DEVELOPMENT, TOURISM, AND GENDER ANALYSIS:
PANGANDARAN, WEST JAVA, INDONESIA AS THE CASE STUDY

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A B S T R A C T

Although tourism has been a significant topic of discussion in the social sciences, very few scholars have related tourism to gender until very recently. Many observers of tourism realize the importance of focusing on a gender analysis in their studies. However, they only touch on gender as part of the broader tourism discussion within a given domain. On the other hand, gender-aware empirical studies which have attempted to make the female role more visible in the tourism discussion, have mostly fallen into studies of the exploitation of women, namely through female prostitution.

There has been an essential argument that tourism cannot be viewed in isolation, but must be considered in the broader context of development issues. As happens in many debates regarding development, there have been many debates about tourism development especially in developing countries. Developing countries do not appear to have much choice but to further develop their tourism. However, research on tourism has been highly fragmented, as has impact-oriented research.

The development of feminist theory in the Western world has led to a particular understanding of gender. Eventually, the issue of integrating gender into every academic activity will be essential, considering that the construction of knowledge has been believed to be based on value-neutral facts, but it is in fact gender (male) biased. Furthermore, understanding the structure and dynamics of gender relations is central to any analysis of social organization and social progress, so that gender and development do not focus only on women, but also on the relationship between men and women. Developing a gender analysis framework for tourism research results in the generation of many questions which require a more subtle approach in moving toward some sort of answer.

My gender-aware qualitative research, conducted in Pangandaran, West Java, Indonesia, indicates a significant change in the social dynamic because of the rapid development of tourism. Although the changes brought by tourism for the local people can be understood only within the context of a complex social and economic system, the research shows that tourism does not necessarily affect all parts of a region or all local-community classes equally or similarly. At the same time, tourism development in Pangandaran has influenced gender roles and relations especially amongst the lower-class locals.
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