

Challenges of community-based homestay programme in Sabah, Malaysia: hopeful or hopeless?

Abstract

This paper explores the challenges faced by the participants of community-based homestay programme in Dagat Village of Lower Kinabatangan-Segama Wetlands of Sabah, Malaysia. Primary data were gathered through field observation and in-depth interviews conducted with the participants in September 2015 and March 2016. The results of this study revealed that the tourism activities based on homestay programme in Dagat Village have the potential to be developed because of its vast natural resources but it was found that the local community faced many challenges during their homestay operation at the study site, which include lack of infrastructure development, poor promotional activity, lack of trained human resource, safety and security issues, poor local leadership, and lack of tourism management experiences that cause the homestay programme operation to be unsustainable. Therefore, this study recommends the importance of collaboration and partnerships among tourism stakeholders in order to achieve a successful ecotourism development.