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The impact of local communities' involvement and relationship quality on sustainable rural tourism in rural area, Sarawak. The moderating impact of self-efficacy

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Abstract

Tourism is recognized as a major growth engine for socio-economic development and poverty alleviation especially in rural destinations. Nonetheless, tourism has negative impact on these rural destinations. As a result, local communities' attitudes and perceptions toward tourism development are one of the important indicators for sustainable tourism development (Choi & Sirakaya, 2006). Besides, people's belief about their ability to influence the events is important in order to influence the outcomes (Bandura, 1994). Thus, this study attempts to examine the relationship between local communities' involvement, relationship quality and sustainable rural tourism with self-efficacy as a moderator in the context of tourism industry in Sarawak. The findings of this study will demonstrate a preliminary conceptual framework on local communities' involvement, relationship quality and sustainable rural tourism and how self-efficacy moderate the relationship between local communities' involvement, relationship quality and sustainable rural tourism in Sarawak.

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1. Main text

Tourism has been recognized for its vast contribution to the economy in many countries in which tourism contributes to economic diversification, profitability, and employment opportunity for a country (Ismail & Turner, 2008). Nonetheless, researchers in the past have noted that local communities' attitudes and perceptions toward tourism development and tourist fluctuate between the negative and positive (Harrill & Potts, 2003). Besides, the economic impacts are perceived mostly positive while sociocultural, legal, and environmental impacts, are viewed as negative (Tosun, 2002). Thus, it is important to understand local communities' involvement and relationship quality and how it will impact the sustainability of rural tourism in Sarawak

2. Objective

The main objective of this study is to investigate the relationship between local communities' involvement and relationship quality on sustainable rural tourism (social, cultural, economic, and environmental) with self-efficacy as a moderator in rural areas of Sarawak.

3. Literature Review

3.1. Local Communities' Attitude

Attitude is a psychological tendency that is expressed by evaluating a particular entity with some degrees of favor or disfavor (Early & Chaiken, 1993). Therefore, it is essential to understand local communities' attitude because an understanding of local communities' attitudes allows tourism stakeholders to adopt an adequate responsive mechanism to the negative influences that arise from tourism (Sharma & Dyer, 2009).

3.2. Local Communities' Perception

Perception can refer to "attitudes" (Lindberg & Johnson, 1997), "residents' opinions" (Williams & Lawson, 2001), or "reactions" (Fredline & Faulkner, 2000). Therefore, local communities' perceptions of the cost and benefits of tourism is the major factor in tourist satisfaction and are important for the success of the tourism industry (Andriotis & Vaughan, 2003).

3.3. Local Communities' Involvement

Community involvement can be defined as the magnitude to which the residents are involved in the daily activities within the communities that they live in (Lee, 2013). Hence, tourism development will be more successful with the involvement of the local communities as their perception and attitudes are important for the decision makers to achieve sustainable rural tourism (Eshliki & Kaboudi, 2012).

3.4. Relationship Quality

Relationship quality is used to establish long-term relationship with the customers and generate favorable outcomes (Morgan & Hunt, 1994). Relationship quality consists of three dimensions, namely trust, commitment, and satisfaction (Chen, Chen, Chen, & Wey, 2011). Thus, relationship quality is salient for the vendor to assess the nature and the intensity of customer relationships and to develop a competitive advantage which is difficult to duplicate (Wong, Hung, & Chow, 2007).

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