

An Analysis on Community Based Heritage Tourism: A Resource for a Small Community in Rural County Clare, Ireland

Authors : Marie Taylor, Catriona Murphy

Abstract : The aim of this paper is to identify the factors of success in community based heritage tourism initiatives. Heritage and community are central to many tourism initiatives with heritage tourism having the potential to act as a catalyst for community development. This paper presents the findings of research that examined the relationship between heritage tourism and community development. The findings recognised that heritage tourism had economic, social and cultural benefits for a community as well as a role in strengthening concepts such as sense of identity, place, and authenticity. In addition, this paper proposes an assessment framework for sustainable community based heritage tourism to identify factors and contextual influences involved in their success or failure. In evaluating the sustainability of such initiatives, a number of issues are investigated including the continued role of stakeholders, the role of funding, the influence of collaboration and the changing role of rural development and its impact on community engagement. The research is descriptive, evaluative and explanatory research, exploring and analysing issues such as the development of community structures in community based heritage tourism. Thus, it will contribute to the development of potential tourism and community development policies and strategies at a local, national and international level. An interpretative and inductive approach is utilised, and a mixed method approach followed as it encapsulates the best of quantitative and qualitative research methods. The case studies focus on social enterprises in relation to tourism and community based tourism cooperatives as there are limited study and knowledge of these. Consequently, this research will contribute to the discourse on community based heritage tourism as an aspect of community development.

Keywords : collaboration, community-based heritage tourism, stakeholders, sustainable tourism

Conference Title : ICHTMM 2017 : International Conference on Hospitality, Tourism Marketing and Management

Conference Location : Boston, United States

Conference Dates : April 24-25, 2017