

Enhancing the community based tourism of Vedda community in Dambana

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ABSTRACT

Utilizing tourism as a social development strategy can be identified as a developing trend among the indigenous societies of the modern world. Although, it is not officially stated, the tourism centered on the Wannilaaththo heritage center in Dambana belong to the category of community tourism in accordance to its main characteristics. The main objectives of this study are analyzing positive and negative impacts of the tourism, identifying problems and lapses associated with it and recognizing potentials for tourism development. In this context, the attention is focused on proposing tourism development strategies for Dambana Vedda community, which can be used for the sustainable development while increasing the community participation, protecting the traditional cultural elements, their authenticity and natural environment.

Generally, the tourists spend relatively short time within the community and lack of activities for them cause to the occurrence of low expenditure at the destination. Tourism has affected to protect certain cultural elements representing their identity. Tourism has made some Vedda people to be more materialized and modernized.

In the development of tourism, it is essential to combining the concepts of community tourism with social, cultural and economic sphere of Vedda community in Dambana. Development of number of new destinations, introducing new activities and package tours, improvement of tourist facilities, advertising for niche markets and increasing community participation are main issues of the tourism development. It is proposed to build a small eco-lodge, which will be managed by the community and establishment of a traditional craft and product center and tourist information center. Introducing home stay concept, volun-tourism, community based ecotourism, agro tourism and creative tourism would yield successful results.

Key words: Community tourism, Tourism development, Heritage management, Vedda community, Dambana,