

Perspective Ecofeminism in Revitalization Ecotourism Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest in Sinjai South Sulawesi

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Abstract

Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest, located in Tongke-Tongke Village, East Sinjai District, Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi, is one of the widest and densest mangrove ecosystems in Indonesia, covering an area of 173.5 hectares with a planting density of 0.5 × 0.5 meters per tree. This area has been developed by the local community for more than 20 years, making it a center for mangrove restoration and learning. Despite its large ecological and tourism potential, this area faces challenges in management and visitor services. This research aims to explore the implementation of an ecofeminist perspective in the revitalization of ecotourism in the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest. The research method used is a qualitative study employing bibliographic analysis based on physical and electronic literature sources. The writing of this article began with direct field observations to examine the actual conditions of the study location. The results show that women's empowerment in ecotourism management can increase environmental awareness and improve the economic welfare of the community. However, challenges such as the lack of supporting facilities, limited training opportunities, and restricted access to capital remain significant obstacles. This study recommends the integration of ecofeminist values into ecotourism management policies to ensure ecological and social sustainability in the area.

Keywords: *Ecofeminism, Ecotourism, Mangrove Forest, Revitalization, Women's Empowerment.*

INTRODUCTION

The tourism industry is one of the most dynamic and economically valuable sectors in the world. According to a report by the World Travel & Tourism Council (WTTC), a global forum that studies the economic impact of travel and tourism in 184 countries, this sector is among the largest and most important contributors to the global economy. In 2023, the Travel & Tourism sector contributed approximately US\$9.9 trillion to global Gross Domestic Product (GDP), accounting for about 9.1% of the world economy. This figure not only reflects the sector's large economic scale but also highlights its strategic role in driving global economic recovery after the COVID-19 pandemic. WTTC projects that in 2024 the economic impact of this sector could increase to US\$11.1 trillion, indicating a positive and sustainable growth trend alongside rising mobility and public interest in cross-country travel (Statista, 2025; Travel and Tour World, 2024).

From a market perspective, IBISWorld data notes that the global tourism market size in 2024 reached approximately US\$1.4 trillion, representing an increase of around 1.7% compared to the previous year. This growth indicates that international tourism activities continue to recover and expand despite ongoing global economic challenges. Meanwhile, Statista estimates

that the global tourism sector will continue to grow during the 2024–2030 period, driven by changes in tourist behavior toward more authentic, personalized, and sustainable experiences (IBISWorld, 2025). WTTC also ranks Indonesia ninth among countries with the highest tourism growth worldwide (Fadillah Ikhsan, 2021).

Like many countries rich in cultural and natural attractions, tourism in Indonesia has become a leading sector of the national economy. Tourism is one of the largest foreign exchange earners and currently ranks as the fourth-largest contributor to national foreign exchange after palm oil, oil, and gas, and mining (Fadillah Ikhsan, 2021).

Data from the Central Statistics Agency (BPS) shows that there are eleven provinces most frequently visited by tourists, one of which is South Sulawesi. In December 2024, the number of foreign tourist visits to South Sulawesi reached 1,085, an increase of 14.57% compared to November 2024, which recorded 947 visits. This increase is closely related to the unique natural beauty and affordable tourism attractions offered by South Sulawesi (BPS, 2025).

One region with strong marine, land, and mountainous tourism potential is Sinjai Regency. This area has a population of 238,099 people and covers 223 km², with promising tourism assets that can serve as

sources of local income. However, despite its tourism potential, tourism development in Sinjai Regency has not been fully supported and developed by the local government, resulting in suboptimal management (Karmansyah & Firman Ahmad, 2020).

The tourism sector in Sinjai Regency could be significantly developed if its management involved active community participation, particularly women's groups. This region has several advantages compared to other regencies in South Sulawesi, including its location at the foothills of Mount Bawakaraeng, which provides stunning natural landscapes, as well as coastal areas with attractive beaches.

Among the coastal tourism destinations in Sinjai Regency, the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest stands out as having strong development potential. Previously managed independently through community self-reliance, it is now under government management. The mangrove forest in Tongke-Tongke Village gained national recognition after becoming a pilot project for other coastal areas in Indonesia during President Suharto's administration in 1995. During that period, H. Taiyeb, the initiator of the mangrove conservation effort, received the Kalpataru Award for his dedication to rehabilitating degraded and neglected coastal land through mangrove reforestation, making the site nationally prominent at the time (Rahmi Djafar, 2019).

Initially, mangrove management in Tongke-Tongke Village was the result of community self-reliance led by the Natural Resources Conservation Group "Aku Cinta Indonesia" (KPSDA ACI). The group successfully established mangrove forests aimed at protecting coastal areas and villages while strengthening the local economy. This initiative was also supported by rising shrimp prices during the monetary crisis, which incentivized fishpond farmers to restore mangroves as habitats for fish and shrimp (Salim Tamrin, 2018).

In addition to playing a vital role in maintaining ecological balance, such as coastal protection, carbon storage, and providing critical habitats for biodiversity (Suriani, 2019), mangrove ecosystems also support coastal livelihoods through fisheries and nature-based tourism, as observed in the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest in Sinjai (Rahmi Djafar, 2019). Since its management was transferred to the Sinjai Department of Tourism and Culture in 2017, Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest has become a flagship tourism destination. Gradual improvements were made,

including the introduction of an entrance fee of IDR 5,000 per person based on Regional Regulation Number 6 of 2017 concerning tourism retribution (Tamrin, 2018).

However, public enthusiasm for Tongke-Tongke Mangrove tourism has gradually declined due to increasingly complex and concerning management issues. Although the site remains operational, it is no longer as crowded as before. Field observations show that several parts of the mangrove tourism area have suffered damage, contributing to the decline in visitor numbers. During field observations conducted during the long Eid al-Fitr holiday in 2025, only four motorcycles and one car were observed in the parking area, with only dozens of visitors inside the site.

Previously, women and community groups played an active role in managing the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest when it was community-managed. However, these roles diminished after the government takeover. Although retribution revenues were initially agreed to be distributed among the regional treasury, community managers (ACI), and the village government, this agreement was not realized. Revenues amounting to approximately IDR 300 million did not directly benefit the community. The Department of Tourism and Culture of Sinjai Regency cited the absence of regulatory mechanisms governing retribution distribution as the reason (Suriani, 2019).

The development of this mangrove forest has generated ongoing debate between the local government and the Tongke-Tongke Village community, causing a formerly popular tourism site to lose its appeal due to the lack of collaboration and community engagement, particularly among women. In many tourism destinations, women's involvement—as tour guides, food stall operators, handicraft producers, and homestay managers is a crucial element of tourism development in emerging areas (Alongi, 2008). An ecofeminist perspective is therefore employed in this article to discuss the revitalization of ecotourism in the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest in Sinjai.

Women's contributions to the tourism sector not only enhance visitor experiences but also generate positive impacts on the local economy (Sofyan, 2017). Moreover, women have the potential to strengthen their decision-making roles related to ecotourism development. By actively participating in planning and managing local resources, women can play a key role in formulating policies that support sustainable

development. Empowering women in ecotourism activities not only improves economic welfare but also strengthens mangrove conservation (Putu Andi Permata Putra, 2023). This study recommends integrating ecofeminist values into ecotourism management policies to promote ecosystem sustainability and community welfare.

This study offers strong novelty at the conceptual, empirical, and practical levels within the context of community-based ecotourism development in Indonesia. Conceptually, it integrates an ecofeminist approach into mangrove ecotourism revitalization studies, an area still rarely explored. Previous research on mangrove ecotourism in Indonesia has largely focused on ecological and economic aspects, such as biodiversity conservation, climate change mitigation, and local economic strengthening. Studies that place gender relations, ecological justice, and women's participation at the core of tourism revitalization remain limited (Nurjanah, 2021; Supriharyono, 2015; Satria, 2017; Wibowo, 2020; Rachmawati, 2020).

Empirically, this research provides a new interpretation of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest case in Sinjai Regency, which has a long history as a community-based conservation area since the 1990s. Although several studies have discussed the success of reforestation and conservation programs in the area (Kamaruddin, 2020), none have examined the social and gender impacts of management changes following government takeover. This study demonstrates that such shifts affect not only economic and ecological performance but also reduce women's involvement, who previously played active roles in community-based tourism management and promotion.

Practically, this study introduces a revitalization model for ecotourism grounded in ecofeminist values, emphasizing gender equality, ecological justice, and social sustainability in nature tourism management (Shiva, 1989). This approach encourages the integration of local values and women's ecological knowledge into sustainable tourism development strategies (Arora & Jansson, 1989). Consequently, this research not only expands theoretical discourse on ecofeminism in ecotourism but also provides practical contributions for policymakers in designing collaborative and socially just tourism management policies.

By integrating an ecofeminist perspective into the revitalization of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest,

this study aims to bridge the research gap between environmental conservation studies and gender studies within sustainable tourism development in Indonesia. The main novelty lies in its critical examination of socio-ecological transformation from a women-centered perspective and in proposing a management model that positions women as key actors in sustaining mangrove ecotourism at the local level.

Based on the discussion above, this study identifies two main research questions:

1. What are the management problems facing the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest tourism destination in Sinjai?
2. How can an ecofeminist perspective analyze and inform an ecotourism development model applicable to the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest in Sinjai?

METHODS

In order to describe the management conditions of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest tourism object in Sinjai, which has experienced limited involvement of women, this research employs a qualitative research method utilizing bibliographic studies based on physical and electronic library sources. The writing of this article began with direct field observations to examine the actual conditions of the research location, namely the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest in Tongke-Tongke Village, East Sinjai District, Sinjai Regency, South Sulawesi.

Secondary data were obtained from scientific publications and research notes accessed through Google Scholar and Scopus searches, as well as official documents and written reports issued by relevant government institutions. The collected data were analyzed using content review analysis, which aims to generate a theoretical review relevant to the research topic. According to Kimberly A. (2002), content analysis is a research technique used to draw replicable and valid conclusions from data within a specific context.

The final stage of data analysis involved data reduction through systematic filtering using the keywords "Mangrove Debt," "Ecotourism," and "Women's Empowerment" to produce the most relevant and concrete findings. Subsequently, data were organized and interpreted using an ecofeminist framework to explain the relationship between women's roles and the enhancement of tourism-based

economic development in Tongke-Tongke Village, East Sinjai District.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Current Condition of Ecotourism Management in the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest

The results of observations and literature reviews show that the management of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest has undergone significant changes since it was transferred from a community-based self-reliance management system to regional government management in 2017. In the initial phase, management was carried out by the Natural Resources Conservation Group “*Aku Cinta Indonesia*” (KPSDA ACI), which positioned local communities as the main actors in conservation, utilization, and development of the mangrove area. This model proved capable of maintaining ecological sustainability while simultaneously providing economic benefits for coastal communities.

However, after management authority shifted to the Department of Tourism and Culture of Sinjai Regency, there was a change in approach from community-based management to state-centered management. This shift resulted in declining community participation, weak institutional coordination, and the absence of a clear benefit-sharing scheme. Tourism retribution revenues were no longer directly felt by village communities, leading to reduced motivation among residents to remain involved in area management.

Based on Regional Regulation (Perda) Number 6 of 2017, which regulates the structure of retribution rates for recreational and sports facilities in Sinjai Regency, including the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest tourism object, entrance fees were set at Rp. 5,000 per adult and Rp. 3,000 per child, excluding parking fees of Rp. 2,000 per two-wheeled vehicle. In practice, however, the implementation of these regulations was not accompanied by official proof of payment. The enforcement of this regulation generated various perceptions within the community, particularly because it was perceived as reducing the authority of local residents who had previously managed the tourism area, including the collection of entrance and parking fees (Rismala, 2018). In fact, the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest had long served as a regional tourism icon before the implementation of the regulation at the end of 2017.

The transition of retribution management from the community to the regional government, although still involving local residents as field officers, has generated social tensions and further reduced community participation. Therefore, a more comprehensive and dialogical approach between the Department of Tourism and Culture of Sinjai Regency and local communities is required to create participatory and sustainable tourism management (Rismala, 2018; Wulandari, 2023). These conditions align with findings from previous studies indicating that tourism management models that neglect local participation tend to experience declining service quality and destination attractiveness (Rahman, 2018).

Empirically, field observations combined with previous studies indicate a significant decline in visitor numbers to the Tongke-Tongke mangrove tourism area. Inadequately maintained facilities, such as tracking paths, parking areas, and supporting tourism infrastructure, have become major factors contributing to declining tourist interest. This situation is further exacerbated by the lack of tourism product innovation and the absence of environmental education-based attractions that once characterized the area. This decline demonstrates that ecotourism revitalization cannot rely solely on physical development but requires a socially sustainable and participatory approach, particularly involving women (Hidayat, 2020).

Based on an analysis of supporting factors, the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest possesses strong ecological and social capital. Its status as a protected conservation area, high mangrove fertility, biodiversity of flora and fauna, and good accessibility make it highly potential for development as a sustainable ecotourism destination (Lestari, 2001). Additionally, the relatively good educational level of the local community and the predominance of fishing-based livelihoods create opportunities for experience-based tourism development, such as mangrove education tours, boat tours, and integrated marine tourism connected with the Nine Islands.

Nevertheless, these potentials have not yet been matched by effective governance. The main inhibiting factors include social conflict, ambiguity of inter-agency management authority, minimal cross-sector coordination, and limited supporting facilities and infrastructure. Top-down management uncertainty and policies have also raised community concerns over the

loss of economic access, contributing to declining local participation. These conditions indicate that the core problem does not lie in resource availability, but rather in the absence of an inclusive, collaborative, and equitable management model (Rahman, 2018; Hidayat, 2020; Lestari, 2001).

Marginalization of Women in Mangrove Ecotourism Management

One of the most significant findings of this study is the decline in women's roles in ecotourism management following the government takeover. During the community-based management phase, women played active roles in various activities, including managing roadside food stalls, providing tourism services, processing mangrove products, and conducting environmental education for visitors. However, the centralized and bureaucratic management system has gradually eliminated these spaces for participation. Women are no longer involved in planning processes, decision-making, or tourism economic management. This condition reinforces gender inequality and contradicts the principles of sustainable tourism development that emphasize social inclusivity (Cole & Stroma, 2017).

In the discourse of sustainable tourism development, ecotourism is one of the most widely discussed concepts. Ecotourism was first introduced by Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin in 1987, defining it as nature-based or ecological tourism. It is also described as travel to relatively undisturbed and uncontaminated natural areas for the purpose of studying, admiring, and enjoying landscapes, flora, fauna, and cultural expressions of local communities, both past and present (Afriza Lia, 2018; Bayu Khusnul, 2023). This concept was later refined by The International Ecotourism Society (TIES), which defines ecotourism as "responsible travel to natural areas that conserves the environment and improves the welfare of local residents" (Bayu Khusnul, 2023).

Ecotourism emerged as a critique and corrective response to mass tourism practices that dominated the 1960s–1980s and generated significant negative environmental and socio-cultural impacts on local communities. In response, ecotourism offers conservation-oriented alternatives, environmental learning, and community empowerment (Fennell, 2015; Fennell, 2020). According to Fennell, ecotourism is a form of nature-based tourism in which activities focus on direct experiences and understanding of

nature. He defines ecotourism as "a sustainable form of natural-resource-based tourism that focuses primarily on experiencing and learning about nature, and which is ethically managed to be low-impact, non-consumptive, and locally oriented (controls, benefits, and scale)" (Fennell, 2015). This definition underscores that ecotourism encompasses ethical, conservation, and sustainability dimensions beyond mere outdoor recreation.

Fennell further identifies four core characteristics of ecotourism. First, tourism activities must be nature-based, conducted in relatively undisturbed areas. Second, they must be sustainable, maintaining environmental integrity while providing social and economic benefits to local communities. Third, ecotourism emphasizes educational or interpretive elements, offering opportunities for visitors to learn about biodiversity, ecology, and local culture. Fourth, it incorporates a moral or ethical dimension, where tourists, service providers, and communities share responsibility for protecting the environment and preserving socio-cultural integrity at tourism destinations (Fennell, 2020).

Through these principles, Fennell affirms that ecotourism is not merely an economic activity but also a moral and social practice. Its success is measured not by visitor numbers alone, but by its contributions to nature conservation and community well-being. In this view, ecotourism becomes a means of fostering environmental awareness and strengthening reciprocal relationships between humans and nature.

Historically, Fennell traces the emergence of ecotourism concepts to the 1980s, coinciding with the strengthening of global environmental movements and increasing criticism of mass tourism's destructive impacts. Rapid growth in international tourism during this period exerted significant pressure on conservation areas and local communities in developing countries. Within this context, ecotourism was viewed as a potential solution to balance economic needs with environmental preservation. The term "ecotourism" was first popularized by Héctor Ceballos-Lascuráin in 1983 and later developed further by scholars such as Fennell and Eagles (1990) within more systematic scientific frameworks (Fennell, 2015; Fennell, 2020).

From this perspective, ecotourism is not simply "tourism in nature" but represents a new paradigm in human–environment relations. It reflects moral responsibility toward nature, where recreational

activities can serve as instruments of education and conservation when conducted with ecological and social awareness. With sustainability, community engagement, and conservation as its core principles, ecotourism not only enhances the economic value of destinations but also holds potential as a tool for socio-ecological transformation toward a more sustainable future (Fennell, 2003).

Ecofeminism as a Socio-Ecological Analytical Framework

Ecofeminism serves as a socio-ecological analytical tool that critiques modern development paradigms characterized by androcentrism and exploitation, which oppress women and degrade nature simultaneously (Keren, 1991; Shiva, 1989). Ecofeminism argues that power relations positioning nature as an object of exploitation share structural similarities with power relations that marginalize women in social, economic, and political spheres (Keren, 1991).

In the context of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest, an ecofeminist perspective enables analysis of ecotourism management problems through two key relationships. First is the relationship between the state and nature, where mangrove areas are reduced to tourism commodities and sources of regional revenue. Second is the relationship between the state and society, particularly women who experience marginalization in post-takeover decision-making processes. When mangrove management is controlled through bureaucratic approaches, local ecological knowledge previously safeguarded by communities, especially women, is neglected. These findings reinforce ecofeminist arguments that environmental exploitation and women's marginalization are two sides of the same development logic (Gaard, 2011).

Within ecofeminist studies, women are not positioned in an essentialist manner as "closer to nature," but rather as social actors whose ecological knowledge is historically and practically constructed through social divisions of labor and everyday life experiences (Agarwal, 2010). In coastal communities such as Tongke-Tongke, women play strategic roles in mangrove resource management, seafood processing, and conservation practices rooted in daily experience, constituting vital social capital for sustainable ecotourism (Shiva, 1989; Arora, 2011).

The analysis shows that during community-based management phases, women played crucial roles in

maintaining mangrove sustainability. However, once management systems became centralized, women's ecological relationships with mangroves were structurally severed. This condition reflects what Shiva (1988) terms "maldevelopment," referring to development processes that erode local capacities to maintain ecological and social balance (Shiva, 1989). Thus, ecofeminism helps interpret the ecotourism management crisis in Tongke-Tongke not merely as a technical or managerial issue, but as a socio-ecological crisis that excludes women as custodians of environmental knowledge (Satria, 2017; Wibowo, 2020).

Ecofeminism as a Model for Sustainable Ecotourism Development

Beyond serving as an analytical tool, ecofeminism offers normative and practical foundations for developing equitable and sustainable ecotourism models. This model is grounded in three core principles: gender equality, ecological justice, and community participation (Shiva, 1989; Karen, 2000). Women's participation as subjects of management and development in Tongke-Tongke mangrove ecotourism must position women as managers rather than mere complements. This aligns with empowerment-based ecotourism concepts that emphasize active local community involvement across all stages of tourism management (Scheyvens, 1999).

Ecofeminism also emphasizes the importance of situated knowledge derived from lived experience and direct relationships with nature (Karen, 2000). In Tongke-Tongke, women's knowledge of mangrove cycles, marine resources, and conservation practices can be integrated into educational ecotourism packages. This integration serves dual functions: maintaining ecological sustainability while strengthening local destination identity. Consequently, ecotourism becomes oriented not only toward visual consumption but also toward ecological and social learning (Scheyvens, 1999; Armitage, 2005).

Furthermore, ecofeminism highlights justice in the distribution of development benefits, ensuring that women are included (Scheyvens, 1999). Therefore, ecotourism development models in Tongke-Tongke must ensure fair and transparent benefit-sharing mechanisms, particularly for women and local communities. This aligns with co-management concepts in natural resource management, where the state acts as facilitator and regulator, while

communities serve as primary managers (Armitage, 2005; Ostrom, 1990).

The Common-Pool Resources (CPR) theory developed by Elinor Ostrom challenges deterministic views of the “tragedy of the commons,” which assume inevitable resource degradation without privatization or state control (Hardin, 1968). Ostrom demonstrates that local communities can effectively manage shared resources through strong, adaptive local institutions (Ostrom, 1990). She identifies eight design principles for successful community-based resource management, including clear boundaries, rule congruence with local conditions, user participation in decision-making, monitoring mechanisms, graduated sanctions, conflict-resolution mechanisms, recognition of community rights to self-organize, and nested institutional arrangements (Armitage, 2005; Ostrom, 1990).

In Tongke-Tongke, early community-based management reflected several of Ostrom’s principles, particularly clear territorial boundaries, strong social norms, and active local participation, including women in conservation and utilization. The success of this phase confirms that local institutions can sustainably manage resources when institutional design principles are fulfilled.

However, Armitage cautions that many Community-Based Natural Resource Management (CBNRM) approaches rest on problematic normative assumptions, particularly viewing “community” as homogeneous and harmonious. In reality, communities are heterogeneous, characterized by unequal power relations related to gender, class, and access to resources (Armitage, 2005; Armitage, 2007). Armitage also emphasizes that CBNRM success depends on adaptive capacity and broader institutional contexts, including relations with the state and markets. When the state assumes control without collaborative co-management mechanisms, community-based institutions may weaken and lose social legitimacy.

This critique is highly relevant to the Tongke-Tongke case, where the transfer of management authority to the regional government was not accompanied by strengthening local institutions or co-management mechanisms. As a result, Ostrom’s principles, such as participation, recognition of community rights, and conflict resolution, ceased to function effectively.

Differences in community-based management performance can thus be understood as mismatches

between institutional design and socio-ecological realities. In Tongke-Tongke, failure lies not in the CBNRM concept itself, but in implementation that ignored internal power relations, particularly women’s marginalization, cross-scale connectedness, and equitable benefit distribution as prerequisites for social legitimacy (Armitage, 2005; Hardin, 1968).

Ecofeminism can be positioned as a conceptual bridge between the optimism of commons theory and Armitage’s critique. It emphasizes not only the importance of local institutions but also explicitly critiques power relations and gender inequalities often overlooked in conventional CBNRM approaches (Shiva, 1989; Agarwal, 2010). In Tongke-Tongke, ecofeminism expands Ostrom’s principles by asserting that participation must be substantive and gender-inclusive, not merely procedural. Thus, effective mangrove management requires not only clear rules and local monitoring, but also recognition of women’s roles and ecological knowledge as integral components of community adaptive capacity.

This review demonstrates that community-based natural resource management performs more effectively when institutional design principles are applied contextually, assumptions of community homogeneity are critically examined, power relations, especially gender, are integrated into management design, and the state functions as a facilitator within co-management schemes rather than as a sole authority. By integrating commons theory, Armitage’s critique, and ecofeminist perspectives, the management of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest holds strong potential to develop into a sustainable, adaptive, equitable ecotourism model rooted in local socio-ecological strengths.

CONCLUSION

This study shows that the dynamics of ecotourism management in the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest are strongly influenced by changes in the management regime, from community-based management to centralized management by the local government. In the initial phase, community self-reliance-based management was proven to be capable of maintaining ecological sustainability while simultaneously providing economic and social benefits for coastal communities. This success was supported by strong local institutions, active community participation, and the integration of experience-based ecological

knowledge, which aligns with the principles of common-pool resources management.

However, the transfer of management authority to the local government after 2017, without adequate collaborative mechanisms, has weakened community participation, reduced the quality of destination management, and triggered social tensions. Ambiguity in the distribution of authority, lack of cross-sectoral coordination, and top-down levy policies have led to a decline in the social legitimacy of management, with implications for decreasing facility quality and tourism attractiveness. These findings confirm that management failure is not caused by limitations in natural resources, but rather by weaknesses in the design of inclusive and adaptive institutions.

This study also finds that changes in the management system have had a significant impact on the marginalization of women in mangrove ecotourism. Women who previously played active roles in tourism economic activities, environmental education, and mangrove conservation have lost spaces for participation in planning and decision-making processes. This marginalization not only deepens gender inequality but also disrupts the crucial role of women as custodians of local ecological knowledge that contributes to ecosystem sustainability.

Through an ecofeminist perspective, this research confirms that the crisis in ecotourism management in Tongke-Tongke is a socio-ecological relational crisis, in which natural exploitation occurs alongside the exclusion of women within development structures. Ecofeminism provides both an analytical and normative framework for formulating a sustainable ecotourism development model that emphasizes gender equality, ecological justice, and substantive community participation.

By integrating Commons Theory, critiques of assumptions regarding community homogeneity, and an ecofeminist perspective, this study concludes that community-based natural resource management strategies will perform more effectively when supported by contextual, collaborative, and institutionally adaptive designs that are sensitive to power relations, particularly gender. Therefore, the management of the Tongke-Tongke Mangrove Forest needs to be directed toward a co-management scheme that positions the state as a facilitator, while recognizing and strengthening the roles of women and

local communities as the main actors in sustainable ecotourism management.

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