru, South America) have varying degrees of authority and power that manifest with relationships of ethnicity, class and gender (Henrici, 2002). In a similar study Ishii (2012) found multi-layered marginalization based on gender, ethnicity and legal status among the Akha of Northern Thailand. More recent studies have used Critical race Theory and the related logics of Black Feminism in decoding sustainability issues in tourism industry (Chambers, 2022; Chambers, 2021; Figueroa-Domecq, Kimbu, de Jong and Williams, 2020; Boukhris, 2017). Researchers have also discussed the issues governing sustainability in tourism and fostering cultural & heritage resilience in

the context of justice and ethics grounded in gendered intersectionality (Bright et al, 2021; Jamal and Camargo, 2014).

Intersectionality was also found to shape women's experience and their nature of engagement in tourism industry in Indian context. Prakash, Engheepi, and Sinha (2024) used eco-feminist perspectives to assess the possibility of gender-inclusive community development through responsible tourism and access to water resources (sustainable water governance) in Sikkim, India. While their observations affirmed the invaluable role of women as keepers of "water knowledge" in indigenous communities, they found absence of gender-responsive policies to ensure equitable access to water. Women's participation in conservation governance has also been questioned (Pandya, 2023) as women's overarching positioning and subjectivity were found to shape their decision making and engagement with conservation interventions.

In this study the Feminist Political Economy provided the framework to understand the gendered power dynamism in accessing and mobilizing resources, both cultural and economic within the tourism ecosystem, while the Intersectionality theory grounded the research problem in the intra-gender analytical framework which acknowledged the complex social fabric of India. This intertwined framework guided the investigation into how gender-responsive tourism could be a catalyst for transformative change, leading to both social equity and authentic cultural custodianship.

Research gaps

Studies on gender-responsive tourism are inadequate and lack cohesion to be framed within a unified theoretical framework. The gender issue has been addressed sporadically in the context of their engagement, roles and responsibilities across tourism communities but was never discussed for intra-gender marginalization, power-simulation, economic intermediation and representational voids at the decision making and control platforms. Compounded marginalization also remained illusive in the context of intersectional gender hierarchies and its implications for the tourism sector. One could also identify lack of precise research focus on gender-mobility across the economic platforms as a result of which there has been a generalised understanding about the clutches of economic intermediation which needs to be further explored for its pattern, dynamism and impacts.

On the methodological front most of the studies, exploring economic participation of women in tourism activities and/or their role in cultural & heritage preservation, used mono-method approach, thereby, losing the in in-depth and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon governing gender-responsive tourism. The larger proportion of the studies were either observational or diagnostic. Use of mixed-method research with synchronised paradigmatic stance has been a rarity. The design deficiency in adopting a participatory action research (PAR) is amplified with this skewed methodical

approach. The analytical depth was found to be lacking too as the power relations in the resource governance in tourism sector is complex and spatially multi-layered. Therefore, the theoretical lens, such as Feminist Political Ecology and Intersectionality provide the logical framework to decode the research problem from novel viewpoints, such as, exploration of economic empowerment of women to assess the scope of equitable preservation of culture and heritage.

A gap also exists in the development and testing of participatory models for gender-responsive tourism that are contextually grounded in the diverse socio-cultural landscapes of India.

3. Objectives

The study aims:

1. to critically analyze the gendered division of labour and the distribution of socio-economic benefits within community-based tourism initiatives in selected destinations of West Bengal.
2. to document and analyze the specific roles, contributions, and challenges of women in safeguarding and transmitting intangible cultural heritage within the context of tourism development.
3. to co-design, in collaboration with stakeholders, a participatory model for gender-responsive tourism praxis that promotes social equity and inclusive cultural preservation.

Research questions

The study hinges on the following research questions:

1. How is the tourism value chain is gendered and what are the implications for women's socio-economic agency?
2. In what ways do women act as custodians of intangible cultural heritage, and how does their level of empowerment within the tourism ecosystem impact the viability and authenticity of this cultural preservation?
3. What are the key components of a participatory, gender-responsive tourism model that can effectively address existing inequities and foster both social justice and cultural sustainability?

4. Research Methodology

This study deployed an equal-status exploratory mixed-methods research (MMR) design, where the qualitative and quantitative phases were given equal priority, and the qualitative phase preceded and informed the quantitative phase (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2018). This approach was deemed most appropriate as the initial qualitative exploration was necessary to understand the complex, context-

specific gendered and cultural dynamics, which then informed the development of a culturally-grounded quantitative survey. The study used an ethnomethodological worldview across three purposively selected districts in West Bengal, India: Birbhum (known for Santiniketan, folk arts like Baul music, and terracotta), Bankura (known for Baluchari sarees, terracotta temples, and tribal communities), and Darjeeling (known for its tea tourism, Himalayan culture and homestays). These sites were selected for their diverse tourism typologies (cultural traditions, indigenous craft practices, culinary practices, pilgrimage, heritage and eco-tourism) and distinct socio-cultural contexts, allowing for a richer, comparative analysis.

A multi-stage sampling strategy was employed. For the qualitative phase a maximum-variation purposive sample of 60 participants (20 from each district) was selected. This included women tourism workers, women cultural practitioners (artisans, performers), leaders of women's Self-Help Groups (SHGs), community elders, and local tourism officials. This sample was designed to capture a wide range of perspectives on gendered experiences and cultural roles. However, theoretical saturation was reached after interacting with 39 research participants (Birbhum-16; Bankura-13 and Darjeeling-10) and hence the final sample size was limited to 39.

Based on themes extracted from the qualitative phase, a quantitative survey was administered. A stratified random sample of 384 women engaged in tourism (128 from each district) was drawn from SHG membership lists, artisan cooperatives, and homestay association registries. The stratification ensured representation across different roles (artisan, homestay host, wage labourer, etc.) and social groups (SC, ST, OBC, General). Randomization was ensured while selecting the research participant. However, it was made sure that all the participants of the qualitative study were included in the sample frame for the quantitative study to ensure consistency. Primary data collection was conducted in two phases. The qualitative phase was conducted between August-December, 2024 and the quantitative phase was carried out between February-April, 2025.

Data collection tools and validation of tools:

For the qualitative phase of the study we used:

- (i) semi-structured interviews to explore experiences and perceptions of the research participants with regard to tourism transactions, cultural implications and gendered participation.
- (ii) Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) to generate collective views on community norms, gender roles, and cultural change.

As a measure of validation we opted for data triangulation (data sourced from multiple participants) To ensure trustworthiness, triangulation of methods was used, and member checking was performed by sharing summaries with participants for validation.

A structured survey questionnaire was developed for the quantitative phase. It contained three key measurement constructs, with items measured on a 7-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree to 7=Strongly Agree). The construct, namely, socio-economic empowerment (SEE) was based on Women's Empowerment in Agricultural Index (WEAI). This scale was modified to a tourism context. It measured domains like participation in tourism decisions, control over income, and leadership in community groups. The second construct, namely, cultural agency and custodianship (CAC) was developed based on themes from the qualitative phase and a review of UNESCO's ICH safeguarding framework. It measured perceptions of recognition, transmission of knowledge, and control over cultural representation. Lastly, the perceived equity in tourism (PET) was adapted from items used in studies of organizational justice (Colquitt, 2001) and applied to the community tourism context. It measured perceptions of fairness in benefit distribution, workload, and access to opportunities. The questionnaire was validated through a panel of three experts in gender studies, tourism, and sociology. A pilot study (n=30) was conducted, and Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) and Cronbach's Alpha were used to establish construct validity and internal reliability. All constructs achieved a Cronbach's Alpha > 0.7, indicating acceptable reliability.

5. Results and Discussion

We used Reflexive Thematic Analysis (RTA) which was grounded in the six-phase framework by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2012, 2019, 2021). RTA, being a recursive process, provided the opportunity to move beyond simple data summarization to epistemologically understand the patterns of shared meanings across the data sets. The data analysis approach perfectly synched with the ethno-phenomenological inquiry approach used for the social constructivistic window to view the rooted problem. The analysis also focused on contextualism and used a critical realist perspective to mine out the power dynamism hidden in the data (transcripts). The approach bridged 'participants' narration of realities' which are e shaped by material conditions of patriarchal and caste-based structures with the 'researchers' understanding on pluralism' based on these narratives and contextualising them using the theoretical lenses of Feminist Political Ecology and Intersectionality. The approach did not seek single "truth" but aimed to develop a rich, nuanced and theorized understanding of the experiences reported by the women in the study.

The first step involved prolonged engagement with the data. The audio recordings from the 39 semi-structured interviews and 9 Focus Group Discussions (FGDs) were transcribed verbatim. We used the open-source platform, namely, Turboscribe, to assist us in this process as it could accommodate

transcription of interviews registered in local vernacular (namely, Bengali in this case). We generated the initial set of codes, using both semantic (descriptive) and latent (evocative) techniques and assigned the codes to the identified data segments. For example, a data segment, such as, *"I wake up at around 4 AM... I cook meal for my family, get the children ready for school then go to the field. On returning from the field I prepare the evening meal once finished I get a chance to work on 'kantha stitch' which I love to work there are orders from the tourists they demand authentic work this is the only time I get wish I could get more time to work on this....."* was initially coded as "long-day labour", "unpaid domestic labor," and "tourism engagement as the third shift." Another segment, such as, *"----- as a member of the scheduled caste I find my products get less of a shelf space compared to that of the general castes the shopkeeper says tourists prefer the other designs more.... but I know it's because of my community....."* was coded using "caste-based leadership practice", "sense of devaluation", "suppressed voices within groups" etc. This process was applied consistently across the entire dataset. We produced 131 codes with assignment of single codes to multiple data. This gave us the groundedness score of each and every code. Once the open coding was accomplished, through researchers' intellectual engagement with the data, the entire coded data set was migrated to NVivo 14 platform. Code categories were developed based on the proximity measures associated with the open codes (frequency of occurrence, similarity, causality implications etc.). Based on the code-to-code linkages (formed during categorisation) we could compute the density scores of the codes.

Thematic extraction, based on clustering of code-categories, was iterative as we moved back and forth across the data segments and the open codes before freezing the themes. We used the matrix-coding query of NVivo to understand the code and code-category distribution across the dataset. For instance, codes like "long-day labour", "unpaid domestic labor," and "fragmented labour and work time" were clustered to form the code category "gendered Division of Labor". Similarly, codes like "lack of control over income," "male control of finance," and "dependence on husband/ male partner for investments" were clustered under "constrained economic agency." The initial set of themes were developed based on the scope to cluster the code-categories. These initial themes were reviewed and refined. The themes were analysed in the context of the codes and data segments and were expanded, merged and even splitted as deemed fit. For example, an initial theme of "economic challenges" was deemed too broad and was revised to more precise "structural barriers to economic agency". Once the refinements are done, we proceeded to review the entire dataset to ensure that the extracted themes captured the grounded meaning in the dataset. Concise narrations were developed for the final themes to articulate its focus, scope and implications in relation to the research questions, research objectives and the research gaps identified. The process came up with five themes, such as, "labour invisibility",

“structural barriers to economic agency”, “gendered cultural custodianship”, “social empowerment”, “collective decision-making” and “inter & intra-gender marginalization through skewed power structure”.

Next, the researchers used the autocoding facility in NVivo to cross-check any missing perspective in theme development. NVivo deploys a quasi NLP-assisted indexing approach where text data are algorithmically parsed, mapped and assigned to simulated codes. We selected a pattern-based autocoding for thematic extraction which used string-matching algorithms (exact match, wildcard expansion, and proximity operators) executed over inverted text indices, allowing retrieval of term occurrences and their positional offsets. Co-occurrence matrices and frequency-weighted clustering heuristics were applied to group data segments lexically followed by topic modelling. The rule engine used conditional logic to assign codes and extract themes out of the same by ensuring reproducibility. However, the algorithm remained semantically disambiguated to allow contextual interpretation. Additional insights were received which helped us to re-nomenclate two of our initially identified themes, such as “social empowerment” and “collective decision-making” into “collectivized empowerment”. We froze five themes, namely, “labour invisibility”, “structural barriers to economic agency”, “gendered cultural custodianship”, “collectivized empowerment” and “inter & intra-gender marginalization through skewed power structure”. Table-1 provided a sample representation of the codes, code categories and thematic outputs.

Table-1: Sample representation of the coding scheme with thematic outputs

Data Segment (From Interview/FGD Transcript)	Open Codes (Initial, Descriptive)	Code Categories (Clustering Open Codes)	Thematic Extraction (Clustering Code Categories)
<p><i>"I wake up at around 4 AM... I cook meal for my family, get the children ready for school then go to the field. On returning from the field I prepare the evening meal once finished I get a chance to work on 'kantha stitch' which I love to work there are orders from the tourists they demand authentic work this is the only time I get wish I could get more time to work on this....."</i> (Interview, Birbhum, Artisan, 42)</p> <p>Original transcript: “.....আমি ভোর প্রায় ৪টার সময় উঠে পড়ি... পরিবারের জন্য রান্না করি, বাচ্চাদের</p>	Long-day labour	Gendered division of labour Non-representation in labour-credits triple work burden	<p>Labour invisibility: The theme captured women’s workload and contribution in domestic, agriculture or allied areas and tourism which largely remain unrecognized and invisible</p>
	Unpaid domestic labour		
	Agricultural and allied (other livelihood-based) labour		
	Fragmented labour and work-time		
	Tourism engagement as the "third shift"		
	Marginalized from mainstreaming		

<p>স্কুলের জন্য প্রস্তুত করি... তারপর মাঠে যাই। মাঠ থেকে ফিরে এসে সন্ধ্যার খাবার তৈরি করি... সব শেষ হলে ‘কাঁথা সেলাই’-এর কাজ করার একটু সুযোগ পাই, যেটা করতে আমি খুব ভালোবাসি... পর্যটকদের কাছ থেকে অর্ডার আসে... তারা আসল কাজই চায়... এই সময়টাই আমি পাই... ইশ, যদি এই কাজের জন্য আরও বেশি সময় পেতাম...।”</p>			
<p>“..... <i>the money earned from selling these terracotta figurines goes to the household fund my husband decides how to spend it I have to ask for money from him to buy raw materials, such as clay, burnish etc.</i> ” (FGD, Bankura, Potter, 39) Original transcript: “..... এই টেরাকোটা মূর্তিগুলি বিক্রি করে যে টাকা উপার্জন হয় তা সংসার খরচে যায়... কীভাবে তা খরচ হবে তা আমার স্বামীই ঠিক করেন... কাঁচামাল—যেমন মাটি, বার্নিশ ইত্যাদি—কিনতে হলে আমাকে তাঁর কাছে টাকা চাইতে হয়...।” (FGD, বাঁকুড়া, মৃৎশিল্পী, ৩৯)</p>	<p>Lack of control over income Male control of finances Dependence on husband/ male partner for investment Earnings considered as "household" income (not "personal")</p>	<p>constrained economic agency Patriarchal control of resources</p>	<p>Structural barriers to economic agency. This theme encompasses the systemic and normative barriers—from financial control to restricted market access—that prevent women from converting their labor into meaningful economic power and autonomy.</p>
<p>" <i>the middlemen takes our sarees and sell them to the market Often city markets as weavers we do not know our customers the middlemen decides on the selling price which we do not know We even do not have the power to negotiate on the price that we are getting this is because we do not have market access and market knowledge</i> ” (Interview, Bankura, Weaver, 40) Original transcript: “..... দালালরা আমাদের শাড়িগুলো নিয়ে যায় এবং বাজারে বিক্রি করে... অনেক সময় শহরের বাজারে... আমরা যারা কাজ করি আমাদের ক্রেতাদের চিনি না... বিক্রির দামটা</p>	<p>Lack of market connectivity Middlemen intervention Absence of power to negotiate price Limited direct access to customers</p>	<p>Exclusion from market value chains Exploitative intermediaries</p>	

<p>দালালরাই ঠিক করেন, যা আমরা জানি না... আমরা যে দামে পাচ্ছি, সেই দামে দরদাম করার ক্ষমতাও আমাদের নেই... এর কারণ আমাদের বাজারে পৌঁছানোর সুযোগ ও বাজার সম্পর্কে জ্ঞান নেই...।” (সাক্ষাৎকার, বাঁকুড়া, তাঁতি, ৪০)</p>			
<p><i>"I was taught Baul songs by my mother The tourists listen to it they record it in their phones and cameras probably they love it ... but they never ask the songs' origin how they evolved ... they do not want to know the meaning for them its just a 'show' which they use as testimony of their visit"</i> (Interview, Birbhum, Folk Singer, 53) Original transcript: “..... আমার মা আমাকে বাউল গান শিখিয়েছিলেন... পয়টিকেরা সেগুলো শোনে... তারা তাদের ফোন আর ক্যামেরায় রেকর্ড করে... হয়তো তারা পছন্দ করে... কিন্তু তারা কখনও এই গানগুলোর উৎস কী, কীভাবে এগুলো দীর্ঘদিন ধরে পাল্টেছে—তা জানতে চায় না... তারা অর্থটাও জানতে চায় না... তাদের কাছে এটা শুধু একটা ‘শো’, যেটাকে তারা তাদের বেড়াতে আসার প্রমাণ হিসেবে ব্যবহার করে...।” (সাক্ষাৎকার, বীরভূম, লোকশিল্পী, ৫৩)</p>	<p>Intergenerational knowledge transfer Cultural performance for tourists Commodification of culture Loss of deeper meaning</p> <p>Being a living archive</p>	<p>Cultural custodianship Commodification vs. preservation</p>	<p>Gendered Cultural custodianship This theme identifies women as the pivotal custodians of intangible cultural heritage and explores the dual edge of tourism as both a platform for its celebration and a force for its potential dilution.</p>
<p><i>"..... I cook our local delights, such as, momos and thupkas for the guests in our homestay I narrate stories about our Lepcha culture and its traditions my husband takes decision about the money and communicates with the booking agents ... the tourist appreciates the food and the information but I do not have control over the money"</i> (FGD, Darjeeling, Homestay Manager, 47) Original transcript:</p>	<p>Gendered roles in hospitality Women as cultural ambassadors Men as financial managers</p> <p>Recognition vs. financial control</p>	<p>Gendered division of cultural labour Backstage vs. frontstage</p>	

<p>“..... আমি আমাদের হোমস্টের অতিথিদের জন্য আমাদের স্থানীয় খাবার— যেমন মোমো আর থুকপা—রান্না করি... আমি আমাদের লেপচা সংস্কৃতি ও তার ঐতিহ্য নিয়ে গল্প বলি... আমার স্বামী টাকার ব্যাপারটা ঠিক করেন এবং বুকিং এজেন্টদের সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করেন... পর্যটকেরা খাবার ও তথ্যের প্রশংসা করেন... কিন্তু টাকার ওপর আমার কোনো নিয়ন্ত্রণ নেই...।” (FGD, দার্জিলিং, হোমস্টে ম্যানেজার, ৪৭)</p>			
<p>"..... <i>the formation of our SHG, namely, 'Shanti Self-Help Group' has brought significant changes in our lives we do traditional embroidery work which we can directly take to the market no middlemen we have a bank account we decide on pricing and have control over our earnings we are planning to explore the digital platforms "</i> (Interview, Birbhum, SHG Member, 38) Original transcript: “..... আমাদের এসএইচজি—‘শান্তি সেলফ-হেল্প গ্রুপ’—গঠনের ফলে আমাদের জীবনে উল্লেখযোগ্য পরিবর্তন এসেছে... আমরা ঐতিহ্যবাহী এমব্রয়ডারি কাজ করি, যা আমরা সরাসরি বাজারে নিয়ে যেতে পারি... কোনো দালাল নেই... আমাদের একটি ব্যাংক অ্যাকাউন্ট আছে... আমরা নিজেরাই দাম ঠিক করি এবং আমাদের আয়ের ওপর নিয়ন্ত্রণ আছে... আমরা ইন্টারনেটেও আমাদের জিনিস বিক্রি করার সুযোগ-সুবিধা সম্পর্কে জানার চেষ্টা করছি...।” (সাক্ষাৎকার, বীরভূম, এসএইচজি সদস্য, ৩৮)</p>	<p>Collective action</p> <p>Joint bank account</p> <p>Collective price setting</p> <p>Reduced dependence on middlemen</p> <p>Digital aspiration</p> <p>Increased confidence</p>	<p>Empowerment through collectivization Building social capital</p>	<p>Collectivized empowerment. This theme highlights how forming collectives (SHGs, cooperatives) acts as a powerful counter-strategy to patriarchal structures, enabling women to achieve economic agency, social solidarity, and a stronger voice.</p>
<p>" ----- <i>as a member of the scheduled caste I find my products get less of a shelf space compared to that of the general castes the</i></p>	<p>Caste-based discrimination</p> <p>Unequal market access</p> <p>Biased promotion</p>	<p>Intersectional marginalization Intra-Gender hierarchy</p>	<p>Inter & intra-gender marginalization through skewed power structure.</p>

<p><i>shopkeeper says tourists prefer the other designs more.... but I know it's because of my community."</i> (Interview, Bankura, Leather Artisan, 32) Original transcript: “..... তফসিলি জাতির সদস্য হিসেবে আমি দেখি, আমার পণ্যগুলো জেনারেলের পণ্যের তুলনায় কম জায়গা পায়... দোকানদার বলে, পর্যটকেরা অন্য ডিজাইনগুলো বেশি পছন্দ করে... কিন্তু আমি জানি, এটা SC হওয়ার জন্যই...।” (সাক্ষাৎকার, বাঁকুড়া, চর্মশিল্পী, ৩২)</p>	<p>Market inaccessibility</p>	<p>Unfavourable marketing support</p>	<p>This theme underscores that the experience of gender inequality in tourism is not uniform but is profoundly shaped by other social identities like caste, creating layers of discrimination that require a nuanced, intersectional approach to intervention.</p>
<p><i>"..... our women's group has the presidents from an upper caste they get a chance to represent at the administrative/ district level meetings we, the ST women are only members of the group we can put forward our arguments and suggestions but hardly they are taken "</i> (FGD, Birbhum, ST Woman, 37) Original transcript: “..... আমাদের মহিলাদের দলে সভাপতিরা উঁচু কাস্ট-এর... তারা প্রশাসনিক/জেলা স্তরের বৈঠকে প্রতিনিধিত্ব করার সুযোগ পায়... আমরা, এসটি মহিলারা শুধু দলের সদস্য... আমরা আমাদের মতামত ও প্রস্তাব রাখতে পারি... কিন্তু সেগুলো খুব কমই গ্রহণ করা হয়...।” (FGD, বীরভূম, এসটি মহিলা, ৩৭)</p>	<p>Caste-based leadership practices Restrictive participation Suppressed voices within groups Sense of devaluation</p>	<p>Skewed power structure and dynamics within collectives</p>	

(Source: based on researchers' own database)

Thematic maps were developed (Fig.1) to visualize the relationships between the themes and the code structure which revealed the cohesive story about the research questions. While mapping the datasets (specific cases, such as, interviews and FGDs) we found in majority of the cases the inter-connecting code-thread is “market inaccessibility” which, in itself, reflects gendered marginalization and non-representation (suppression of voice) from the economic workforce and decision-making platforms. A representative case linkage map is shown in Fig.2.

Reflexivity was maintained throughout the analytical process as we consciously focused on the participants' backgrounds and their perceptions to shape the analysis. A complete audit trail was maintained to handle the issue of validity of outputs.

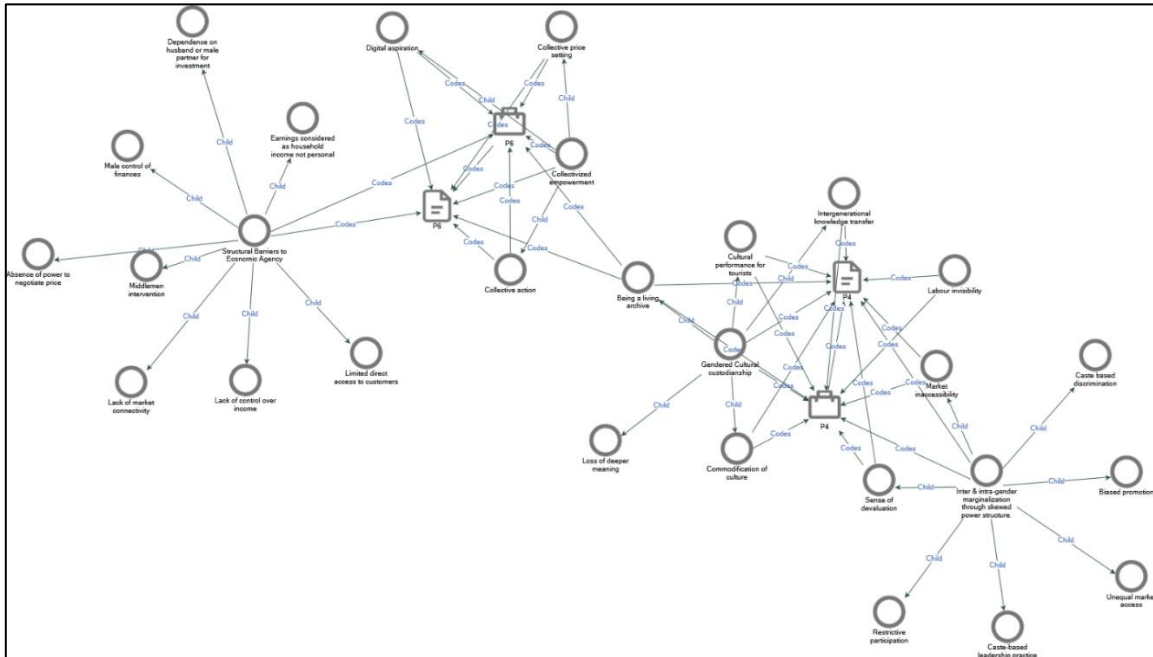


Fig.1: Thematic map showing the theme, code and dataset linkages
 (Source: researchers' own output using NVivo14 based on data collected)

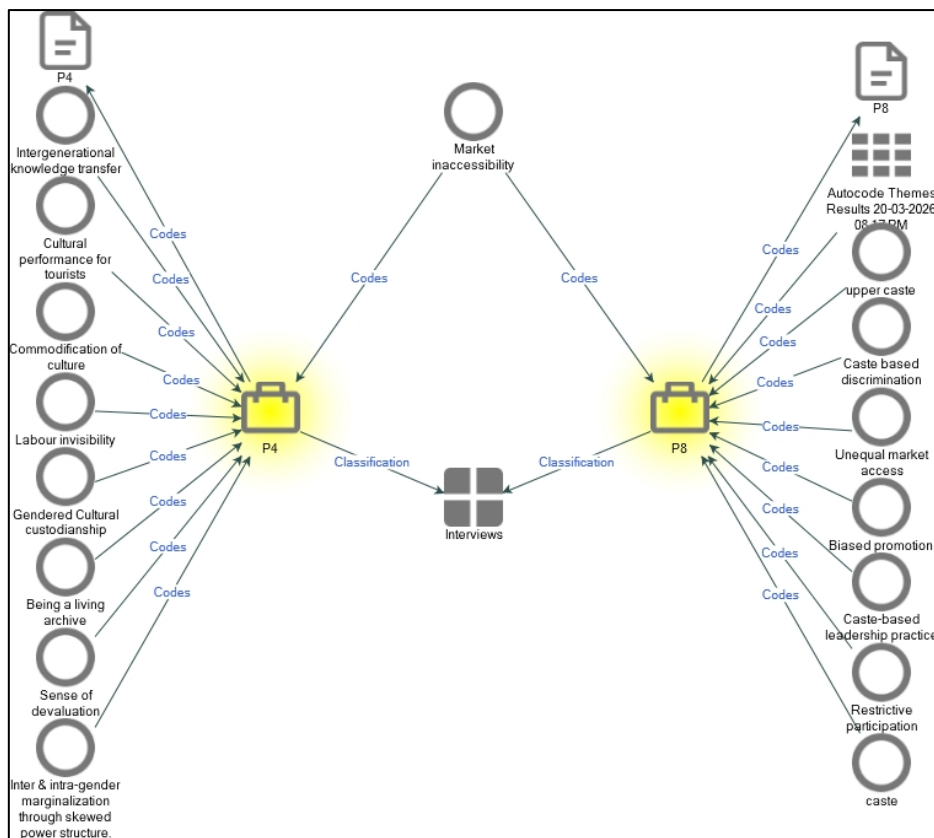


Fig.2: Case linkage based on shared code/s (sample)
 (Source: researchers' own output using NVivo14 based on data collected)

The themes extracted in the qualitative phase of the study assisted in developing and consolidating the constructs of the quantitative phase. The scale to measure socio-economic empowerment (SEE, initial set of scale items 12) which was based on Women’s Empowerment in Agricultural Index (WEAI), was contextualized in tourism context by pooling Theme-1 (The 'Third Shift': Invisible labour and gendered time poverty) and Theme-3 (Structural barriers to economic agency). Cultural agency and custodianship (CAC, initial set of scale items, 9) was developed based on Theme-3 (Cultural custodianship as a gendered responsibility) and code categories, such as, ‘intergenerational knowledge transfer' and 'authentic representation'. Perceived equity in tourism (PET, initial set of scale items 11) was adapted from items used in studies of organizational justice (Colquitt, 2001) and applied to the community tourism context by taking cues from Theme-1, Theme-2 and Theme-5 (Inter & intra-gender marginalization through skewed power structure). We conducted a pilot study (n=79) to assess the internal reliability of the constructs. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was deployed. The EFA was run for all items from the three constructs simultaneously. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure verified the sampling adequacy for the analysis, KMO = .87, which is classified as 'meritorious' according to Kaiser's classification. Bartlett's test of sphericity, $\chi^2(253) = 1824.65$, $p < .001$, indicated that correlations between items were sufficiently large for EFA. Oblique rotation (Oblimin) was deployed based on strong *a priori* theoretical reasoning derived from the initial qualitative phase. The qualitative findings explicitly indicated that the constructs were interrelated, such as Theme 2 (Structural Barriers) and Theme 3 (Cultural Custodianship) were not independent; women's economic disempowerment directly impacted their ability to control their cultural representation. Further, It is logically and theoretically implausible to assume that a woman's perception of fairness in the system (PET) is completely independent of her sense of economic empowerment (SEE) or cultural agency (CAC). EFA generated a three-factor model with eigenvalues greater than 1, explaining a cumulative 62.8% of the variance. And allowed us to retain our broad nomenclature for the extracted factors. The final scale retained 5 factors for SEE, 4 factors for CAC and 5 factors for PET (cut off factor loading was .600) (Table-2)

Table-2: Factor identification through EFA

Item Code	Item Statement (Abbreviated)	Factor 1 (SEE)	Factor 2 (CAC)	Factor 3 (PET)
Socio-Economic Empowerment (SEE)				
SEE1	I decide how to spend my tourism income.	0.812		
SEE2	I have a say in major tourism-related decisions.	0.785		
SEE3	I can participate in skills training if I wish.	0.741		
SEE4	I have access to formal credit for my business.	0.698		

SEE5	I feel confident negotiating prices.	0.665		
Cultural Agency & Custodianship (CAC)				
CAC1	I am motivated to pass my skills to the next generation.		0.831	
CAC2	Tourism has increased respect for my traditional knowledge.		0.792	
CAC3	I have control over how my culture is presented to tourists.		0.723	
CAC4	Tourism helps preserve, not just sell, our culture.		0.685	
Perceived Equity in Tourism (PET)				
PET1	Benefits from tourism are distributed fairly.			0.851
PET2	Women and men have equal access to tourism opportunities.			0.803
PET3	My workload in tourism is fair compared to men's.			0.779
PET4	My contribution to tourism is valued as much as men's.			0.701
PET5	Community tourism leadership is inclusive.			0.658
Eigenvalues		5.42	3.85	2.76
% of Variance		28.50%	20.30%	14.00%

Extraction Method: Principal Axis Factoring. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 7 iterations. (Source:SPSS-29 output based on researchers' own database)

The internal reliability and the validity of the scale was tested. All three constructs demonstrated good to very good internal consistency, with Cronbach's Alpha values well above the accepted threshold of 0.70 (Nunnally, 1978). This indicated that the items within each scale are strongly correlated and consistently measure the same underlying construct. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was conducted to validate the measurements (Table-3). The composite reliability (CR) values for all extracted factors were above 0.70 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981) which confirmed the high reliability of the scales. The Average Variance Extracted (AVE) for all constructs were above the recommended value of 0.50 (Fornell and Larcker, 1981). This indicated that more than 50% of the variance in the items was captured by the underlying construct rather than measurement error, providing evidence for convergent validity.

Table-3: Validation measurement of the extracted factors

Construct	Number of Items	Mean (SD)	Cronbach's Alpha (α)	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Socio-Economic Empowerment (SEE)	5	2.95 (0.92)	0.81	0.83	0.61
Cultural Agency & Custodianship (CAC)	4	3.40 (0.85)	0.78	0.79	0.59
Perceived Equity in Tourism (PET)	5	2.50 (0.96)	0.83	0.85	0.53

One-way ANOVA was deployed to compare Socio-Economic Empowerment (SEE) scores across different primary roles in tourism (table-4).

Table-4: One-way ANOVA results

Primary Role	n	Mean SEE Score	Std. Deviation
Homestay Manager/Cook	90	3.10	0.85
Artisan/Weaver	100	2.65	0.92
Wage Labourer (e.g., cleaner)	80	2.30	0.81
Guide/Manager	30	3.75	0.78
ANOVA Results	F(3, 296) = 25.84, p < .001, $\eta^2 = 0.21$		

(Source:SPSS-29 output based on researchers' own database)

We conducted the Tukey's Honest Significant Difference (HSD) test which is the appropriate post-hoc procedure to make pairwise comparisons between all four groups while controlling the family-wise error rate, thus reducing the chance of Type I errors (Field, 2018). The post-hoc analysis (Table-5) revealed a clear, statistically significant hierarchy of socio-economic empowerment within the tourism value chain, directly reflecting a gendered and stratified economic structure. Results confirmed that guides/managers, predominantly male, were found to exhibit higher degree of socio-economic empowerment (mean SEE score = 3.75, p < .001) compared to artisans and wage labourer dominated by women (mean SEE=2.65 and 2.30 respectively, p < .001). While Homestay Managers demonstrated a significant advantage over the most precarious Wage Labourers (p < .001), the marginal difference from Artisans/Weavers highlighted that entrepreneurial roles offer limited empowerment to women. Artisans/Weavers, despite being skilled cultural custodians, were found to be only marginally better off than Wage Labourers (p = .035). The qualitative findings that surfaced structural barriers (middlemen dependency, lack of knowledge about direct customers, lack of market knowledge, lack of market access etc.) were validated through the quantitative results and established that lack of gender responsive processes had an inhibitory impact on the translation of cultural knowledge into socio-economic power for the women.

Table-5: Tukey-HSD Post-hoc Comparisons for SEE by Primary Role

(I) Primary Role	(J) Primary Role	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	p-value	95% Confidence Interval for Difference	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Guide/Manager	Artisan/Weaver	1.1	0.18	<.001	0.65	1.55
	Wage Labourer	1.45	0.19	<.001	0.97	1.93
	Homestay Manager	0.65	0.19	0.065	-0.02	1.32
Homestay Manager	Wage Labourer	0.8	0.14	<.001	0.45	1.15
	Artisan/Weaver	0.45	0.13	0.078	-0.08	0.98
Artisan/Weaver	Wage Labourer	0.35	0.13	0.035	0.02	0.68

(Source:SPSS-29 output based on researchers' own database)

A standard multiple regression was conducted to assess the simultaneous predictive power of Socio-Economic Empowerment (SEE), social group and district location on Cultural Agency & Custodianship . District was treated as a categorical variable and entered using dummy coding with Bankura as the reference category, as preliminary analyses indicated it had the most developed women's collective enterprises. Model summary is represented in Table-6.

Table-6: Model summary

R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error of Estimate	Model Significance
0.736	0.541	0.539	0.67	F(4, 295) = 46.95, p < .001

(Source:SPSS-29 output based on researchers' own database)

The regression model explained 54.1% of the variance in Cultural Agency & Custodianship (R² = .541), with an adjusted R² of .539 accounting for the number of predictors. The model was found to be statistically significant (p < .001), indicating that the combination of SEE, social group, and district significantly predicted women's cultural agency.

The regression coefficients were represented in Table-7. SEE was identified as the most powerful and statistically significant predictor of CAC ($\beta = 0.57$, p < .001). The partial correlation (0.52) indicated that SEE alone explained 27% of the unique variance in CAC. SC/ST women exhibited significantly lower CAC scores compared to that of the general category women ($\beta = -0.14$, p = .009). Holding SEE and district as constants, SC/ST women scored 0.21 points lower on CAC. This quantified how caste-based discrimination independently undermines cultural agency, even when controlling for economic factors. While district wise impact was measured, Bankura was considered as the reference category. The CAC scores (B = 0.08, p = .375) did not predict significant difference between Bankura and Birbhum districts which implicated similar levels of cultural agency in these two districts. While comparing with Darjeeling and Bankura we found marginally significant negative relationship (B = -0.19, p = .059) with strong trend suggesting lower cultural agency in Darjeeling.

Table-7: Regression coefficients

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p	Part Corr.
(Constant)	1.25	0.29		4.31	<.001	
SEE	0.53	0.05	0.57	10.6	<.001	0.52
Social Group	-0.21	0.08	-0.14	-2.63	0.009	-0.12
District: Birbhum	0.08	0.09	0.05	0.89	0.375	0.04
District: Darjeeling	-0.19	0.1	-0.11	-1.9	0.059	-0.09

**Note: Reference category for District is Bankura. Social Group coded as 0=General Category, 1=SC/ST.* (Source:SPSS-29 output based on researchers' own database)*

Synthesizing the theoretical and analytical inputs the study developed a participatory gender-responsive tourism model. The model has three layers, namely, the input layer (structural constraints), transformative layer (mediating mechanisms) and the outcome layer (transformative outputs).

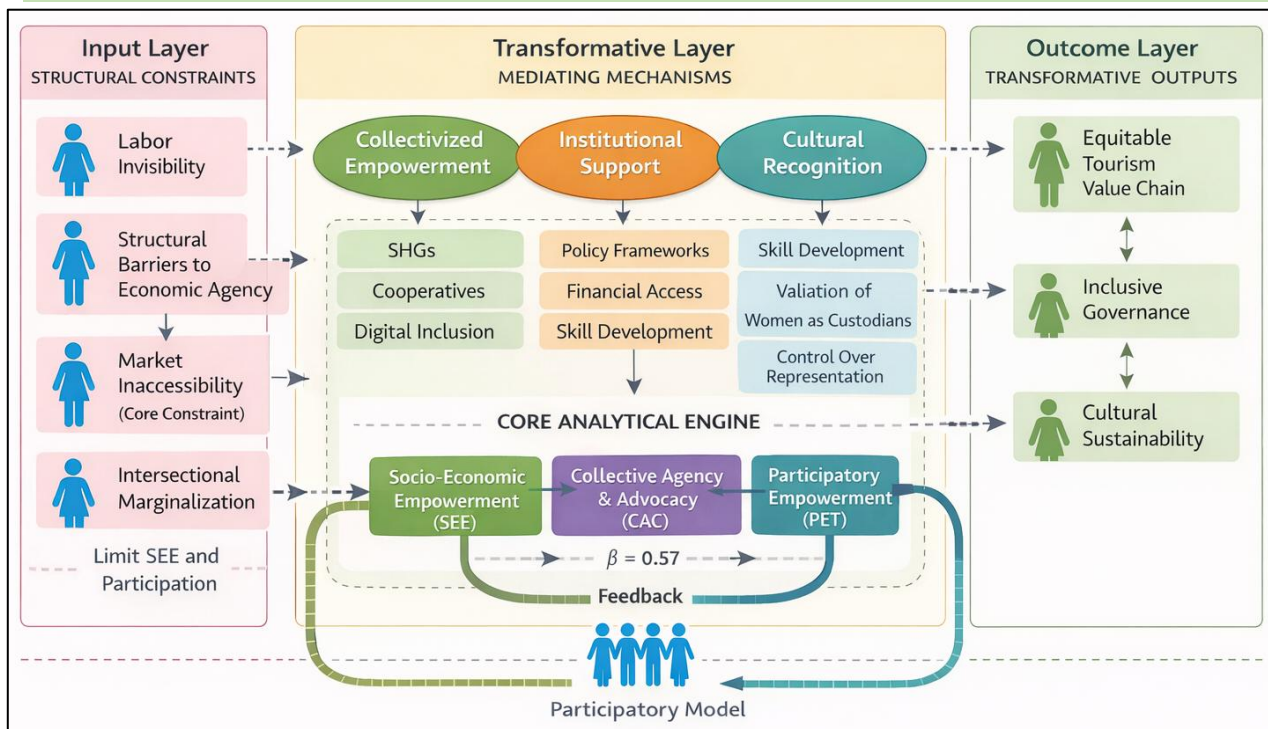


Fig.-3: Proposed participatory model for gender-responsive tourism
 (Source: synthesized based on results and findings)

6. Conclusion

The findings of the study provided empirical evidence that gender-based power relations impact the tourism value chain in the areas considered for the study. It also revealed that the participation of women in the tourism value chain follows structural hierarchies built upon cultural, authority and power (control) orientations. These findings addressed the core issue of systemic marginalization of women within the tourism value chain and the consequent erosion of their cultural custodianship and socio-economic agency.

The qualitative findings revealed the persistence of what this study conceptualized as the ‘Third Shift’, wherein women perform domestic labour, productive labour and tourism-related work simultaneously. This triple burden reflected a gendered division of labour that limits women from participating in decision-making in tourism enterprises. This phenomenon provided evidence for the feminist scholarship on unpaid care work, thereby, demonstrating that tourism development is contingent upon structural inequalities to ensure gender empowerment and inclusive participation across the structural hierarchies. The quantitative analysis further substantiated these qualitative insights. The ANOVA results revealed a clear hierarchy in socio-economic empowerment across different tourism roles. Women engaged in artisanal production, considered to be central to the cultural authenticity of tourism experiences, were found to have significantly lowered empowerment scores compared to male guides and managers. This demonstrated that the tourism value chain privileges market-oriented roles

dominated by men, while cultural labour performed by women remained invisible, undervalued and poorly remunerated.

This structural imbalance has profound implications for cultural sustainability. The regression analysis showed that socio-economic empowerment is the strongest predictor of cultural agency and custodianship. This finding plugged the gap in existing literature which considered women's economic participation and cultural preservation as separate domains. The study affirmed that these domains are deeply interconnected and mutually reinforcing.

The findings also validated the explanatory power of the theoretical framework adopted in this study, namely, Feminist Political Ecology which provided a lens to understand how gendered power relations shape access to cultural and economic resources within tourism systems. Women's ability to monetize their knowledge regarding cultural practices (handicrafts, oral history, culinary traditions etc.) remains constrained by patriarchal institutional hierarchies.

The intersectional analysis of the study highlighted that gender inequality in tourism is not uniform across women. The regression results revealed that women from Scheduled Castes and Scheduled Tribes exhibited significantly lower levels of cultural agency compared to women from the general category (after controlling for economic empowerment). This demonstrated that caste identity compounds gender-based exclusion and produce layered forms of marginalization. Such findings underscored the necessity of adopting intersectional frameworks while designing tourism development policies in socially stratified societies like India. The transformative potential of collective action through women's Self-Help Groups and cooperatives also emerged as a critical insight. The qualitative narratives indicated that collectivization enables women to negotiate prices, credit access, avoid exploitative intermediaries and gain visibility in tourism markets. These 'collectives' function as spaces for social solidarity and knowledge exchange. They challenge patriarchal power structures within communities and create pathways toward gender-responsive tourism governance.

This study contributed to the growing discourse on sustainable tourism by demonstrating that gender equity is not a peripheral concern but a fundamental prerequisite for socially sustainable tourism development. The study ensured three key theoretical contributions:

- (i) it advanced the application of Feminist Political Ecology in tourism studies by demonstrating how gendered power relations shape access to cultural and economic resources within tourism value chains. The findings illustrated that women's cultural knowledge and labour are systematically undervalued within tourism economies, thereby limiting their socio-economic agency.
- (ii) the research extended intersectionality theory within tourism scholarship by empirically demonstrating how caste and social identity intersected with gender to produce differentiated experiences of empowerment and marginalization.

(iii) the study conceptually linked economic empowerment with cultural custodianship, showing that women's control over economic resources significantly influences their ability to safeguard intangible cultural heritage.

From a policy perspective, the findings highlighted the urgent need for tourism planning frameworks that explicitly incorporate gender-responsive strategies. Policies should prioritize women's access to financial resources, entrepreneurship training and market networks. Institutional support for women's Self-Help Groups, artisan cooperatives and digital marketing platforms can significantly enhance women's bargaining power within tourism value chains. Furthermore, tourism governance structures should ensure meaningful representation of women in decision-making bodies.

The study also pointed to the need for targeted social interventions. Capacity-building programs focusing on financial literacy, digital marketing and leadership development could help women to evolve from the peripheral roles to leadership positions within tourism enterprises. Community awareness initiatives are equally important to challenge entrenched patriarchal norms that restrict women's economic autonomy.

Future research could explore the scalability of the participatory gender-responsive tourism model proposed in this study across other regions of India and the Global South. Comparative studies across different socio-cultural contexts would further deepen our understanding of how tourism can be harnessed as a transformative instrument for gender equity and cultural sustainability.

References

- Altinok, A. (2024). Investigating community participation and resilience in community-based tourism development to advance sustainable tourism: the case of Turkey. DOI: <https://hdl.handle.net/11511/111320>
- Alarcón, D. M., & Cole, S. (2019). No sustainability for tourism without gender equality. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*.
- Boukhris, L. (2017). The Black Paris project: The production and reception of a counter-hegemonic tourism narrative in postcolonial Paris. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 25(5), 684–702. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2017.1291651>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, 3(2), 77–101. <https://doi.org/10.1191/1478088706qp063oa>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2012). Thematic analysis. In H. Cooper (Ed.), *APA handbook of research methods in psychology* (Vol. 2, pp. 57–71). American Psychological Association. <https://doi.org/10.1037/13620-004>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2019). Reflecting on reflexive thematic analysis. *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*, 11(4), 589–597. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2159676X.2019.1628806>
- Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2021). *Thematic analysis: A practical guide*. SAGE.
- Bright, C., Foster, K. N., Joyner, A., & Tanny, O. (2021). Heritage tourism, historic roadside markers and “just representation” in Tennessee, USA. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 29(2-3), 428–447. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2020.1768264>

- Collins, P.H. (2015). Intersectionality's definitional dilemmas. *Annual Review of Sociology*, 41, 1–20. <https://doi.org/10.1146/annurev-soc-073014-112142>
- Colquitt, J. A. (2001). On the dimensionality of organizational justice: A construct validation of a measure. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 86(3), 386–400. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0021-9010.86.3.386>
- Chambers, D. (2022). Are we all in this together? Gender intersectionality and sustainable tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 30(7), 1586-1601.
- Chambers, D. (2021). Reflections on the relationship between gender and race in tourism. In P. Dieke, B. King & R. Sharpley (Eds). *Tourism in development: Reflective essays*. Wallingford: CAB International.
- Cole, S. (2017). Water worries: An intersectional feminist political ecology of tourism and water in Labuan Bajo, Indonesia. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 67, 14-24.
- Crenshaw, K. (1989). Demarginalizing the intersection of race and sex: A black feminist critique of antidiscrimination doctrine, feminist theory and antiracist politics. *University of Chicago Legal Forum*, 1(8), 139–167.
- Creswell, J. W & Plano Clark, V. I. (2015). *Designing and conducting mixed methods research* (3rd ed.). SAGE.
- Duffy, L. N., Kline, C. S., Mowatt, R. A., & Chancellor, H. C. (2015). Women in tourism: Shifting gender ideology in the DR. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 52, 72-86.
- Ferguson, L., & Alarcon, D. M. (2015). Gender and sustainable tourism: reflections on theory and practice. *Journal of sustainable Tourism*, 23(3), 401-416.
- Ferguson, L. (2011). Promoting gender equality and empowering women? Tourism and the third Millennium Development Goal. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 14(3), 235–249. DOI:[10.1080/13683500.2011.555522](https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2011.555522)
- Figuroa-Domecq, C., Pritchard, A., Segovia-Pérez, M., Morgan, N., & Villacé-Molinero, T. (2015). Tourism gender research: A critical accounting. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 52, 87-103.
- Henrici, J. (2002). Calling to the Money”: Gender and Tourism in Peru. *Gender/Tourism/Fun*.
- Gentry, K. M. (2007). Belizean women and tourism work: Opportunity or impediment?. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 34(2), 477-496.
- Gurung, H. B. (2008). Innovation in Ecotourism: Its Contribution to Community-based Conservation. *CAUTHE 2008: Tourism and Hospitality Research, Training and Practice; “Where the ‘Bloody Hell’ Are We*, 197-202.
- Henrici, J. (2002). US women and poverty. *Voices*, 6(1), 27-31.
- Ishii, K. (2012). The impact of ethnic tourism on hill tribes in Thailand. *Annals of tourism research*, 39(1), 290-310.
- Jamal, T., & Camargo, B. A. (2014). Sustainable tourism, justice and ethic of care: Toward the just destination. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22(1), 11–30. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2013.786084>([open in a new window](#))
- Joshi, K., Mishra, M. K., Jamal, M., & Janotra, J. (2025). Measuring the intensity of challenges and problems of small-scale entrepreneurs in Uttarakhand, India. *Vilakshan-XIMB Journal of Management*, 22(2), 217-233.
- Jamal, T., & Hollinshead, K. (2001). Tourism and the forbidden zone: The underserved power of qualitative inquiry. *Tourism management*, 22(1), 63-82. DOI:[10.1016/S0261-5177\(00\)00020-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(00)00020-0)
- Manoj, P. K. (2020). Empowering the tribal women in Kerala: Role of community based eco-tourism initiatives through Kudumbashree Mission. *Women empowerment*, 122.
- Momsen, J. (2019). *Gender and development*. Routledge.
- Pandya, R. (2023). An intersectional approach to neoliberal environmentalism: Women's engagement with ecotourism at Corbett Tiger Reserve, India. *Environment and Planning E: Nature and Space*, 6(1), 355-372.

- Prakash, A., Engheepi, V., & Sinha, S. (2024). Intersecting pathways: Eco-feminist perspectives on intersectionality, water management, and responsible tourism for gender-inclusive community development. *Current Research in Environmental Sustainability*, 7, 100254.
- Rocheleau, D., Thomas-Slayter, B., & Wangari, E. (2013). *Feminist political ecology: Global issues and local experience*. Routledge.
- Sarkki, S., Pihlajamäki, M., Rasmus, S., & Eronen, J. T. (2023). “Rights for Life” scenario to reach biodiversity targets and social equity for indigenous peoples and local communities. *Biological Conservation*, 280, 109958. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocon.2023.109958>
- Schellhorn, M. (2010). Development for whom? Social justice and the business of ecotourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 18(1), 115-135.
- Sharpley, R., & Harrison, D. (2019). Introduction: Tourism and development—towards a research agenda. *A Research Agenda for Tourism and Development*, 1-34. DOI: [10.4337/9781788112413.00007](https://doi.org/10.4337/9781788112413.00007)
- Swain, M. B. (2002). Gender/tourism/fun (?): an introduction. *Gender/tourism/fun*, 1-14.
- Truelove, Y. (2011). (Re-) Conceptualizing water inequality in Delhi, India through a feminist political ecology framework. *Geoforum*, 42(2), 143-152.
- Tucker, H., & Boonabaana, B. (2012). A critical analysis of tourism, gender and poverty reduction. *Journal of sustainable tourism*, 20(3), 437-455.
- UNESCO, (2001). *Activities in the domain of women and intangible heritage: Synthesis report (Tehran, June 2001)*. UNESCO.
- United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), & World Tourism Organization (UNWTO). (2005). *Making tourism more sustainable: A guide for policy makers*. UNEP & UNWTO. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284408214>
- UNWTO (2022). *Gender mainstreaming guidelines for the public sector in tourism*. UNWTO. DOI: <https://doi.org/10.18111/9789284423248>
- Vandegrift, D. (2008). “This isn't Paradise—I Work Here” Global Restructuring, the Tourism Industry, and Women Workers in Caribbean Costa Rica. *Gender & Society*, 22(6), 778-798.