

# **Developing Community Capacity Through Experiential Learning: A Case Study of Kg. Sg. Melayu Ecotourism Village**

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The tourism industry is a major contributor to the economic development of a country. Most developing countries use tourism as a development strategy, especially in rural areas. As well as generating employment opportunities, the tourism industry facilitates infrastructure development in rural communities. The development of tourism also reduces the issue of youth migration to cities. Past studies have shown that few community-based tourism (CBT) projects are actually successful, and most of them rely on outside assistance. This failure results from the community's inability to plan and manage CBT projects. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore community capacity building for the purpose of CBT development. In order to achieve this goal, a qualitative research approach was used with Kg. Sg. Melayu Ecotourism Village in Johor as a case study. A total of 16 key informants were selected as participants in this study based on purposive sampling technique. A semi-structured interview method was used by the researcher in the process of data collection. The collected data were analyzed and the findings of this study show the process of community capacity development involving aspects of knowledge and skills are based on an informal learning approach i.e. through research activities, involvement in planning, study tours, seminars and courses as well as group discussions.

**Field of Research:** *Rural tourism, community based tourism, community capacity building, Kg. Sg. Melayu Ecotourism, community based tourism business model, experiential learning approach.*