Women in Tourism: Exploring the Links between Women's Skills Development, Empowerment and Employment

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ABSTRACT

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Women's empowerment is a current and crucial issue of our time. There is increasing recognition that the economic empowerment of women is essential both to realize women's rights, and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare. This qualitative study explores women's empowerment through skills education and employment in Bali, Indonesia. The purpose of this study is to investigate the respondents experience of changes in their everyday life conditions, with particular focus on economic empowerment, with reference to other spheres of the women's empowerment. The aim is to provide knowledge that may be valuable for the work with vocational education and training for women's empowerment in the future. The study relied on semi structured interviews with Indonesian women exploring individual experiences in their everyday local context. Empowerment is a complex topic with an irreducible subjective element. The results showed empowerment at the individual level and as the research highlighted changes in different areas of their life was it proved difficult to grasp the extent of this change. In general, the participants experiences somewhat differed, depending on internal and external factors as well as context, describing varied changes in their life conditions. However, all the women explain the outcome as more or less successful in different spheres of their lives. The study also stresses the need for further research, suggesting exploration in the field with supportive quantitative evidence.

Keywords: Women, Empowerment, Vocational Education and Training, Marginalized, Indonesia, Bali

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1. Introduction

Women's empowerment is a current and crucial issue of our time. There is increasing recognition that the economic empowerment of women is essential both to realize women’s rights, and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare (Golla, 2011).

In the case of Bali, Indonesia, the explosion of tourism in recent decades has generated great economic growth (BaliWISE, n.d). However, despite the high levels of regional and international investment in Bali’s tourism sector, many of its residents are not beneficiaries of the development of the island’s tourism driven economy. Poor and less educated girls and young women are particularly disadvantaged for a number of reasons where poverty is a main driver. Women, especially rural women, have shown to have more restricted access to employment opportunities outside the home, to have lower literacy rates as a result of educational disadvantage, and enjoy fewer benefits from tourism. Females make up the large percentage of unskilled jobs. Once girls and young women lack options and enter the unskilled labor pool, they are considered to be trapped in poverty with little chance of advancement.

Vocational Education and Training [VET] in hospitality is a used approach in the region to help empower women and girls. The expected result of VET programs is that women will experience economic empowerment, when turning their currently small scale income earnings into more profitable and productive activities (UNESCO, 2008). Rivers Oceans Lands Ecology Foundation [ROLE] is a local non governmental organization in Bali. Their program Bali Women in Indonesia Skills Education’s [WISE] work to empower poor, marginalized, and young women through increasing their access to skilled employment by providing basic education and vocational training in hospitality, tour and travel.

However, research is debating to what extent these programs can contribute to the empowerment of women. For example, a study by Kegudu, Malami & Gatawa (2011) showed no significant relationship between women's economic empowerment and vocational training. Ampumuza et al. (2008) found that tourism may be a tool to empower women in various aspects. Yet tourism presents both opportunities and challenges to gender equality (Praveen & Asokan, 2013).

As stated by Kegudu, Malami & Gatawa, (2011 ) there is much literature written on women and women related matters, but not much has been devoted to skill acquisition and capacity building in relation to women. Hence, the ambition of this qualitative study is to further understand the complexity of empowerment through qualitative interviews with 12 Indonesian women who have undergone vocational education and training through the WISE program in Bali, Indonesia.
1.2 Purpose

The purpose of this study is to investigate how women who have participated in vocational education and training at BaliWISE describe their process of empowerment. Particular focus is placed on economic empowerment with reference to other spheres of the women's empowerment. The aim is to provide knowledge that may be valuable for the work with vocational education and training for women's empowerment in the future.

1.3 Research Questions

- How do women describe (economic) empowerment in terms of changes in their everyday life conditions after having participated in the programme, in what aspects has their empowerment improved or not?
- What factors do the women refer to as conditioning (contributing and/or hampering empowerment?
- Are there any general patterns (for the local and national context) in the women's accounts that may be of interest in the development of empowerment efforts for women in skills education?

1.4 Delimitation

The study investigates 12 women’s accounts of empowerment. Even if this study primarily focuses on economic empowerment, the women refer to changes in their everyday lives in a broader perspective taking into account different spheres of everyday life and different dimensions of empowerment. In our perspective, everyday life compromises dimensions outlined in our analytical framework about empowerment by Kabeer (Resources, Agency and Achievements and Rowlands (Personal, Relational, Collective). Consequently, empowerment is also considered in broader terms than purely economical, emphasizing that economic factors can not be separated from everyday life as a whole and necessarily has to be analysed in a particular geographic context. The women are individuals with individual backgrounds, and, hence, exemplify effects of the programme regarding their individual conditions and opportunities in this particular local context. They share, the fact, that they have taken the same skills education and live their lives in the same local context. Altogether, these factors are interesting to learn from and take account in future work to improve women's conditions and opportunities for economic empowerment. Even if this aim is not to generalize from these 12 women to all women in Indonesia, or the Bali society, the aspects that these women share may point in a direction for further research to confirm both general and particular patterns that define women’s economic (and general) empowerment in the Bali context as a result of skill education.

1.5 Disposition

Chapter one presents an introduction to the research topic, the purpose and research questions as well as the limitation of the study. Chapter two covers relevant information to understand the
results and analysis of the study. The section clarifies the geographical area of Bali, Indonesia, but also cultural and historical aspects are highlighted along with the situation of women in the region. In addition facts about the BaliWISE program are also included. Lastly, previous research and theories that are relevant to the study are illustrated. Chapter three discusses the method used for the study, the research process in reviewed step by step and finally the difficulties encountered during the course of the study are lifted. Chapter four presents the result of the data related to analytical framework. Chapter five analyze the results further, discuss the findings, argument for how our study contributes to new knowledge and provide suggestions for further research. Lastly, in chapter six does the study presents its final conclusions for the study.
2. Background and Analytical Framework

This section describes the geographical cultural and historical context framing the context this study is researching. The BaliWISE program is also described in this section. Lastly, previous research and theories that are relevant to the study are presented which frame the analytical framework for this study.

2.1 Geographical Location and National Economic Development

Indonesia is located between southeast Asia and Australia and is ranked the world's fourth most populated country (Landguiden, 2014). In year 2014, the population in Indonesia was home to 253 million citizens. Indonesia involves a group of a total 17 506 islands, 3 of the bigger islands are Sumatra, Bali and Java. Indonesia is currently run by a republican regime and the most common religion is islam where almost 90 % of the population are muslims (Globalis, n.d.). The region of Indonesia is also described to pertain to the collectivistic culture (Yapteoh et al. 1999). According to Unicef (2017) the percentage of the Indonesian population below the poverty of 1.25 dollars per day measured in 2007-2011 was 16.2 %.

One of those 17 506 Islands is Bali province, the home of 4.2 million citizens. Unlike the rest of Indonesia the main religion in Bali is hinduism were 92 % of the population are Hindu. The largest city of the province is Denpasar and it is also the capital of Bali (Lotustravel n.d.). Balinese and Bahasa Indonesia are the 2 main languages spoken on the Island (Baliguiden, 2015). Bali is, among the many Islands of Indonesia, geographically advantageously located between the continents Asia and Australia. It is well known for its divine beaches, large biodiversity, artistic background and historical culture. The country is poorly suited for manufacturing and is short on marketable natural resources. Instead it is favored in attracting tourists and the associated industry has grown considerably. As a result of the nurturing tourism Bali has experienced a positive economic development. The tourism industry contributes with more than 10 % of the global GDP and is considered an essential part of the socio-economic progress in the country. Tourism flourished during the dutch colonialism and continued to increase as Indonesia became independent in year 1949 (Globalis, n.d). The amount of foreign travellers has grown from 1.5 million in 1981 to 2.6 million in the year of 2010 (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017).

In year 1998 an economic crisis hit Indonesia. The national currency faced a deflation with 80 % and the amount of people living in poverty increased from 34.5 million in 1996 to 49.5 million in late 1998. In less than two years the people living below the poverty line grew with 15 million. When a new government was established between the years of 1997–1998, reforms took place aiming to fighting poverty throughout the country. The programmes were implemented after evaluating previous approaches against poverty and after consultations with NGOs, donor organisations, government, poor communities and other financial parties (Hadi et al. 2010).
Research has shown correlation between the number of family members and the level of poverty. The amount of family members may affect the placement of financial resources within the household and may have an impact on the welfare of the family. Large households can also lead to overcrowded living conditions and can show negative results in regards to health conditions of family members. Several studies have shown that poor families are larger than better fortunate families (UNESCO, 2004).

2.2 Religion and Culture

According to Denisa (2017), culture grows slowly into patterns and that cultural norms may play a part in placing women in various economic situations. The largest part of the Indonesian Hindu minority live in Bali. In Balinese Hinduism, there exists a de facto hierarchy where women are being placed in the lower range and are influenced by these beliefs. This is something that Denisa (2017) believes to be long term patterns that evolve slowly. The balinese hinduism panders women to take an active part of “The Five Duties of Women” (Panca Dharma Wanita); (1) Being a loyal companion to the husband, (2) managing the household, (3) educating and providing guidance to children, (4) earning supplemental income as required and, and (5) being a useful member of the community. These duties go with the presumption that women traditionally have been financially independent within the informal sector before marriage and continues to be of importance according to Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa (2017).

Ethnic and cultural groups in Bali tend to have opinions regarding what is appropriate occupation and not for the male and female sexes. The women are usually put in the role of being the "homemaker". Therefore employment within the hospitality business could be considered more socially acceptable because of its nurturing influences. According to statistics, about 75 % of self employed women are involved in tourism or service industry. Most jobs within that field are within relatively low skilled positions and show high staff turnover. As a result, employers refrain to invest in matters of training and education opportunities with their staff (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017). Women are involved in pursuing different kinds of occupations such as, office worker, business, hotel staff and laborers. What is general for women is that they are put in unskilled and low paid positions. What is common in many cultures is that men are at least unofficially and informally superior to women. Men tend to inherit or control large scales of lands and women do not. Even if women are referred to as the “homemakers”, in a divorce they have no right to their children (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017).

Villages in Bali are organized in one or several so called banjaras. Around Bali there are close to 4200 banjaras. Members of the banjar are obligated to assist in different duties. Most of them involving religious ceremonies. Members of the banjar can, on occasions, be forced to leave work or other chores in order to work for the banjar by helping the community set up for religious and cultural holidays or take care of family. The role of the banjar is to interpret the written and unwritten regulations of Bali, to maintain security and peace in the village and to perpetuate the honour and reputation of the specific banjar and village. There are 4 social systems that intertwine the balinese community, that both act as religious and community based
system. The 4 social systems are the; 1) clan system, 2) stratification system, 3) community system and 4) interest and working group system. Theses systems aim to encourage the members of the Banjar to stay devoted and law abiding citizens (Jensen et.al., 1992).

2.3 Women's Education

Throughout the history of education, women have received less education than men. In spite of improvements, there is still a difference in the level of education, depending on where the women live (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017). The female attendance of secondary school was during the years of 2008-2012, 59 % (Unicef 2017). According to Denisa (2017), women in developing areas have been neglected quality education and the result have shown an experience in limited future prospects. Different factors that have shown to hinder women from receiving an education, are tuition fees, safety, lack of school transportation and coming from less fortunate families where the males tend to be prioritised. In addition, other facets that problematizes female education are culture and religion. These inequalities between gender are also considered in the labor market and in close relation to opportunities in education and the accessibility of professional training.

Women in the rural areas of Bali tend to have less access to education than those in urban areas. As a consequence of receiving less education and thereby options, the women in rural areas are more likely to become cheap workers while the women in urban areas, with more options, end up working in hospitality and restaurant businesses. (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017) Another resistance in women education are due to the stereotypical view of females and their role in the Indonesian society. Women are encouraged to engage in fields of study within the domestic life. Male students, on the other hand, are favoured to study within technology, science and business. Consequently, many female students miss out on skills that can flourish an income. Opportunities in a broader education could instead give benefits to the society and be of advantage in social mobility for individuals (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017).

Recently, women's participation in the economy in Bali has shown larger importance. Women are believed to be a contributing factor in the future development and economy of the region and to help reduce poverty. To maintain this improvement, Denisa (2017) believes that women are in need of receiving education opportunities and to gain skills and experience in business (Tajeddini, Walle & Denisa, 2017).

2.4 BaliWISE Program

The objective of the BaliWISE program is to empower poor, marginalized, and at-risk girls and young women (17–24 years old) through increasing their access to skilled employment by providing basic education and vocational training. There are a number of hospitality schools in Bali, but BaliWISE is the only program that offers this training at no cost to marginalized women. All training is on a scholarship basis. The tourism sector is selected for vocational training due to the importance of the industry in Bali. Students are recruited not only from Bali.
but also from Lombok, Java, and Papua. Approximately 60–90% of the graduates are placed in skilled employment after graduation.

Women are reviewed through a process of testing to investigate whether they meet the requirements for participation. They are tested on their basic knowledge of English. The women must present a letter from the government as a attestation of them being registered as poor within the family. Indonesia defines the benchmark for poverty as a situation where a person can or cannot fulfill the cost of basic needs of food items with an intake of 2100 calories per day and also non-food items (Hadi et al. 2015). When applying, they also send in an essay about reasons for applying and about their background. They are also interviewed as to test their confidence in English, spare time activity and examine if they could move away from their family for the duration of the program, where they stay at an arranged dormitory.

The program offers a training model that includes 3 months of on-campus education in hospitality, but also in English language skills, life skills, gender awareness, and personal development such as increased self-confidence, goal-setting, and self-esteem. This is followed by 3 months of vocational training at partner hotels, spas, or tour agencies. Further on, the program provides a gender workshop to increase the students’ awareness and understanding in terms of women’s rights and gender equality in the workplace, family and community. Students improve their skill by being able to apply the basic computer skills to search for employment opportunities (BaliWISE, n.d).

2.5 Defining Empowerment

According to Kabeer (1998), empowerment is a process of change that focuses on expanding the range of choices that people can make. As such, it cannot be understood as a single dimensional formula for change, either as process or outcome. It must, instead, be understood in particular contexts taking into account the specific needs of the people intended to be empowered. In assessing empowerment, according to Kabeer, we need to consider changes in three-interrelated dimensions which comprise choice: resources, agency and achievements. Empowerment, according to her, has to be understood from these three analytical stances.

Resources – should be interpreted as material (land, equipment, and working capital), human (knowledge, skills, creativity etc) and social (claims, obligations and expectations through relationships) variables. These resources are distributed through institutional constellations as family norms, patron-client relationships, public sector welfare etc. and it is therefore important to acknowledge the terms on which people gain access to resources when considering if empowerment is taking place.

Agency – means the ability for the individual to define goals and act upon them. Agency is not only about observable action it is also about meaning, motivation and purpose. Action is not merely interpreted as individual decision making, but has instead many strategies from which
individuals act, such as bargaining, negotiation, deception, manipulation, subversion, resistance and protest. Agency can be performed both on the collective and the individual level.

Achievements – is the product of the two earlier dimensions in progress. Since the concern of this study is to evaluate the possibility of empowerment, it is interesting to highlight the inequalities in people’s capacity to make choices rather than differences in the choices they make. A lack of uniformity in the achievements made is not conclusive as an evidence of inequality, because people’s frame of reference for living a good life (to some extent choosing a livelihood) differs.

Kabeer sees empowerment as a positive change in the ability to make choices. It is also important that there are alternatives to choose from and that they are perceived as real alternatives (Kabeer, 2005; Rowlands, 1997). On a functional level, Kabeer specifies access to education, paid work, and political representation as important elements in facilitating empowerment, if undertaken in analytical, non exploitative and broad-based contexts. Therefore, while there can be various paths and processes to empowerment, this perspective specifically identifies choosing from a range of alternatives as empowerment process and outcome.

The framework by Rowland (1997) mapps three dimensions of empowerment. Each of the dimensions involves core values that takes part in the empowerment transformation.

Personal dimension – develops a sense of self, confidence and capacity and releases internal oppression. The core values are to unfold self confidence, self esteem and sense of agency. The ability to interact with others with but also the capacity to think and analyze and create own opinions and decisiveness. As the level of confidence increases and the women start to realize their own worth and as members of their society, they will express themselves and their thoughts. capability to comprehend others and respond to their opinions. This dimension also includes that the women are sparing time for themselves besides their family chores.

Relational dimension – aims to cover the relationship with individuals. How the individual in the personal dimension is using those qualities in her relations with others. The core values in the dimension of relational dimension are, the development of the person’s ability to speak her mind, having discussions, find support and defend her rights. Empowerment does not solely involves the development of the woman’s own expectations and behaviour but also with her partner and family members.

Collective dimension – where individuals collaborates in order to reach further comprehensive impact than is possible to achieve alone. The collective dimension can be seen in local and in more institutional levels. It is related to the personal dimension in a way that in order to act collectively one need to be empowered individually. The core values are the sense of collective agency, identity as a team, dignity as a team, self organization and management.
2.6 Defining Economic Empowerment

This study is emphasising the economic dimensions on the individual level of empowerment where the women gained employment after the program. Kegudu, Malamis & Gatawa (2011) describe economic empowerment as a situation where the ability to own and control resources exist. It involves the ability for women to engage in income generating activities that will enable them to have access to independent income. At the micro level, women are able to decide on the welfare of the family and especially their nutrition, health, family planning and education. This participation in the decision making however small, is considered to lead to increased self-confidence and self-worth.

Golla (2011) describe economic empowerment as “a woman is economically empowered when she has both the ability to succeed and advance economically and the power to make and act on economic decisions” (Golla, 2011, s. 4). The author describes that economic empowerment is comprised of two interrelated components: 1) economic advancement and 2) power and agency. Both components are connected, and both are necessary to achieve better lives for women and their families. Economic gain and success (economic advancement) promote women’s power and agency. At the same time, when a woman is able to control and share in resource use (power) and to define and make choices (agency), she is better able to advance economically.

To achieve women’s economic empowerment, organizations must address the underlying factors that contribute to it: individual and community resources, and norms and institutions. Resources are the building blocks women can draw on to succeed economically or to exercise power and agency. Resources can be at the individual or community level. They are more than financial or monetary in nature, and include; Human capital (e.g., education, skills, training), financial capital (e.g., loans, savings), social capital (e.g., networks, mentors) and physical capital (e.g., land, machinery).

Norms and Institutions are the “rules of the game” or the organizational and social systems that govern activities and mediate relations between individuals and their social and economic environment. Norms and institutions influence how resources are distributed and used. Norms include gender defined roles, taboos, prohibitions and expectations such as whether or not it is appropriate for women to be in public spaces, hold certain types of jobs, or manage money. Institutions include legal and policy structures, economic systems, market structures, marriage, inheritance and education systems. Golla underlines that the specific factors that signal progress toward women’s economic empowerment may be different in different contexts. They may even change over time, as countries or regions become more developed. In the process of thematizing the interview guide the theories and previous research have been taken into account along with the indicators presented by Golla (2011) to form a basis for the interview.
2.7 Skills Education for Women’s (Economic) Empowerment

Messerli, Abdykaparov & Taylor (2006) argues that in the past there has been great debate about the role and contribution of Vocational Education Training (VET) compared to other forms of education, but that there has recently been a shift towards recognising the complementarity of different levels and systems of education. Competences and learning outcomes of all education programmes, including vocational education, often stress the development of critical and problem-solving skills, knowledge and understanding of marketing and management, the ability to communicate effectively, and attitudes and values that emphasise interpersonal relations as well as cultural and social awareness. This is a laudable shift in thinking, but practically it presents a challenge for VET systems in many countries, where there is a perceived need to shift from teaching which is instrumental (to satisfy labour and employment needs) towards learning which is transformational (linking personal learning and change to wider processes of social change). Most particularly, there is a need for VET systems to be inclusive and to address issues of gender inequity, which in the past have meant that girls and women were denied the same educational opportunities as men. This requires new or changed thinking about both the process and content of VET in relation to learning outcomes.

Kegudu, Malami & Gatawa (2011) conclude that vocational training, both skills acquisition and capacity building, has a positive correlation with economic empowerment. However the study showed that even though there was a positive correlation, there was no significant relationship between women's economic empowerment and vocational training. Capacity building, however, showed significant improvement in practice.

Rommes, Faulkner & Van Slooten (2005) claim that women-focused practices and women-only ‘safe spaces’ are a necessary prerequisite for gender equality. In their study, the implications for this claim shows that mechanisms like women-only training are necessary if women are to build a more positive sense of themselves and to be empowered to change their lives for the better. Furthermore, they argue that the role of women-only training is transitional, a stepping stone to women re-entering the mixed-sex world, but on a more equal footing. Rommes, Faulkner & Van Slooten (2005) include a deductive approach, where a hypothesis is tested using qualitative interviews and questionnaires to understand the effects on vocational training on the individual level of the participants (psychological well-being, attitudes on own self-esteem etc.)

In the case of China, Hongxia, Zhiwen & Li (2015) give a geographic perspective on the issue using previous research and policy review to address both local and micro-level issues to understand whether vocational training has helped promote equitable development for women. In this case, it was considered to be too early to say to what extent vocational training has encouraged women empowerment and equitable development for rural women in China and for Liuzhou women in particular. Mapping the changing social relations within which vocational training for the women is embedded, it addresses women’s equity in the areas of welfare, access,
conscientisation, participation and control. The study stressed the lack of women’s involvement in envisioning development and directing development projects for themselves, where women should have more space to play an active role in the design and delivery of training policies and programmes as few if any, studies have shown that rural women were actually consulted or involved in the design and delivery of training programmes.

Jabbar & Zaza (2016) points out that there are many effective ways to improve the social status of marginalised populations, especially women, via literary interventions or vocational skills training programmes. The study stressed that it is of utter importance to identify the social and economic benefits of such programmes and interventions and, on the other, how such programmes contribute to sustainable development and women empowerment. In this case the program, much like the study Rommes, Faulkner & Van Slooten (2005) enhanced women’s confidence and self-esteem, improved their occupational business, and entrepreneurship skills, helped them generate income to build a better life for their families; and gave them hope and opportunities. What should be noted is that the study focused on a refugee community, where patterns are deconstructed and gender roles may be changed. Gender equality and women’s empowerment are seen as perquisites for sustainable development. Furthermore, does the author also discuss differences implications of being unemployed or employed during the program. Women who were employed showed higher levels of personal well-being than those who were not. Being employed helped in boosting their self-esteem and confidence: knowing that their jobs were of importance. Economic hardships was also mitigated because women felt they were able to contribute in providing for their families, and thus meeting their physiological needs. The results also proved that with time, acculturation did improve. In essence, women were able to raise their socio-economic status, lessen financial constraints and enhance their personal well-being.
3. Method

This section discusses the method used for the study, the research process is reviewed step by step, and finally the difficulties encountered during the course of the study are considered.

3.1 Qualitative Study

A qualitative approach allows this study to gain a deeper understanding of the complexity of empowerment that the study aims to explore, as well as increases the ability to understand the women in Bali and changes experienced. Qualitative interviews give respondents space to explain their thoughts about the research theme and enable the study to interpret and find deeper meaning in the data (Hjelm, Lindgren & Nilsson, 2014). The authors prioritized the understandings of the Indonesian women themselves and consequently used their stories as the basis of the analysis. Personal stories were preferred in this study, because empowerment contains an irreducibly subjective element, but sought to interpret the findings on the basis of this larger context referring to previous research. According to Hjelm, Lindgren & Nilsson (2014), another advantage is that the deeper understanding and the more detailed statements for which a longer discussion on the research issue often results in, can be better used to chart causal relationships. A respondent's presentation of her thoughts or about an event is often much more informative than the answers to any questionnaire. However, this stress on qualitative interviews should not be taken as a negation of other more objective forms of data. The quantitative methods for example, plays a valuable role in providing knowledge of incidence and magnitude, helping to distinguish between those which are widespread and those which are relevant only to a minority. In comparison, one of the disadvantages of qualitative theory testing is that the results can not easily be generalized as the number of people interviewed is limited.

When exploring the research theme in a foreign setting like Bali the use of semi-structured questions is beneficial. It offered the study both flexibility and structure. When aiming at gaining knowledge on a deeper level this is preferable (Bryman, 2014). According to Hjerm, Lindgren & Nilsson (2014) flexibility is created by the fact that the answer alternatives are not fixed and determined by the interviewers. An argument against creating a detailed interview guide, is the risk that it could lock the interaction and limit the ability to understand the women's experiences. Hence, it allowed for more control over direction while also enabling the responses to be more similar and comparable. This facilitated the analysis, especially in the case of theoretical testing. In addition, it became easier to create higher validity when the questions and the interview structure were more or less determined in advance.

3.2 Selection and Descriptions of Respondents

Twelve Indonesian women participated in the study. Participant selection was carried out so that the sample would represent a mixture of women that had participated in the BaliWISE program. The program is made up of marginalized poor women and girls between the ages of 17–24 years old from different parts of Indonesia who have all completed secondary school. Purposeful
Convenience and snowball sampling were used in the study. When using snowball sampling a small number of respondents were initially contacted for the study. These respondents helped in providing additional interviewees that may otherwise be hard to reach (Bryman, 2014). In purposeful sampling, respondents were selected with the assistants of the program staff at Bali WISE based on a preselected criteria. The goal was to interview 10–15 women. During data collection the authors kept in mind that if the data reached theoretical saturation, which is the point where the newly collected material no longer provides additional insights, no further interviews would be needed. The criteria for eligibility in the study included having graduated from the program, residing and having current employment in Bali, Indonesia. The participants were selected as to increase variation (in age, profession and hometown) and thus our ability to shed light on the research question from several perspectives. The study uses fictive names for the women and below is a short description of the women interviewed.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Hometown</th>
<th>Religion</th>
<th>Siblings</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Profession</th>
<th>Relationship Status</th>
<th>Housing</th>
<th>Future Plans</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wayan</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>North of Bali</td>
<td>balinese-hindu</td>
<td>3 siblings</td>
<td>graduated 2014</td>
<td>spa therapist and yoga teacher</td>
<td>divorced</td>
<td>owns a house</td>
<td>plans to open her own yoga center.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Icha</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>North of Bali</td>
<td>balinese-hindu</td>
<td>4 siblings</td>
<td>graduated March, 2017</td>
<td>spa therapist</td>
<td>younger brother</td>
<td>works abroad</td>
<td>dreams of studying at university.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurul</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>North Bali</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>younger brother</td>
<td>graduated September, 2016</td>
<td>booking-agent</td>
<td>mother works</td>
<td>likes to own a house</td>
<td>works abroad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hana</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>East Java</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1 older brother</td>
<td>graduated July, 2016</td>
<td>with a son who lives with family in Java</td>
<td>divorced</td>
<td>wants to be able to take care of her son</td>
<td>works as a carrier woman.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dina</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>East Timor</td>
<td>Christian</td>
<td>3 siblings</td>
<td>graduated from the program in 2014</td>
<td>tour agency</td>
<td>works at a tour agency while living in Bali</td>
<td>wishes to have children</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Farah</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>West Java</td>
<td>Muslim</td>
<td>1 older brother</td>
<td>graduated March, 2017</td>
<td>tour agency</td>
<td>works at a tour agency</td>
<td>a better paid job and a scholarship in order to continue her education at university.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Putri</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>North of Bali</td>
<td>balinese-hindu</td>
<td>4 siblings</td>
<td>graduated September, 2016</td>
<td>hotel as a cooking assistant</td>
<td>older sister</td>
<td>a house one day</td>
<td>to encourage people in her village to continue with their education.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Sarah, 19, comes from North of Bali. Her family is balinese-hindu. She graduated March, 2017 and works as a spa therapist. Sarah wished to gain work experience abroad and build a house for her parents. (Interviewed: 18–04–2017)

Marti, 20, comes from East Java. Her family is muslim. She has 3 siblings. She graduated March, 2017 and works with tour and travel. Dina wishes to visit Mecca with family and future husband. (Interviewed: 19–04–2017)

Nadya, 18, comes East Java. Her family is christian. She has 1 younger brother. She graduated September, 2016. She has since then worked with tour and travel administration. (Interviewed: 19–04–2017)

Shinta, 20, comes from North of Bali. Her family is balinese-hindu. She is the oldest of 4 siblings. She graduated March, 2017 and works as a receptionist at a tour and travel agency. She has a boyfriend and lives with her family. (Interviewed: 20–04–2017)

Alya, 23, comes from the Island of Flores. Her family is christian. She has 8 siblings. She graduated September, 2016 and works at a tour and travel agency. She has a boyfriend and currently lives with a friend. (Interviewed: 20–04–2017)

### 3.3 Data Collection

Semi-constructed interviews were conducted in cafés at various places in the south of Bali. The women were interviewed with both authors present and an unlicensed interpreter. The interview lasted between 30–75 minute. All interviews were audio-recorded and transcribed verbatim. The semi-constructed interview guide was used in English and translated in Bahasa Indonesia when needed. The guide can be found in Appendix 2. The theoretical framework and previous research were used to create themes to ask relevant questions to the women. The first part was focused on gaining insight into their individual context, their background. The themes chosen were primarily focused on indicators presented by Golla (2011) about economic empowerment; vocational education / employment, control over assets, agency / decision-making, autonomy and mobility, self-confidence / self-efficacy and gender norms. The questions asked were open-ended and flexible to the individual respondent and her answers with support questions like “what do you mean when you say...? “can you give us an example?”.

Before and during the data collection, the study took into account the 10 criterias mentioned by Bryman (2014); Before conducting the interviews, going to through a process of familiarizing oneself with the focus of the interview by reading previous research but also engaging in conversation with similar women in Bali the study wished to interview as well as staff from the program. To make sure that the women had an understanding of the purpose of the interview an introduction guide was formed, so all the women would receive the same information. Thereafter, they were asked if they had any questions. This introduction can be found in Appendix 1. In order to make sure that there was a clear communication, questions, languages used and phrasings were corrected in the data collection process, showing consideration by
giving time to respondents as well as remained sensitive and open to what the women wanted to share. In their response it was important to follow up with support questions to find deeper meaning and parallels in their stories. Throughout the interview process it was of importance be conscious about being objective and not affecting the respondents.

### 3.4 Data Processing and Analysis

The transcribed interviews were analyzed using qualitative content analysis (Bryman, 2014). This procedure included several steps. The analysis started with an open reading of the text to acquire a sense of the whole in relation to the aim of the study. The women's statements about their experiences were extracted and combined into one text, which is the unit of analysis. This text was then read through several times and divided into meaning units, which, in turn, were condensed and labeled with a code. A condensed meaning unit is characterized by a process of abbreviating while preserving the core of the text. The codes were compared, based on what the women have shared and then analyzed what change, similarities and differences could be found, we then sorted according to the general themes of their stories which represents the results of the study. In the final stage, we have looked at whether and how these themes relate to the theories we previously selected in our analytical framework. To increase trustworthiness, the authors participated in the entire process, from data collection to writing the manuscript. Representative quotations from the transcribed interviews were also chosen to increase trustworthiness, all in line with qualitative content analysis.

In line with hermeneutic interpretation by Steinar & Brinkmann (2009), the data process and analysis went through 8 stages. That is, 1) went through a process of moving back and forth between parts and wholes that follows the hermeneutic circle to draw a deeper understanding of the meaning of both the analytical framework chosen and the transcribed interviews. 2) The interpretation was perceived as finished when there was a good shape to the inner connection within the text, without logical contradictions. 3) The authors examined the interpreted parts of the text as a whole. 4) The transcribed texts from the interviews were firstly treated as autonomous i.e. understood as its own frame of reference, and what that says about the theme of the study. 5) Both of the authors participated during the interviews and therefore had knowledge of the context. 6) The authors were aware of their own perception and point of view which were considered and reflected upon during analysis. 7) By analyzing the text, the authors were presented with new knowledge and aspects that were not previously foreseen.

### 3.5 Ethical Considerations

During this field study ethical considerations have been taken into account throughout the whole research process. Before performing the interviews there was a stage of exploration and familiarization of the work, living and other relevant environments for the people the study wished to interview in order to increase the understanding and the interpretation of the respondents. The respondents’ background, culture and religion have been considered and cultural and traditional differences respected, when operating in the domestic environment of
the respondents. Since the interviews covered questions that might be sensitive it has been important to carefully choose how to word these questions in order not to cause any harm to the interviewees. During the entire research process it has been a major concern to stress out that the researcher's aim is to listen and learn from the women and to get their perspective on the issue. The women were contacted and first informed about the study through phone to book a meeting. This information included the aim of the study, also underlining that the participation is voluntary and that the participants can withdraw from the study at any time. The respondents gave their informed consent to be a part of the study. The women were told that the study would be reported in such a way that they could not be recognized by others reading the report. Incentives like beverages were offered to the participants.

3.6 Methodological Considerations

All interviews were analyzed, discussed, and reflected upon jointly by the authors, and the findings were illustrated using quotations from the interviews to establish trustworthiness. 12 interviews were conducted to shed light on the research question from a variety of perspectives, as the respondents varied in, for example, hometown, occupation, age and graduation year. This study accomplished the goal of interviewing between 10–15 indonesian women.

One limitation of the present study is that interviewees were conducted in semi-open spaces that could have affected what the women felt comfortable with sharing. The interviews were conducted by both authors present and an interpreter. There is a risk that the relation may affected the interview because of this. However, having both authors present offered another insight to interpreting the answers and to ask eventual follow up questions. It should be noted that the interpreter was not licensed, she had very occasionally interpreted before. Nevertheless, it is the opinion of the authors that she benefited the study in that she was a young women, had experience in hospitality and was raised in the rural areas of Bali.

It is important to consider what can be “lost in translation” when using a translator. Bujra (2006) discusses the both practical and technical issues of using an interpreter. One of the practical issues experienced was finding a professional translator and in what ways our translator should translate, causing there to sometimes be inadequate translation and need to stop and make corrections. Regarding the technical issues is that the translator may take their own judgements which may transform the message received. More generally, it is common for the translator to ‘filter out’ what they consider unimportant, even though this might be precisely what the research needs and wishes to know. Ideas and concepts from one language cannot always be translated into another, especially in cultures and languages that differ widely from each other, in this case Bahasa Indonesia and English.

The interviews were conducted in english and translated when needed in Bahasa Indonesia. The authors tried to remain open and sensitive to what the participants wanted to talk about. The interview guide had it basic themes, however, it evolved during the collection process the more
the authors learnt about the participants and their context. Another limitation faced was the data construction and collection. This is believed to be an effect of how the interview guide was constructed and how it related to the aim of the study. It has also been challenging to fully grasp the concept of empowerment and how to formulate theories into everyday questions for the women to respond to. It is possible that this material does not give a full picture of what we aimed at investigating. However, does it point to certain aspects that we were able explore and discuss that can be related to previous research and valuable for future work with vocational education and skill training for women.

It has been an advantage to use a qualitative approach to understand changes the women had undergone in their everyday life. The method was suitable because empowerment is believed to include a subjective element and it was important to give the women an opportunity to reflect. The age range of the respondents, the authors and the interpreter were female and between the ages of 18–26. It is the opinion of the authors that this was a benefit and helped with the power balance during the interviews. The authors experiences that this helped form a comfortable setting between the interviewers and the interviewees. In conclusion, being foreigners in Indonesia and new with the context, both advantages and disadvantages were identified.
4. Results

This chapter examines whether empowerment through skill education and employment has occurred among the women interviewed and what changes there have been in their everyday life conditions. The qualitative analysis commences with a comparison of the women's stories in what changes could be identified in relation to the program and their employment. It includes the examination of the inhibiting and encouraging factors of women's empowerment through skill education and employment where a comparison of the identified changes, commonalities and differences are presented.

4.1 Program

4.1.1 Skills Development

During the program of BaliWISE the women all experienced learning new skills that were in direct relation to the theme of the program or others that was realized during the time. The specific skill was either linked to a general interest within the subject or awoke a new one. Nurul said that the most important learning experience from the program was microbank, where she learnt finance and business. She also spoke about increased knowledge and skill in interacting with others.

Skills and teamwork, because I can live with other people, they have a group for cooking and cleaning. Before BaliWISE I did not know anything and I believe that the skills that I got from BaliWISE would not be the same as the university. I'm more educated now. (Putri, 18 years old from Karangasem)

Shina explains that learning about tourism and hospitality is important in the Island of Bali because it is a tourist destination. It is different from other programs she says, where BaliWISE teaches about more general knowledge and practical skills that make is easier for her to find employment.

4.1.2 Personal learning / Self Development

Nurul shared that she felt more independent and decisive. She demonstrated this for us during the interview with the help of a napkin. She picked it up and put it on the table and explained that if she only thought about picking up the napkin, she never would. But, if she decided to take action and pick it up, she would. Nurul also mentioned receiving motivation and support through friends that also worked. Farah also believed that her confidence had increased.

The most important thing I learnt in BaliWISE is they thought me how to be a confident woman because I used to be a shy girl really. I'm always shy and always afraid to talk to new people but, I tried and I'm doing it right now with you. (Farah, 18 years old from Java)
However, Shinta believed that the most significant change regarding her self development was within her attitude. She describes it as respecting others and being positive. Wayan also mentioned a change in attitude. She also talked about how to live on her own without her family. She describes that it can be hard to live alone with no rules to consider and to keep her focused.

How to control myself here. How to do rules without my family. Keep fighting, keep positive. Not do anything that make broke for me. Like drink, you know drink? Consume other medicine not good. That's bali. So many teenagers in Bali have gone wrong way because so far from family, their family. They do something, who they want. How to control myself. Because my family can not see 24 hours here.

(Wayan, 21 years old from Karangasem)

### 4.1.3 Women Collective

When the women become accepted to the skills education program, they are required to move away from their families and stay in the organizations dormitory. The geographical location of the educations facilities are based in the southern part of Bali and all of the women participating in this study were born in more or less rural areas on other Indonesian islands or in the northern parts of Bali. This change of location involved moving in with several other women and leave their family behind in their villages. For some women this was not an issue, for example, Putri had already lived away from her family during high school so she did not experience any challenges in regards to living away from her family. For other such as Farah, it was her first time leaving her family and she found it challenging.

I'm struggling here, how to survive in Bali. Living far away from family is really difficult because of most Indonesian people like hard to move from their family [...] For me because I am muslim you know that is a bit difficult, because I did not hear you know azan is a call for prayer for me.

(Farah, 18 years old from Java)

The program is for women only and one of the requirements of joining the program is that the women stay at the organization's dormitory during the course of 6 months. Sarah says that she felt more confident because all the participants were women. She also felt that she was more comfortable. Sarah further explains that she would not feel as comfortable sharing and speaking if there were male participants. In her experience they would be doing most of the talking, she would feel stared at and afraid. Nadya adds on that she felt that she connected and was supported by the women who were in a similar situation like herself. In her case she had previously experienced bullying which had led to severe lack of self worth. Alya talked about the relationship that she built during the program and that they regularly kept in touch afterwards. Dina explained that they formed a network through social media where they keep in touch and support each other by sharing job vacancies that were available.
We asked about the woman's hopes and dreams and eventual changes in their ambitions. This is considered to be closely connected to agency which is apart of empowerment in relation to finding and allowing oneself meaning motivation as well as purpose in both the short term and long term. How a person allows oneself to dream can be viewed as an indicator of self-confidence and self esteem but also a sense of agency, viewing yourself in the long term shows upon ambitions and motivation for the future and not wanting to go back to a sense of hopelessness. The answers showed a range of different envisions. To become fluent in english was a frequent comment during the interviews. Shintas greatest wish was to own a house while Hana on the other hand wanted to become a successful career woman and one day bring her family to Saudi Arabia. Alya wished to continue her studies and in the future return back to her village and teach english. Nurul said that she had never had a dream before, but started to vision her future during a dream project,

In BaliWISE I finally find my dream, a dream is not just about what work you would want, dreams can be anything right? and my dream is that I just want a house and hope that I can continue my education [...] yes I hope, thats my dream, bachelor and have a house. (Nurul 19 years old from Bali)

In addition, the respondents were asked how they picture their life ten years from now. The majority of the women wanted a house of their own, they wanted marriage and children. Other women wanted to volunteer, travel, work abroad and give back to their village by educating others and spreading information about the skills program. However this was not mutual amongst all women, the oldest female of the respondents, Dina who were engaged to be married, she wanted to stay home and have a child, and she wanted her child to attend school.

4.1.4 Autonomy and Mobility

Comparing with her life back home in her village, Wayan mentioned experiencing limitations in mobility. The reasons for this, she explains, are that her parents are afraid that she would make similar choices as her friends, who got pregnant before they finished school. Now Wayan believes that she has an increased mobility, since she can visit her friends at all time but still has obligations and need to make responsible choices. During the interview with Farah, she compared her previous life situation with her current. She used to have few friends to spend time with and there was little things to do there. Most of the women from her hometown works in the factory producing shoes, clothes and electronics. Following, Farah said that was the reason for wanting to go to Bali, to find a better education and move away from Java.

4.2 Employment

This part has compared what the women have shared regarding their economic empowerment after the program. All of the women interviewed had been employed after graduating the program. The employment they had was provided in partnership with the program. The majority
of the women had undergone their training at the same workplace, where they later received an employment.

4.2.1 Increased Income and Distribution

Their employment led to increased income. The women were asked about what they choose to spend their income on in order to gain an understanding of what they prioritized and ultimately, which areas of their lives had been affected as a result of the program and employment. In addition to paying basic services like food and accommodation to live without their families, it was important for the women to save a portion of their income and also support their family. The majority of the women said that they would like to save money but were unable to due so because of their salary still being to low. Wayan explains that this is as a procedure in Bali, where you start with a starting salary and that it then increases with time. The salary that the women earned was between 1–4 million indonesian rupiah. Wayan, was the highest paid of the women interviewed and was also the one who had been at work the longest, having graduated from the program three years ago. Wayan was also, along with Nadya the only ones to mention being able to save for emergencies. The emergency savings was to be spent for things like health problems or other unplanned expenses. Wayan shares about her experience after receiving her first salary,

> What I say... Wow! I have got a big income. I have to spend on myself. [...] But how to control that. Because first, we have to manage it. First from house rent, then from my mother. Save for the future, save money in the bank for the next urgent, so the money, have to separate it. So I think no shopping more from me. (Wayan, 21, from Bali)

When asked about what they were saving for and why it was important, the answers had commonalities and differences. For instance, for the balinese it was also important to save for religious ceremonies, that is a part of the duties for the banjar community. Furthermore, was it important for most to save for a motorbike. This is used widely among the inhabitants and is understood to be a way of increasing their mobility and independence.

The financial support that the women gave to their families was to help with such things as supporting their house and their basic needs like food and health. Furthermore did all the young women have siblings, were the majority were sending money in order to keep their siblings in school. Nurul, who we interviewed in Kuta, was the only one who spoke of loans for education, having to give some of her salary to her uncle for having funded her previous education.

4.2.2 Power and Agency

All of the women mentioned having gained self-confidence after the program and gaining employment. One of the aspects of economic empowerment is being able to control you own income. During the interviews it emerged that who can decide on their income was not always the women themselves. How much influence and decision-making was made by the parents differed widely in the women's stories. Some of the women asked permission for most choices
regarding purchases and others said to be in full control over their income. Sarah explains the reasons for asking permission for larger purchases was cultural. It is a principal within her family values and religious traditions to honour and follow the parents in the family. For example, did Nurul give her whole income to her mother and had little knowledge of how her income was handled.

“[...] when i have a salary I give it to my mother, all so she can take care of it. I just ask for the general things like food [...] I don't know if she save or not, I think she not save from my salary because I don't think it is, maybe it is not enough.

(Nurul, 19 years old from Bali)

The majority of the women enjoyed their current employment and had gained a sense of power and agency from working. Dina says that it changed her social relationship as well, where she met other people at the workplace and could talk and spend them with them as well. She says that she was also learning new things at work and these new experiences had improved her self-confidence. The women had different employment contracts, agreements for their work. Their insecurities seemed to also depend on how secure they felt with their employment.

Nadya has been working with a tour and travel agency for a year within a 2 year contract. Nadya did not enjoy her work and experienced that some of her superiors were mistreating and overworking her. She also felt that she was struggling financially and that the income she gained was at times not enough to cover her expenses. The work Nadya does separates her from her family which she found to be challenging.

“[...] you can share your problems and your mom can give you help and support, or a good quote. But in here I can’t. If I talk with my mom, what happened in my life, she will just say okay just come back. You know. Like she worries about me. Here, so it’s just like okay, now I am struggling, struggling with life. It is really hard.”

(Nadya, 18 years old from East Java)
5. Discussion

This qualitative study has explored women’s empowerment through skills education in Bali Indonesia. The study relied on interviews with Indonesian women to investigate changes in individual experiences in their everyday local context. The authors have aimed to enrich the discussion by the theories and previous research from the analytical framework. With this as a starting point the authors ask questions about the findings and argument for how the study contributes to new knowledge. Lastly are proposals for further research discussed.

5.1 Empowerment As a Multidimensional Process

According to Kabeer (1998), empowerment is a process of change, that focuses on expanding the range of choices that people can make. The inequality in people's capacity to make choices and not specifically the differences in the choices the people make. When studying the empowerment process, it should be understood in the specific context and the particular needs of the people aiming to be empowered.

The women talked about changes in several areas that the study wished to explore. They all had different backgrounds and had each individual life situation and ambitions. So naturally, the answers differed somewhat from each other. It was obvious in our result and in the interview with the women that it is not possible to only focus on one sphere of the women's lives without touching upon another. Discussing the choices that the women felt they can make, it was interesting interviewing the women about their future. The youngest tended to have ambitions of working abroad and focusing on their carrier while the oldest women had ambitions to start a family and stay at home to take care of their family. These statements, does not necessarily have to show on lesser empowerment then the other but rather the capacity to act and make the choices necessary to reach their goals.

When asking about their employment the majority of the women enjoyed their work. Nevertheless, many of them were insecure with their contracts and looked for chances to advance and gain more security. In order to plan for the future it was important for the women to have savings. In many of the cases the women felt that they still did not have financial possibilities to save, but that they had increased options for what they could afford to spend money on. The women felt that there was their responsibility to support their families with money for education, rent, food and other spendings. Having this possibility to support them gave the women comfort and a sense of gained power and agency. However, in some cases did the women give their salary for the family to decide on which diminished their sense of power and agency as well as the choices they could make. This was said to be for cultural and traditional reasons. Some women had control over the income but when it came to bigger purchases they would ask permission from their family.
Rowlands theory focuses on three dimensions; personal, relational and collective. A sense of gained self-confidence was possible to identify in several spheres of the women's lives. It is also the factor that is most often directly associated with being empowered. One reason could be that gained self-confidence is distinctly noticeable amongst previously marginalized women. Most of the respondents mentioned being shy and not being able to approach people easily, the contrast of being more social. Discussing these aspects and relating them to the theoretical framework, the indicators that were found to be effected were related to a few of the indicators presented by Golla (2011); Productivity and skills, income, consumption smoothing/risk, prosperity, control over assets, agency/decision-making, autonomy and mobility, self-confidence/self-efficacy, gender norms and gender roles/responsibilities.

5.2 Interlinking Factors for Empowerment

The basis of this study has been the respondents stories in which every women has told her own story. The empowerment process proves to be a complex and challenging topic. It is understood in this study as a personal journey. The focus has been on finding similarities and differences in the women's depictions of their lives and changes experienced. The women had different personal and professional ambitions, but with the same ambition of securing a stable future for themselves and their families. The experiences they had somewhat differed, depending on internal and external factors as well as context, describing varied changes in their conditions regarding empowerment. However, all the women express the outcome as more or less successful in different spheres of their lives.

When analyzing the findings several questions emerged. As we looked at the description of the women and their profile we reflected on factors such as age, religion, family structure, traditions, marital status, rural vs urban environment, living away from home affected the women's empowerment. There was a general pattern that emerged that could be related to the time aspect. The women were able to save more of their income as well as have more financial control depending on how long ago the women graduated. Concerning their employment, one of the women explain this to have to do with the labor market as well, were their income also increases over time. Living in a new environment showed to be a both hampering and contributing factor for the women, where they did they experience that it contributed to their personal development but that they missed the support of their family.

The women were asked about what had caused their sense of gained self-confidence. They expressed different factors that relate to skill development, living and networking within similar women in women collective which relate to collective empowerment, improved communication skills and the encouragement from the teachers at the program. Many of these refer to aspects of the program. In relation to the theory of Rowland (1997) it also in line with some aspects that touch upon the personal, relational and collective dimension of empowerment.
5.3 In Relation to Previous Research

An important aspect of this study is to understand in what ways it relates to previous research. Messerli, Abdykaparov & Taylor (2006) argue in their paper that there recently has been a shift in thinking, which presents a challenge for VET systems in most countries. This shift entails a perceived need to shift from teaching which is instrumental (to satisfy labour and employment needs) towards learning which is transformational (linking personal learning and change to wider processes of social change). Most particularly, there is a need for VET systems to be inclusive and to address issues of gender inequity, which in the past have meant that girls and women were denied the same educational opportunities as men. In regards to this research, the result show that the respondents go through a series of activities that focus on personal learning and one on gender inequity that do seek to link to processes of social change, however few respondents mention having experienced personal learning on gender inequity but focused on the learning that they gained that relates to satisfying labour and employment needs. Although it is clear that the organization relates to this shift of thinking, is is possible that there is a need for further development that takes more account for transformational learning.

Empowerment is a developing term as well is economic empowerment. In this study we related economic empowerment to Kegudu, Malami & Gatawa (2011) definition and added Golla (2001). The women showed evidence of economic advancement as a result of finding employment after the program. However, in what extent they practised decision-making and had influence in different aspects of their lives varied immensely. Aspects such as whatever or not they could decide on how to spend their income differed widely among the responses, with some women asking permission for purchases, did not have knowledge of how their income was spent or perceived themselves as having full control over their income. Therefore, there is a perceived significant relationship to the program and women's economic empowerment, in that sense that it allowed them to advance economically, but to what extent there is a relationship of the respondents gaining power and agency as a cause was not possible to identify.

Hongxia, Zhiwen & Li (2015) looked at local and micro-level issues to understand whether vocational training has helped promote equitable development for women. In this case it was considered too early to say to what extent vocational training has encouraged women empowerment and equitable development for rural women in China and for Liuzhou women in particular. This brings up the aspect of time in regards to women empowerment. In the relation to the women in this study, time has been considered when discussing not only what areas the women expressed changes in but also in concern with when they graduated the program, which varied from 1 month to 3 years ago at the time the women were interviewed. Furthermore, Hongxia, Zhiwen & Li (2015) stressed the lack of women’s involvement in envisioning development and directing development projects for themselves, where women should have more space to play an active role in the design and delivery of training policies and programmes as few if any, studies have shown that rural women were actually consulted or involved in the design and delivery of training programmes. This was not the focus in this study, but presents an interesting aspect for what is valuable for the work with vocational education and training for
women's empowerment in the future, which this study can support with by having collected testimonies from the women themselves.

In our result the majority of the women respond to the women-focused practices in a positive sense, were they express feelings of being more secure with the ability to develop more than if the program included male participants. This result relates closely to the claim of Rommes, Faulkner & Van Slooten (2005) which claim that women-focused practices created women-only ‘safe spaces’ that necessary prerequisite for empowerment and gender equality. The majority of the participants expressed a change in psychological well-being and attitudes on own self-esteem. This is understood as to having significantly impacted their feelings of decisiveness.

Jabbar & Zaza (2016) show in their research that the program, much like the study Rommes, Faulkner & Van Slooten (2005), enhanced women's confidence and self-esteem, improved their occupational business, and entrepreneurship skills, helped them generate income to build a better life for their families; and gave them hope and opportunities. What should be noted is that the study focused on a refugee community, where patterns are deconstructed and gender roles may be changed. Deconstructed patterns and changing gender roles is a factor that could possibly relate to this study as well, as the Indonesian women are required to move away and live sometime at a women's collective, where all the women interviewed continued to either live by themselves, with a fellow women from the program with just a small minority living with their family. Leaving by themselves or with a roommate is understood to not be a regular pattern of the Indonesian culture, where most of the women underline that in their environment women are restricted in mobility, live with their parents or support their husband and this other environment away from their family structure had in some sense allowed for more mobility and decision-making power.

Furthermore, do Jabbar & Zaza (2016) also discuss different implications of being unemployed or employed during the program. Women who were employed showed higher levels of personal well-being than those who were not. Being employed helped in boosting their self-esteem and confidence: knowing that their jobs were of importance. Economic hardships was also mitigated because women felt they were able to contribute in providing for their families, and thus meeting their physiological needs. The results also proved that with time, acculturation did improve. In essence, women were able to raise their socio-economic status, lessen financial constraints and enhance their personal well-being. This study shows similar mechanisms. This also brings the aspect of empowerment as a process which highlights the aspect of time and what part time can play in this process, specifically regarding changes and choices the women made.

As whole, this study contributes to new knowledge in this subject as it it collected data in a somewhat unexplored context when it comes to research. It has identified the social and economic benefits for marginalised women that participate in a vocational skills training programme, with research such as Jabbar & Zaza have stressed is of utter importance for also sustainable development. It has also highlighted the significance of the local context and
structure that do play a part in the process of individual empowerment. These aspects show the importance of not only programs adapting and paying considerations to these systems but also what challenges there are to challenging social structures. In regards to social change, if an inclusive agenda is not considered it is possible that the women are subjected to stereotypical gender patterns that diminish the choices that women can make, for example in the workplace, in their families or for themselves.

5.3 Proposals for Further Research

After completing this study, the research have shown potential for further research in the field. In regards to this particular program it would be interesting to study the long-term effects through a longitudinal qualitative method. This could provide further insight into the actual changes and contributing and/or hampering factors for empowerment in their context. This study have interviewed Indonesian women who reside in Bali but who originally come from different regions in Bali. It would therefore be beneficial to dig deeper into the context of the balinese context solely, both on the individual and household level as well as community level. This research has focused on empowerment in general and economic empowerment in particular, but there are also other theories and approaches that could be used to analyze from a different perspective. The quantification of findings plays a valuable role in providing some idea of their incidence and magnitude, which further research could help to distinguish between those which are widespread and those who are relevant only to a minority.
6. Concluding Remarks

The purpose of this study has been to investigate how women who have participated in vocational education and training at BaliWISE describe their process of empowerment. Particular focus is placed on economic empowerment with reference to other spheres of the women's empowerment. The ambition has also been to provide knowledge that may be valuable for the work with vocational education and training for women's empowerment in the future.

Empowerment is a complex topic with an irreducible subjective element. As the research highlighted changes in different areas of their life was it proved difficult to grasp the extent of this change and empowerment overall. It is possible that this material does not give a full picture of what we aimed at investigating. However, does it it point to certain aspects that we were able explore and discuss that can be related to previous research and valuable for future work with vocational education and skill training for women.

In general, the participants experiences somewhat differed, depending on internal and external factors as well as context, describing varied changes in their life conditions. However, all the women explain the outcome as more or less successful in different spheres of their lives such as productivity and skills, income, prosperity, control over assets, consumption smoothing/risk, agency/decision-making, autonomy and mobility, self-confidence/self-efficacy. Some of the factors that were considered to be contributing were education and skill gained, change in environment, collective empowerment, employment gained and income increase. The factors hampering were more difficult to distinguish. However, the women experienced a lack of capacity to make choices due to their current situation where low income, lack of decision-making, gender roles/responsibilities and insecurities with employment was mentioned.

Empowerment efforts has to be seen in a holistic och inclusive manner, where all the subdimensions are correlated and therefore must have an adequate interaction with each other. The women's integration into the labour market in the field of tourism and gaining education and skill proved to be essential in this case, where all the women interviewed relate their employment to their sense of gained empowerment. It is important, if not crucial, to improve women's possibilities and options in several areas in order to support equitable development for for Indonesian women. In order to further understand the local and national context there is a need for further research. This study recognizes that the economic empowerment of women is essential both to realize women’s rights, and to achieve broader development goals such as economic growth, poverty reduction, health, education and welfare.
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Appendix 1 Interview Introduction

Hi ____!

Our names are Maja and Elma, we are 2 students from Sweden. We are 23 years old. As we said on the phone we are writing our thesis-project about BaliWISE and their vocational training program.

Our project is about if and how you have experienced any changes in different aspects, areas of your life because of graduating from BaliWISE. We would like you to answer our questions in relation to before and after program.

In this interview we are interested to learn about your life, to learn from you. You will be anonymous in our study and if it is okay by you we will record this interview so we can have it as a support when writing. It will not be available for anyone else to listen. Please, if there is anything that is unclear or that you don’t understand, let us know and we will explain. (____, is here if you need anything translated). The questions are about your background, about the program, your work and your life situation. What do you think? Is this okay by you?
Appendix 2 Interview Guide

Interview Guide “Hi ___, could you please tell me about yourself?”

Background
- Age
- Marital Status
- Children
- Work
- Religion
- Family (domestic life)
- Living situation

Vocational Education / Employment
- Reasons for applying / expectations
- Outcomes after education / employment
- Characteristics (+ level of employment)
- Income (monthly)
- Contract (working conditions)

Control over assets
- Have their own source of income
- Share of household income
- Control over spending and savings
- Has individual and household savings

Agency/ Decision-making
- Proportion of income spent on herself (and children)
- Involvement in major household decisions
- Decide on the welfare of the family (nutrition, health, family planning and education)

Autonomy and Mobility
- Ability to visit friends, family, associates
- Ability to use public transportation/travel freely in public spaces

Self-confidence/ Self-efficacy
- Psychological well being
- Attitudes on own self-esteem
- Achievements

Gender Norms
- Attitudes on women and work