

## Typologies of Female Transformative Leadership in Balinese Tourism Villages: A Social Representation Perspective

L.G.L.K. Dewi<sup>1</sup>, Yuyu Indrawati<sup>2</sup>, Wayan Citra Juwitasari<sup>3</sup>,  
I Putu Andre Adi Putra Pratama<sup>4</sup>

<sup>1,2,3,4</sup>Bachelor of Tourism in Travel Industry Management, Udayana University, Indonesia  
E-mail: [leli\\_ipw@unud.ac.id](mailto:leli_ipw@unud.ac.id)<sup>1</sup>, [yayuintdrawati@unud.ac.id](mailto:yayuintdrawati@unud.ac.id)<sup>2</sup>, [citra\\_ipw@unud.ac.id](mailto:citra_ipw@unud.ac.id)<sup>3</sup>,  
[andreadiputra@unud.ac.id](mailto:andreadiputra@unud.ac.id)<sup>4</sup>

Article History	Abstract
Received: 03 November 2025 Accepted: 04 December 2025 Published: 10 December 2025	<p><i>This study analyzes the transformative typologies of female leadership in Balinese tourism villages through the lens of Social Representation Theory. Despite their vital role in community-based tourism, women remain underrepresented in formal governance due to patriarchal norms. Employing a qualitative phenomenological design, the study examines the lived experiences of three key female leaders in Tista, Sayan, and Klecung. The findings identify three distinct typologies: Environmental Awareness Leadership (ecological stewardship), Professionalized Leadership (digital and managerial competence), and Community Empowerment Leadership (cultural and economic collectivism). Through these roles, women reconstruct their social representations shifting from domestic figures to strategic public actors by re-anchoring leadership within local cultural values. This research contributes to gendered tourism scholarship by reconceptualizing Balinese women not merely as agents of change, but as "custodians of change," capable of synergizing cultural preservation with modern tourism management.</i></p> <p><b>Keywords:</b> transformative leadership; balinese women; social representation; community-based tourism; gender; rural tourism.</p>



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### INTRODUCTION

Over the past decade, Indonesia's tourism development strategy has undergone a fundamental paradigm shift, moving away from mass tourism toward quality and sustainable tourism. The primary vehicle for this transformation is the development of "Tourism Villages" (Desa Wisata), a Community-Based Tourism (CBT) model designed to decentralize economic benefits to rural populations (Kemenparekraf, 2021). Within this ecosystem, women play a statistically dominant role. Data from the World Tourism Organization (UNWTO, 2019) reveals that women constitute 54% of the tourism workforce globally, a trend mirrored in Indonesia where women are the backbone of the hospitality and service sectors. They fill vital roles as homestay operators, culinary artisans, and craft producers, effectively serving as the "face" of Indonesian hospitality. However, this quantitative dominance conceals a structural irony: while women are heavily involved in operational execution, they remain significantly underrepresented in strategic decision-making and destination governance (Scheyvens, 2000). At the national level, this creates a gendered dichotomy where women labor to sustain the industry but possess limited agency in shaping its policies.

This complexity is amplified when examined within the context of Bali, the barometer of Indonesian tourism. Balinese tourism is uniquely rooted in cultural Hinduism, where the village (Desa Adat) serves as the primary custodian of tradition. In the Balinese social structure, which adheres to a patrilineal kinship system (*Purusa*), women bear a "double burden." On one hand, Balinese women are the primary agents of cultural reproduction; they are responsible for preparing daily offerings (*banten*) and managing the intricate rituals that form the core appeal of cultural tourism (Putra & Pitana, 2010). Without their labor in the domestic and ritual spheres, the "cultural product" of Bali would cease to exist. On the other hand, the hegemonic patriarchal structure often relegates women to the status of "second-class citizens" in public and political affairs. Strategic decision-making spaces, such as Banjar (hamlet) meetings or the core structures of *Kelompok Sadar Wisata/Pokdarwis* (Tourism Awareness Groups), are traditionally viewed as male domains. Consequently, Balinese women face a dual marginalization: their cultural labor is exploited to attract tourists, yet their voices are frequently silenced in the governance of the very villages they help sustain (Utari et al., 2023). Their involvement is often confined to supportive or technical roles rather than strategic leadership positions (Prasiasa, Komalasari, & Widari, 2023; Indrawati et al., 2024).

The central problem addressed in this study is the sharp gap between women's actual contributions and their leadership representation. A striking paradox exists in Balinese tourism villages: women are highly visible in the "front stage" of tourism services welcoming guests and performing culture but remain largely invisible in the "backstage" of management and policy formulation (Kinnaird & Hall, 1996). Although many Balinese women functionally exercise leadership, organizing dance troupes, managing household finances during lean seasons, or leading environmental sanitation drives, these actions are rarely recognized as formal "leadership." Prevailing social representations frame these activities as extensions of domestic duties or religious service (*ngayah*), rather than as professional managerial contributions. This gap hinders the potential of tourism villages to develop optimally, as it effectively disregards the strategic capacity of half the population.

The urgency to investigate and reconstruct female leadership has become critical for two compelling reasons. First, the paradigmatic shift in rural tourism toward Community-Based Tourism (CBT) models necessitates governance structures that are inherently inclusive and equitable (Dangi & Jamal, 2016). Second, gendered leadership remains significantly under-theorized, particularly in contexts where deep-rooted tradition intersects with modernity, as seen in Bali (Yanthy, 2022; Pickel-Chevalier & Yanthy, 2023). Furthermore, the demonstrated adaptive capacity of women during recent crises suggests that traditional, rigid patriarchal models may no longer suffice to address future challenges requiring flexibility. Consequently, formalizing female leadership transcends the issue of gender equity; it becomes a strategic necessity for building resilient tourism villages. Bali requires a transformative leadership model capable of synergizing cultural preservation with economic innovation a capacity that women have distinctly proven. The existing gap between women's heavy cultural responsibilities and their limited formal leadership roles underscores the pressing need to examine how they negotiate, reinterpret, and transform their social positions within tourism governance.

This study adopts Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 1984) to analyze how

Balinese women construct new meanings about their roles in tourism villages. Social representations are formed through daily discourse, cultural symbols, and collective beliefs shape the extent to which women are perceived as legitimate leaders. By examining women's lived experiences across three villages with distinct socio-cultural characteristics Tista, Sayan, and Klecung, this study will identify typologies of female transformative leadership that emerge from their interactions, struggles, and agency. Consequently, this article focuses on one central research question: What specific typologies of transformative leadership are enacted by Balinese women, and how do these typologies reflect a shift in their social representations from domestic caretakers to strategic agents? This research contributes to the existing body of knowledge in three significant ways. First, it provides an empirical mapping of women's leadership transformations in rural tourism, a topic rarely explored through a socio-cognitive lens in the Indonesian context. Second, it offers a typological model of leadership that is grounded in the unique cultural logic of Bali, challenging the often Western-centric narratives of leadership. Third, it reconceptualizes women not merely as beneficiaries of tourism development, but as active custodians of change who successfully navigate the delicate balance between preserving tradition and embracing modern innovation. This research also to fill a gap in the literature, which has predominantly focused on the economic empowerment of women while overlooking the socio-cognitive aspects of their leadership. Empowering women requires more than providing capital; it necessitates changing how society perceives or "represents" women (Moscovici, 1984). By utilizing Social Representation Theory (SRT) as an analytical lens, this study examines how women in three distinct tourism villages Tista, Sayan, and Klecung have successfully negotiated their positions and dismantled cultural stigmas. This research aims to move beyond mere participation statistics to formulate specific typologies of female transformative leadership. These typologies reflect the unique dialectic between Balinese traditional values and modern tourism demands, illustrating how women transform themselves from "guardians of tradition" into "agents of change" who steer the future direction of village tourism.

## RESEARCH METHOD

This study employs a qualitative approach with a phenomenological design (Creswell & Poth, 2018). This design was selected as it allows for a deep exploration of the "lived experiences" of female leaders, capturing the subjective meanings they ascribe to their roles within the patriarchal structure of Balinese society. Phenomenology is particularly aligned with Social Representation Theory, as both frameworks seek to understand how individuals construct reality and negotiate meaning through social interaction and shared experiences.

The research was conducted in three tourism villages in Bali: Tista, Sayan, and Klecung. These sites were selected through a critical case sampling strategy (Patton, 2002) to represent distinct archetypes of successful community-based tourism development. The selection is justified based on the unique governance models of each village, which necessitate specific forms of female leadership:

1. Desa Wisata Tista (Tabanan Regency): Selected as a critical case representing successful environmental management, particularly in Subak conservation and waste management.
2. Desa Wisata Sayan (Gianyar Regency): Selected as a critical case representing successful

managerial and digital innovation, characterized by a mature homestay industry and global market access.

3. Desa Wisata Klecung (Tabanan Regency): Selected as a critical case representing successful collective economic empowerment, leveraging performing arts to distribute economic benefits equitably.

Participants were selected based on specific inclusion criteria: (a) women holding strategic or influential roles in village tourism governance; (b) recognized by the community as change agents; and (c) having a minimum of three years of active engagement. Three key informants were identified: Informant CT from Tista, representing institutional- environmental leadership; Informant AT from Klecung, exemplifying communal-cultural leadership; and Informant GS from Sayan, embodying professionalized-digital leadership.

Data collection spanned a six-month period from January to June 2025. The primary method involved in-depth, semi-structured interviews lasting between 60 to 90 minutes, conducted in a mix of Indonesian and Balinese to capture cultural nuances. These interviews were complemented by participant observation of village meetings and tourism activities, as well as a document analysis of village planning reports and digital platforms. To analyze the data, the study utilized the systematic coding spiral proposed by Creswell and Poth (2018), progressing from open coding to identify initial concepts, through axial coding to form categories, and finally to selective coding to synthesize core themes of leadership typologies.

To ensure the trustworthiness and rigor of the findings, the researchers employed data triangulation by cross-verifying interview transcripts with field observations and documentation. Additionally, member checking was conducted by returning preliminary findings to the informants to confirm the accuracy of the interpretations. Ethical considerations were strictly adhered to throughout the research process; all participants provided informed consent, and their identities were anonymized (referred to as Informant A, B, and C) to maintain confidentiality while preserving the context of their leadership roles.

## **RESULT AND DISCUSSION**

Findings reveal three typologies of female transformative leadership rooted in local social representations and shaped by village contexts.

### **Typology 1: Environmental Awareness Leadership (Tista Village)**

The findings indicate that CT's leadership in Tista Village reflects an Environmental Awareness Leadership pattern, built through a combination of her structural role as a village office staff member and her capacity to mobilize the community in preserving the subak system. The coding analysis reveals four interconnected thematic dimensions access, control, participation, and benefits, which collectively shape this ecological leadership character. At the access stage, CT leverages her position within the village administration to obtain training, information, and institutional networks, which she subsequently distributes to community members, particularly PKK women's groups and youth. This demonstrates how formal village structures can serve as an entry point for women to gain initial legitimacy in managing environmentally based tourism activities.

At the control stage, CT plays a coordinating role by organizing PKK women to prepare

local food, welcome visitors, and support the operational aspects of the subak tourism package. Codes such as *inviting PKK members*, *preparing consumption*, and *welcoming tourists* highlight her capacity to manage ecotourism activities using a participatory approach.

Meanwhile, in the participation dimension, CT mobilizes village youth to serve as trekking and cycling guides in the rice field areas. She trains them to understand the subak system, explain ecological values to tourists, and maintain the trekking routes. Codes such as *training youth* and *explaining subak* demonstrate how CT uses tourism as an environmental education medium for the younger generation.

The benefits dimension emerges through economic gains (from food preparation and tour packages), social benefits (strengthened solidarity among PKK groups), and ecological benefits (regeneration of subak knowledge). Across the selective coding process, it becomes evident that CT integrates agrarian values, environmental education, and tourism development into a distinct form of ecological leadership.

This process aligns with Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 1984), wherein CT engages in *anchoring* by linking women's traditional domestic roles as guardians of household harmony to new roles as guardians of ecological harmony. She shifts the representation of women from domestic spheres to public ones through *objectification*, embodied in the concrete figure of women as subak educators and nature-based tourism facilitators. From the perspective of Transformative Leadership (Burns, 1978; Bass, 1985), CT's actions—training youth, motivating PKK members, and maintaining subak sustainability demonstrate *idealized influence* and *intellectual stimulation*. She not only leads activities but also shapes the community's ecological consciousness.

Furthermore, within a Community-Based Tourism framework (Scheyvens, 2000), CT's leadership fosters social, political, and psychological empowerment among women. PKK members gain new opportunities for involvement in tourism activities, while youth acquire knowledge and strategic roles as nature guides. The regeneration of subak values through tourism activities illustrates that tourism is not merely an economic practice but also a mechanism for preserving agrarian cultural heritage.

Thus, CT's leadership reflects the typology of Environmental Awareness Leadership, a form of women's leadership that integrates environmental preservation with community strengthening. CT serves as a custodian of ecological knowledge, a figure who safeguards, teaches, and transmits ecological values to both community members and visitors. Her leadership demonstrates that the sustainability of environmentally based tourism villages is strongly supported by women who possess high ecological sensitivity, coordination skills, and commitment to the regeneration of agrarian cultural values.

## Typology 2: Professionalized Female Leadership (Sayan Village)

The findings indicate that GS's leadership in Sayan Village reflects the characteristics of Professionalized Female Leadership, a form of women's leadership grounded in academic competence, digital capacity, and managerial skills in developing a modern tourism destination. The coding analysis reveals four interconnected thematic dimensions—access, control, participation, and benefits which collectively shape GS's professional leadership pattern. In terms of access, GS's educational background as a Master of Tourism provides an essential



foundation for understanding broader tourism issues, including marketing, digitalization, and destination management. Her strong digital literacy is reflected in codes such as *managing Instagram*, *updating Google Maps*, and *promoting the village online*. This combination of formal education, digital knowledge, and professional networks enables GS to gain legitimacy not through traditional customary structures, but through professional competence recognized by the community.

At the control stage, GS performs a strategic role as the Head of the Tourism Awareness Group (Pokdarwis). She coordinates homestay owners, youth, craft shop operators, and renowned painting maestros. Codes such as *arranging tour packages*, *contacting painters*, and *coordinating the team* illustrate her capacity to lead teams across different age groups and professions. One of the major challenges she faced was persuading senior painting maestros artists who typically work independently to participate in the village tourism program. GS's persistence, reflected in codes such as *repeated approaches*, *convincing painters*, and *building trust*, demonstrates strong resilience and psychological endurance.

In the participation dimension, GS engages young people in managing social media, creating promotional content, and assisting with tourism services. Codes such as *training youth*, *distributing digital roles*, and *encouraging youth involvement* show how GS develops the village's digital capacity and fosters a new generation of modern leadership within the tourism village. This initiative positions Sayan not only as an artistic village but also as a digitally enabled tourism destination. The benefits dimension is evident from increased visibility of Sayan as an art tourism destination, higher income for homestays and painting studios, and the formation of new tourism networks. Codes such as *homestays receiving frequent inquiries*, *tourists attracted to art*, and *an increasing number of tour packages* confirm the economic and social benefits resulting from GS's leadership.

Theoretically, GS's leadership aligns with the Gendered Transformative Leadership Theory (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001), in which women lead through collaboration, communication, and innovation. GS demonstrates *inspirational motivation* and *intellectual stimulation* (Bass, 1985) by mobilizing youth, modernizing promotional strategies, and integrating local art into structured tourism packages. Her ability to engage painting maestros also illustrates strong *negotiated influence*, a leadership style relying on cultural and social intelligence. From the perspective of Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 1984), GS challenges existing social representations of young women—often seen as lacking experience or legitimacy to lead by repositioning herself as a professional leader capable of managing a tourism destination and initiating innovation. Women are no longer viewed as technical assistants but as central actors in destination strategy.

A strong Community-Based Tourism (CBT) dimension (Scheyvens, 2000) is also visible. GS fosters community empowerment by training youth, creating new roles in digital management, and integrating traditional art into tourism products. This demonstrates that tourism can serve as a space for young women to practice professionalized leadership, rather than merely participating in supporting roles. Thus, GS exemplifies the typology of Professionalized Female Leadership, a form of women's leadership built upon digital competence, managerial capacity, formal education, and cultural negotiation skills. Her leadership shows that young women can drive destination transformation through modern,

innovative, and intergenerational collaborative approaches. This typology expands the understanding of women's roles in tourism villages not merely as implementers, but as strategic architects who bridge traditional arts with the demands of contemporary tourism industries.

### Typology 3: Community Empowerment Leadership (Klecung Village)

The findings show that AT's leadership is strongly rooted in social motivation and deep concern for the future of her village. AT returned to her hometown after discovering that nearly 80% of village land had been sold to investors, resulting in the loss of community control over their economic assets. This concern inspired her vision to develop a tourism village so that the local economy could once again be managed by the community itself. The coding analysis reveals four main themes access, control, participation, and benefits which illustrate how AT mobilizes village residents to build a tourism model grounded in empowerment.

In the access dimension, AT uses the knowledge and networks she acquired from her previous work outside the village to introduce the concept of a tourism village to the community. She approached customary leaders, youth groups, and PKK women to ensure that all community segments understood Klecung's tourism potential. Codes such as *convincing the community*, *conducting joint meetings*, and *developing a village vision* highlight AT's initial role as a socially motivated agent of change.

In the control dimension, AT directs the tourism village management structure to ensure that the local economy remains in the hands of residents rather than external investors. She designs a homestay rotation system, allocates responsibilities among women, and coordinates the flow of tourist services so that income is distributed evenly. Codes such as *organizing homestay rotation*, *assigning women's roles*, and *co-managing tourist activities* demonstrate her ability to steer tourism governance through participatory decision-making.

In the participation dimension, AT establishes an empowerment model that involves all age groups. Youth are trained to become tour guides during the day, and in the evening, they manage a coffee shop for visitors. Women manage the homestays and prepare meals for guests, purchasing ingredients from local farmers. Codes such as *youth fully involved*, *women cooking for guests*, and *buying produce from village farmers* reflect the holistic participation model that AT leads. The benefits dimension is shown through the circulation of money within the village, increased homestay income, the growth of small businesses (such as the coffee shop), and enhanced community self-esteem. Codes such as *money circulates within the village*, *everyone benefits*, and *the village becomes lively* affirm the socio-economic impact of AT's leadership.

Based on selective coding, AT demonstrates the typology of Community Empowerment Leadership, characterized by women's leadership that emphasizes economic independence, collective participation, and equitable distribution of benefits. AT's leadership reflects a form of community-based transformative leadership that aligns with the Community-Based Tourism (CBT) framework (Scheyvens, 2000), which emphasizes ownership, empowerment, and collective welfare. AT positions tourism as a tool to restore community control over village resources while creating a more equitable economic model. The coding results show that AT activates the four empowerment dimensions described by Scheyvens:

1. Economic empowerment through homestays, coffee shops, and guiding services;

2. Social empowerment through collective work and cooperation among residents;
3. Political empowerment through participatory and consensus-based decision-making;
4. Psychological empowerment through increased community confidence and pride.

From the perspective of Social Representation Theory (Moscovici, 1984), AT challenges traditional representations of women as “followers” or “supporters” within customary structures. She constructs a new representation of women as community leaders with a social vision and the ability to guide residents toward economic independence. *Anchoring* occurs when AT connects the tourism village concept with traditional values of cooperation and community solidarity. *Objectification* takes place when AT embodies the image of women as drivers of local economic activity and guardians of collective well-being.

From the standpoint of Gendered Transformative Leadership (Eagly & Johannesen-Schmidt, 2001), AT demonstrates a highly collaborative leadership style empathetic, participatory, and sustainability-oriented. She enacts *inspirational motivation* and *individualized consideration* (Bass, 1985) by mobilizing residents according to their strengths: youth as guides, women as homestay managers, and farmers as food suppliers. Most notably, AT practices negotiated influence, a form of social negotiation that restructures power relations between the community and external investors returning economic control to village residents. She acts as a guardian of community well-being, ensuring that the economic value of tourism stays within the village and is distributed fairly among residents. Thus, AT embodies the model of Community Empowerment Leadership a form of women’s leadership born from concern, solidarity, and commitment to the economic sovereignty of the village. She is not merely a leader but a social architect who creates a system in which tourism becomes a mechanism for collective prosperity.

In summary, the three women CT, GS, and AT demonstrate that transformative female leadership in Balinese tourism villages emerges through three complementary typologies: ecological leadership, professionalized leadership, and community-empowerment leadership. Despite their different contexts and strategies, all three shift women’s roles from the domestic sphere to strategic public leadership. These typologies highlight women as key drivers of change, leading tourism villages through sustainability, innovation, and collective well-being.

## CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that women’s leadership in the management of Balinese tourism villages is not monolithic; rather, it emerges through three complementary typologies: Environmental Awareness Leadership (CT), Professionalized Female Leadership (GS), and Community Empowerment Leadership (AT). These typologies illustrate that the transformation of women’s roles arises from the interaction between cultural values, individual experiences, access to resources, and the dynamics of community-based tourism. Despite coming from different contexts and strategies, all three women successfully shifted the social representation of women from domestic roles to strategic public leadership. These findings enrich the literature on women’s leadership in tourism particularly within Bali’s unique cultural setting and affirm that women play a pivotal role in ensuring ecological sustainability, professional innovation, and collective well-being in tourism villages.

Theoretically, this research contributes to the expansion of Social Representation Theory



by demonstrating how women construct new representations of themselves through everyday leadership practices. The findings also deepen the understanding of Transformative Leadership by presenting leadership models that not only emphasize value-driven change but also integrate environmental stewardship, digital innovation, and community empowerment. Practically, this study provides evidence that strengthening women's capacities through education, training access, and community support can foster leadership that is responsive to local needs and oriented toward sustainability.

Nevertheless, this study has several limitations. First, the number of informants limited to three female leaders restricts the generalizability of the findings. Second, the analysis is situated within the specific contexts of three villages, which may not fully represent all tourism villages in Bali. Third, the study focuses on women who have already achieved notable leadership positions, which means it does not capture the experiences of women who are involved but do not hold formal leadership roles.

Based on these limitations, several recommendations for future research can be considered. First, longitudinal studies are needed to understand how these leadership typologies evolve over time, especially as tourism structures and customary systems continue to change. Second, comparative studies across provinces or countries could enrich our understanding of how cultural contexts shape the transformation of women's leadership. Third, future research may involve a broader range of women including those without access to strategic positions to provide a more inclusive picture of leadership barriers and opportunities. Lastly, quantitative or mixed-method approaches may be employed to measure the actual impact of women's leadership on tourism village performance, benefit distribution, and environmental sustainability.

In conclusion, this study opens new avenues for future inquiry into women's leadership in tourism and underscores the importance of structural support, education, and policy interventions in strengthening women's roles as transformative leaders in the development of tourism villages in Indonesia. This study affirms that women are not merely participants in tourism, but transformative forces shaping the future of tourism village development. Strengthening women's leadership capacity is therefore essential to strengthening the social, cultural, and economic sustainability of tourism villages.

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