

Asian Women's Roles in Family Holiday: A Case Study of Indonesian Females

Desloehal Djumrianti^{1,*} Augustus E. Oseso-Asare ²

¹ Politeknik Negeri Sriwijaya, Palembang, Indonesia

² Faculty Business and Law, University of Sunderland, United Kingdom

*Corresponding author. Email: djumrianti@ymail.com

ABSTRACT

The issues about gender in tourism are still debated among scholars. The women's movement has had a positive impact on gender equality, as in many countries wives hold an equal position with their husbands when making decisions about family holidays. However, some Asian women are still subordinate and hold lower positions compared to Asian males. Therefore, the purpose of this study is to continue to investigate the familial status of Asian women by focusing on the roles of 21st-century Indonesian wives who hold jobs in the decision-making process of family holidays. The study finds that most of the housewives are family holiday planners; they also have very important roles as leisure policymakers. Most of the housewives in Indonesia are the primary caregivers and have household responsibilities. The study revealed that, as working mothers, the participants believe they have the right to participate in the decision-making process of family holidays. The Internet makes it possible for them to explore and select destinations and attractions from around the world as part of the decision-making process. Therefore, the study results indicate that working Indonesian wives, particularly in large urban areas, play an important role in the decision-making process of family vacations.

Keywords: *Indonesian Females, Womens' Roles, Working Women, Family Holidays.*

1. INTRODUCTION

The issues surrounding gender in tourism are still debating among scholars. Some believe the women's movement brings positive impacts to gender equality, females have equal opportunity in family decision making of holidays in many countries. However, a previous study found that some Asian women are still typically subordinate [7], being the object of tourism promotion materials, while men are the main subject or customer who enjoy the promotion materials. Therefore, the purpose of this current study is continuing to investigate Asian women's travel-related decision making contributions, by exploring a case of 21st century Indonesian women.

Women or wives have important roles in the purchasing of a family holiday. The holiday for family is more than just a journey; it is a time for families to spend time together doing activities that can enhance established relationships and create unforgettable experiences [10]. It also serves as a breaks from busy everyday lives. The family members may relieve stress, recover, and rest in the pleasant championship of family [9].

In the purchasing of a family holiday, each family member may be involved. Mother, father, and children may partake in different aspects of the family holiday

planning. Although not all scholars agree that the mother is the main person in charge of the family holiday planning [4, 16], women are more enthusiastic about collecting holiday information than men. Women, here, refer to housewives or mothers, who search for information related to destinations, tickets, or hotels. The high involvement of mothers choosing destinations and deciding where to go on vacation indicates that they are the key decision makers of a family holiday. The changing status of women in relation to career opportunities and the ability to earn incomes is another aspect which leads them to be more passionate about arranging family holidays.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

1.1 Information technology empowers Asian females and breaks-down the patriarchy culture

Issues of equality gender and patriarchy attract extensive scholarly research. A relationship between patriarchy and the roles of Indonesian women, particularly within Javanese community groups, in household decision making [2]. Men maintain control and power in household decisions. This is because most women in Asian countries, such as Indonesia, have a lot

of responsibilities including cooking, child rearing, cleaning, and planning for a family holiday.

A study in Southern Sulawesi, Indonesia focused on the balance of power in household decision-making between men and women [7]. It was found that considerable female involvement in agreement to result: women's spheres of decision-making must ascertain and taken into account...". This indicates in contemporary Indonesian families, the patriarchy system is not applied and gender equality, in the form of family decision-making, is on par with females in other countries. It seems that the development of technology has influenced the ability of Indonesian women to break-down the patriarchy culture in family decision making. This is a way of Indonesian females to continue what Raden Ajeng Kartini (a fighter of equality gender in Indonesia) started around two hundred years ago. In terms of gender equality in Indonesia, according to the World Economic Forums' 2016 Global Gender Gap report that Indonesia ranked 88th out of 144 countries in terms of gender equality [26].

2.2 Women participation in family incomes reduce gaps between couples

In most of the Asian countries, like Indonesia, a man is the family leader. He is responsible for family income. However, now many Indonesian females are career women, they participate in the labour force, particularly in urban areas. Data shows there are approximately 17.3% of females employed in Indonesia [30]. This number indicates that some of the women in Indonesia are now equal to men in employment opportunities, which has helped to change the "societal attitude towards females in the market". Some of them prefer to work in the cities rather than agriculture sectors [32]. In many cases, women work in the, "informal sector, women are in low-paying, and low skilled occupations. Very few occupy higher positions in the private or sector" [32, 3]. However, one study disclosed "women in the manager levels can gain the same income as men" [12]. In addition, educated women in urban areas appear to be "more empowered, they have a greater say over household decisions ..." [25], and they are able to contribute to family incomes. This capability to earn money allows more freedom to use the money for some expenses, such as for family holiday funds.

"Females are ... more likely to take control of all significant investment decisions ... and... control of household expenditures and make important family ... but men still hold sway when it comes to big-ticket items, exerting greater control over major financial investments ..." [31]. In the last decade, there has been rapid change as women take the position as the financial head of the households [17]. As budget is an important

roles of women in family holidays decision making. A case study is used to analyse and describe ... a

aspect in a family holiday [10], this correlates with women as the vacation funds planners.).

2.3 Females are better than males at multitasking

Women more organised and better at multitasking than men [18]. This mainly in managing children and households family and job. Another study focused on new mothers in Indonesia [27]. They found that breastfeeding mothers were still able to do more than one duty at the same time. Additionally, Covid-19, has forced young moms and other females in Indonesia to conduct several new tasks, such as becoming educators for their children as some men refuse [18]. Normally, women are able to decide which tasks need completion, indicating that women, including Indonesian women, have the power to manage and control their responsibilities by themselves as the boss of house jobs. They are also able to balance internal and external functions, such as being housewives and career women at the same time [14].

Many wives take on the role of gatekeepers, in that they are initiators in the planning of vacations, specifically conducting information seeking by using internet search engines and social media [6, 17, 4]. They may be influential in the purchase tasks, such as information search, information processing and determination of a specific package holiday to be purchased [6]. As women become empowered through technology, increased working opportunities, and their ability to multitask, their role in family travel decisions has increased. Delahaye (2019) notes mothers usually pack family belongings, organise documents for family members, and may act as a food controller to manage the family meals [8, 23, 20, 16, 15].

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Data Collection Method

The primary data was gathered through semi-structured interviews. The list of interview questions was based on the theories that have been reviewed above, and included questions about participant roles of within the family and in family holiday decision making process (planning, process, and decision of purchase). Semi-structured questions allow for variation and follow-up based on respondents' answers. The interviews were recorded on a mobile phone, lasted approximately 30 minutes each, and were conducted in Indonesian. The secondary data was collected from the internet, books, journals, or documents from the government.

A case study approach has been chosen as the methodology. The goal is to describe and explain the group of people ... or a problem (or several problems) [28]. This method has been largely used in the social

sciences and has been found to be valuable in practice-oriented fields. The case studies are designed to “to answer ‘how’ and ‘why’ questions” [5]. Thus, this method is used to answer the questions how women in Jakarta, Surabaya, and Palembang participate in family holiday planning and decision making; and why they decide to take on these roles

3.2 Population and Samples

The object of the study was Indonesian women, ages 20-64, in 2018, who have jobs, whether permanent or part-time, and who live in urban areas. Women from the three largest cities namely Jakarta; Surabaya; and Palembang, were chosen. The research was conducted during the six months between January and June 2019. The study used the Slovin sampling method to determine the appropriate sample size. Based on the overall population of each city, Jakarta (2,062,000 females) [8], Surabaya (372,600) [11] and Palembang (164,800) [22]. By using the Slovin’s formula below, 100 participants were selected (see Table 1).

Table 1: Study Sample Size

No	Regencies	Samples
1.	Jakarta	79
2.	Surabaya	14
3.	Palembang	7
Total		100

3.3 Analysis Technique

To analyse the data, the study used a ‘themes and coding’ approach. Coding refers to the process of labelling and managing the qualitative data to identify different themes and the relationships between them [19]. This current study used manual coding. One of its’ purposes is to provide “sources, description, examples, and recommend ... for further analysing qualitative data” [24]. Open coding was applied as a first step in the analysis, the labels were applied, which are “a first attempt to condense the mass data into categories” [19], and from the labels, themes were developed.

Several steps were used in the process of open codes (1) identifying initial categories based on reading the transcripts, (2) writing code alongside the transcripts, (3) reviewing the list codes, revising the list categories and deciding which codes should appear in which category, and (4) looking for themes and findings in each category. A plenary category list was been drawn up at the start to identify initial based on the interview transcripts. Then the codes were selected. By using abbreviations, words, and phrases were written alongside the interview transcripts. The application of codes involved three elements, summarising, selecting, and interpreting. The third step included a review of the initial codes and categories to make a better sense of the data. The list of codes and categories showed the name(s) of the

respondents to whom each code applied. A few codes were revised and new ones were added. The last step included looking for themes and findings in each

category. Then, the analysis was based on the percentages of each theme.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study found that young women (20 – 40 years old) partake in two functions as house wives and career women. Some were fulltime workers as bankers, teachers, nurses, and medical consultants. While part time workers were online drivers, online sellers, and beauty consultants. Event 30% of full-time employees also held part-time jobs, as online sellers and caterers. The study also found that of the mature women (41 – 64 years old) 70% of them held permanent jobs. With 15 to 20 years work experiences, they were manager banks, senior lecturers, senior teachers, and senior civil servants. Their wages also equaled male workers, implying there was no salary difference between genders. This issue spawned the term ‘matriarchy’ to the female executives. Their powers, capabilities, and experiences emulate men, and they are able to control male employees. Indonesia had a woman as the fifth President.

Around 40% of the respondents claim that their husbands' salaries were insufficient to cover family expenditures throughout the month. So, it is very understandable that women work in order to meet

household needs that are not fulfilled by their husband's income alone. The women's salary impacts their ability to run the household and contribute to the family holiday expenses. Around 65% of them spend their money for a staycation on the weekends, either for themselves or with family members. The rest allocate their money for shopping as a leisure activity.

For the participants, holidays are important to relieve stress from daily activities, although they must decide if their trip will be solo or with family. Most respondents already had commitments with other couples how to allocate the family incomes. Fifty-two percent use savings (from husbands and wives) for family expenses, including holiday budgets. Husbands let their wives as financial managers in their families. They believe women are better than men in arranging family incomes. Wives, as the financial managers, are also the holidays budget planners. All the budgets for holiday are controlled by them and they decide how much to spend [10]. The women play important roles to determines how the vacation will be purchased.

Another interesting finding was most husbands rely on the wives to arrange family holiday's packages, from planning to the execution of holidays. Sixty-seven percent of the participants search for pre-holiday information, arrange travel documents, choose destinations, hotels, attractions, and restaurants, and purchase tickets, . . . The development of technology, particularly internet and phone applications, enabled the participants to explore and select destinations and attractions around the worlds. They claim that familiarity with internet through work has helped them gather information. Thus, through the technology, Indonesian women are empowered [12].

The participants appear to be proud and happy to plan vacations for their families. Particularly Muslim women, who believe that it shows devotions to their husbands, planning holidays is viewed as a credit to the husband and a good cause for the family. Gender equality implies that women and men enjoy equal status and proportional contribute to the household. This does not mean that women who work outside as career women help their husbands to improve family welfare cannot do household tasks anymore. This issue debatable among women in Indonesia, women who become housewives or become career women. Those who think that being a pure housewife is a very noble job. In contrary, another group think if a woman who has well education then she should be a career woman, even she also choose to become housewife at once. This story illustrates how women continue to be faced with the issue of cultural roles in facing ideal women who are currently able to contribute significantly to development.

Some women won't to do this task, it is considered another form of subordination, they believe it is a kind of inferior culture that still exist in society. The social norms in Indonesia position husbands as someone who

has financial responsibilities to the family. It seems women don't have right to reject this task. The structure of a patriarchal culture has also spawned the limitation of women in terms of decision-making within the family [25]. In Java culture, for instance, 'kanca wingking' is a term which describes the role of the wife in the domestic sector as a 'backward friend', meaning that women are treated as a husbands' friends in managing household tasks, especially looking after children, cooking, cleaning, and other household duties. In other words, women's roles include 'masak' (cooking), 'macak' (make up), and 'manak' (giving birth).

Women's lives are dependent on the power and the mercy of men. In most Indonesian family traditions, and in villages in general, where the influence of Islam is strong, women are considered as complementary to men: as a wife, a mother, an obedient support system to the lives of men. Women do not have to be smart, because they will end up being a wife and staying at home anyway. The ability to raise children and manage the family's finance would suffice as a great woman.

The Indonesian government has issued Law Number 23 in 2004 called the Elimination of Domestic Violence, especially within chapter 3, point b, which concerns gender equality. This legislation is designed to protect women in the household and create equalisation between genders in the family. According to this law, a husband acts as the head of the family who is responsible for earning a living to meet the needs of clothing, food and shelter. The husband also acts as a wife's partner, namely being a loyal friend who is fun, not mean to his wife, and always has times for his wife. So, when interpreted, the wife is the husband's partner, not the person who works for the husband.

The division of gender roles and household duties between husbands and wives in Indonesia are still influenced by the perspective of society, which tend to position women in the domestic area. This may be influenced by various factors, such as government policies which indirectly adhere to patriarchal ideology, especially in the legal system in Indonesia. Additionally, traditional education taught daughters that men are the leaders of the family, while women are only housewives who have to obey their husbands. Social values also influence the status of women in society, such as limited access to work, education, employment, decision making. The role of the mass media is also fair in cornering Indonesian women, because in some cases they are exposed from the charm of beauty, sexuality, and complementary things.

The study also found 26% of respondents were single moms they were work as parttime and fulltime workers. Around 12% of them were married with no child, while the rest have 1 to three kids. . single women posses two role: household responsibilities and earning money for the family. It means there are balance of domestic and public roles need to be accomplished with extra efforts through a process of

patience, knowledge, and consistency to run it" [25]. A single mom or a widow is a lady who can destroy a relationship of husband and wife. Some people may underestimate to them, the men possibly will consider widows easy to tease, while other women think that widows might be teasers to their husbands. However, this group of women are more free to make decisions. They have their own money to purchase holidays for themselves or for families. They do not need to ask family members to make a decision for holiday.

5. CONCLUSION

The study discloses decision-making in the Indonesian families in order to purchase the family holidays. Women are both family finance managers and family household managers. The women are positioned as inferior to men, they did not have the choice to reject the tasks. They arrange the family incomes which not enough to cover a month or half month for family expenses. These also make men feel superior to women. The purchasing of family holiday packages was dependent on them, including manage holiday budgets, seeking information, and arranging travel documents. However, the women who had stable incomes were free to use the money for themselves including for holidays. Single moms, even though they are free to arrange money for themselves and family members which include family holidays, social judgements sometimes made them feel uncomfortable.

Finally, this chapter is useful for future research, particularly to investigate the comparison between east and west women in the decision-making to purchase a holiday whether for herself or for families.

AUTHORS' CONTRIBUTIONS

Djumrianti and Augustus presented the idea, review some literatures, collected and analysed data, wrote the paper, and other contributions related to this current study.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

We would like to express my special thanks to all the respondents who contributed and participated to this study. I also would like to say thank you to my family and friends who helped me a lot in the finalising of this paper.

REFERENCES

- [1] Algeretto, S., Basic family budgets: Working families incomes often fail to meet living expenses around the US, Economic Policy Institutes – Briefing Paper #165. August 20, 2005. Available at (<https://epi.org/publicatio/bp165/>, 2005, (accessed 9 March 2020).
- [2] Ardianto, I., & Lisyaningsih, U., Peran Perempuan dalam Pengambilan Keputusan Rumah Tangga di Kecamatan Kraton Kota Yogyakarta, *Jurnal Bumi Indonesia*, 4(4). Pp. 1-10., 2015
- [3] Asian Development Bank, Country Gender Assessment, Annual Report, Publication Stock, Manila 2006
- [4] Barlés-Arizón, M. J., Fraj-Andrés, E., Eva Martínez-Salinas, E. (2013) Family Vacation Decision Making: The Role of Woman, *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*, 30(8), 873-890 DOI: [10.1080/10548408.2013.835681](https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2013.835681), 2013
- [5] Baxter, P & Jack, S., Qualitative Case Study Methodology: Study Design and Implementation for Novice Researchers, *The Qualitative Report*, 13, 4, 544-559, 2008.
- [6] Bialik, C., Do women really control 80% of household spending? The Wall Street Journal, Available at (<https://blogs.wsj.com/numbers/do-women-really-control-80-of-household-spending-1054/>), 2011, (Accessed March 12, 2020).
- [7] Colferm P.J.C., Achdiawan, R. Roshetko, M. J., Mulyoutami, E., Yuliani, L. Mulyana, A. Moeliono, M., Adna, H., Erni, The Balance of Power in Household Decision-making: Encouraging News on Gender in Southern Sulawesi, *World Development*, Vol. 76. Pp.174-176, 2015
- [8] Delahaye, J., Mum's genius hack for packing 200 items for a family of four into one suitcase, *Mirror*, 18 April 2019. Available at (<https://www.mirror.co.uk/travel/news/mums-genius-hack-packing-200-14410855>), 2019, (Accessed March 11, 2020).
- [7] Djumrianti, D., Chamber, D. Representation women in tourism materials: A case study of Jakarta's females. Proceeding Paper in 1st International Research Symposium: Tourism, Hospitality & Events in the University of Sunderland, UK, May 2017, 2016
- [8] DKI Jakarta Central Bureau of Statistics, Total amount of Jakarta women, BPS DKI Jakarta, Jakarta, 2018
- [9] Gram, M., Family Holiday: A qualitative analysis of family holiday experiences. *Scandanaian Journal of Hospitality and Tourism*, 5, 1, 2-22, 2006
- [10] Hayes, A., How to create a family vacation budget (and a free vacation budget planner spreadsheet), Available at (<https://www.doughroller.net/smart-spending/budgeting-family-travel/>). 2019, (Accessed March 11, 2020).

- [11] Indonesia Central Bureau of Statistics, Total amount of of Indonesian women, BPS Indonesia, Jakarta, 2018
- [12] Karnadi, B.E., Research: gender pay gap exits in Indonesia, especially for women under 30. The Conversation, Desember 2019, Available at (<https://theconversation.com/research-gender-pay-gap-exists-in-indonesia-especially-for-women-under-30-128904>), 2019, (Accessed September 1, 2020).
- [13] Knight, R., Holiday Hassle: Men and women stick to gender roles when it comes to holiday planning, The Sun. November 1, 2017, Available at (<https://thesun.co.uk>). 2017 (Accessed March 12, 2020).
- [14] Lantara, N. F., The roles of woman as leader and housewife, Journal of Defense Management, 5(1), 2015
- [15] Levenson, E., Travel troubles: The problems of not sharing your child surname, The Guardian, November 22, 2012, Available at (<https://www.google.com/amp/s/amp.theguardian.com/lifeandstyle/the-womens-blog-with-jane-martinson/2012>), 2012 (Accessed March 12, 2020).
- [16] McGuire, C., What's my name: Documents you need if you're travelling with a kid who has a different surname to you, The Sun, August 12, 2019, Available at (<https://www.google.com/amp/s/www.thesun.co.uk/travel/3004580/holiday-parents-kids-different-surnames/amp>), 2019 (Accessed March 12, 2020).
- [17] Metinko, C., Women are the New CFO of households. The Street. April 19, 2017. Available at (<https://www.thestreet.com/personal-finance/women-are-the-new-cfo-of-the-household-14089470>). 2017. (Accessed Marc 11, 2020).
- [18] Morgan, G., Women better multitasking than men, study finds, BBC.com, October 24, 2013, Available at (<https://www.bbc.com/news/science-environment-24645100>), 2013 (Accessed August 22, 2020)
- [19] Neuman, L. W., Social Research Methods: Qualitative and Quantitative Approaches, Pearson Education, Inc., Boston, 2006
- [20] O'Brien, C., A mother's warning after a passport check: A signature can render your child's document invalid, CTV News Canada, January 10, 2020. Available at (https://www.google.com/amp/s/beta.ctvnews.ca/national/canada/2020/1/10/1_47615), 2020, (Accessed March 12, 2020).
- [21] Peeling, K., Family travel on a budget: Here's how yo do it. Available at (<https://www.familyadventureproject.org/family-travel-on-a-budget/>), 2020, (Accessed March 9, 2020)
- [22] Palembang Central Bureau of Statistics, Total amount of Palembang women, BPS Palembang, 2018.
- [23] Rogerson, M, Family Holiday Packing List, Available at (<https://www.mumonthemove.com/family-holiday-packing-list-2/>), 2019, (Accessed March 11, 2020)
- [24] Saldana, J., An introduction to codes and coding: The coding manual for qualitative researchers, 2009
- [25] Schaner, S. and Das, S., Former Labor Force in Asia: Indonesia Country Study, ADB Economic Working Paper Series, No. 474. Asian Development Bank, Manila, 2016
- [26] Siniwi, M. R., The Javaness Princess Who Fought for Gender Equality in Indonesia, Jakarta Globe, 24 April 2016. Available at (<https://jakartaglobe.id/news/r-kartini-javanese-princess-fought-gender-equality-indonesia>), 2016, (Accessed 30 August 2020).
- [27] Spagnoletti, B. R., Bennett, L. R., Kermode, M., & Wilopo, S. A., Multitasking breastfeeding mamas: middle class women balancing their reproductive and productive lives in Yogyakarta, Indonesia. *Breastfeeding Review*, 25(3), 13, 2017
- [28] Starman, B. A., The case study as a type of qualitative research, *Journal of Contemporary Education Studies*, 1, 23, 28-42, 2013
- [29] The Indonesian Government Law Number 23, The Elimination of Domestic Violence
- [30] Trading Economics, Indonesia – Employees, Industry, Female (% Of Female Employment), Available at ([https://tradingeconomics.com/indonesia/employee-s-industry-female-percent-of-female-employment-wb-data.html#:~:text=Employment%20in%20industry%2C%20female%20\(%25,compiled%20from%20officially%20recognized%20sources.\)](https://tradingeconomics.com/indonesia/employee-s-industry-female-percent-of-female-employment-wb-data.html#:~:text=Employment%20in%20industry%2C%20female%20(%25,compiled%20from%20officially%20recognized%20sources.))), 2020, (Accessed 18 August 2020)
- [31] Wilson, L., New research reveals females control the household budget, News.com.au, November 28, 2015, Available at (<https://www.news.com.au/finance/new-research-reveals-females-control-the-household-budget/news-story/d4541bb54e632192f30ba3968b108198>). (Accessed March 10, 2020), 2015

- [32] World Economic Forum, Gender in equality in Indonesia, The global gender gap report² (2014), (The Australian-Indonesian Partnership for Economic Governance (AIPEG), the Australian Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT) and Monash University's Centre for Development Economic and Sustainability (CDES), Jakarta, 2015
- [33] Yin, R. K., Case study research: Design and methods (3rd ed.), Sage, Thousand Oaks, CA, 2003