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A MODEL OF 'CREATIVE EXPERIENCE' IN CREATIVE TOURISM

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Abstract: This study explores the essence of 'creativity' in 'creative tourism' from a tourist perspective. Creative tourism is receiving an increasing amount of attention, although the concept remains rather vague, and more research is needed. Data was collected using in-depth interviews with tourists and observations at four 'Creative Life Industry' sites in Taiwan. Grounded theory approach was employed, and the findings show that 'outer interactions' and 'inner reflections' construct the model of tourists' creative experience. The former refer to tourists' interactions with 'environment', 'people', and 'product/service/experience', while the latter refer to 'consciousness/awareness', 'needs' and 'creativity', and these dimensions 'interact' in tourists' inner-self throughout the experience. Moreover, 'consciousness/awareness' is a prerequisite for 'creative experience', differentiating it from other types of experiences. **Keywords:** creative experience, creative tourism, creativity, tourist's perspectives.

INTRODUCTION

The concept of creative tourism has been developed for a number of years in many countries, including New Zealand, Austria, Spain, Canada, the United States and Taiwan. Although different places have their own definitions of creative tourism, there are commonalities among them, such as 'active participation', 'authentic experiences', 'creative potential development', and 'skills development' (Richards, 2011). These experiences are mostly related to everyday life, and the 'creativity-base' of creative tourism includes traditional crafts/

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handicrafts-making, gastronomy, perfume-making, porcelain painting and dancing (Richards & Wilson, 2006). Even though creativity is seen as the base of creative tourism, the creative factors of creative tourism systems remain unexplored. Furthermore the current definitions of creative tourism are all supply-led, such as by tourism boards, service providers, and various industry practitioners, without considering the tourists' viewpoint although tourists are seen as co-creators of the experiences.

While it is undeniable that a supply-led perspective is important in this context, as most of these creative tourism businesses are operated by creative people such as artists, 'lifestyle entrepreneurs' or 'cultural creatives' (Anderson, 2009; Binkhorst, 2007; Maisel, 2009; Peters, Frehse, & Buhalis, 2009; Prentice & Andersen, 2007; Ray & Anderson, 2000; Raymond, 2007), the views of consumers should not be ignored (Maisel, 2009; Maitland, 2007; Raymond, 2009). As Kaufman and Baer (2012) ask, who decides what is creative? In fields such as psychology or design, creativity is always seen from the artist's perspective. For example, how artists develop their artworks (Mace & Ward, 2002), the development of measurements of artistic creativity (Nelson & Rawlings, 2009), or the creative process of designing new products or new activities. However, these assessments of creativity are expert-based, and may not applicable for ordinary people, especially as these studies often examine artistic creative dimensions that are unreachable by lay people, such as tourists, who just want to enjoy something that is original or authentic in common life settings and related interactions.

Although tourists are seen as playing active roles in co-creating their experiences while on vacation, industry practitioners still take the lead when it comes to designing and providing such activities (Raymond, 2009), with few studies considering what tourists actually want in this context. For example Maitland (2007) studies the roles of tourists and residents in creative cities, while Maisel (2009) acknowledges that many tourists desire experiences that are small, intimate and on a human-scale. Therefore, there is a need for more sophisticated analysis of creative tourism that draws on the tourist's perspective, especially with regard to what exactly makes creative tourism creative, how is it different from other types of tourism, what are the basic building blocks of creative experiences, and how do these elements interact in creative tourism systems? This study thus aims to construct a model of 'creative experience' in creative tourism from the tourists' perspective. By knowing how the creative process has been constructed, tourists can maximize their creative experience by searching for what they want from the range of creative tourism experiences on offer. Besides, industry practitioners also need to know more about the key elements that can increase the level of creativity in the creative experience process. Since there are relatively few studies examining these issues, the current research aims to address these gaps in the current literature.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Creative Tourism

Creative tourism is growing in popularity, and the concepts of 'creative cities' (Landry, 2000), 'creative class' (Florida, 2002), and 'creative clusters' (Hitters & Richards, 2002) emerged after the first Creative Industries Mapping Study was released in 1998 (DCMS, 1998). In the wake of this publication, many cities/regions began to search for new development models, and the idea of 'creative industries', including tourism, gained more attention. Creative industries are especially popular in an 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), 'entertainment economy' (Amin & Thrift, 2002) or 'educational tourism' context (Bodger, 1998). Different places use different terms for creative tourism, for example, 'Creative Tourism New Zealand', 'DIY Santa Fe' in New Mexico, 'Creative Tourism Australia', 'Creative Paris', 'Creative Tourism Austria', and 'Creative Life' in Taiwan.

The concept of creative tourism can be traced back to 1993, when Pearce and Butler first mention it as a potential form of tourism, although they do not define the term very clearly (Richards, 2011). Richards and Raymond define 'creative tourism' as 'tourism which offers tourists the opportunity to develop their creative potential through active participation in courses and learning experiences which are the characteristic of the destination where they are undertaken' (2000, p. 18). Activities related to creative tourism allow tourists to learn more about the local skills, expertise, traditions and unique qualities of the places they visit (Richards & Wilson, 2006). In order to develop creative tourism, industry practitioners must identify the activities which are closely linked to their region (Richards, 2005). In 2006, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization's Creative Cities Network defined creative tourism as 'travel directed toward an engaged and authentic experience, with participative learning in the arts, heritage, or special character of a place, and it provides a connection with those who reside in this place and create this living culture' (UNESCO, 2006, p. 3).

In Taiwan, the term 'Creative Life Industry (CLI)' is used to describe the idea of creative tourism, and is seen as part of the cultural and creative industries (Lin & Wu, 2010). Different from other cultural/creative industries, CLI focuses on everyday activities, and aims to attract tourists rather than seeing creativity in purely artistic terms. The scope of CLI contains 'all businesses that use creativity or cultural accretion as the basis for providing useful products or services in the areas of food, clothing, accommodation, travel, sport or entertainment using innovative methods; and, all businesses that employ compound management, using innovative methods to achieve a re-production capability, and providing learning experience activities' (MoEA., 2004, p. 164). In other words, CLI business owners use their creativity (supply-led) to provide cultural and creative activities in a place (for example, farm, museum, and so on) for tourists to experience.

The common components of creative tourism are 'participative, authentic experiences that allow tourists to develop their creative

potential and skills through contact with local people and their culture' (Richards, 2011, p. 1237), and thus it is essentially a learning process. However, these definitions and related concepts are still vague, and lack consideration of tourist's views. Raymond (2009) notes that it is easier to establish a supply of creative tourism experiences than it is to create demand for them, and Maitland (2008) states that there has been very limited research that explores what tourists want, although the tourists themselves, their perceptions and what they enjoy, should be at the heart of any related activities.

The Emergence of Creative Tourism

Understanding the emergence of creative tourism is essential if we are to learn why it has become increasingly popular and why it needs more sophisticated studies from different perspectives. The growth of creative tourism has been identified as an extension of or a reaction to cultural tourism, in that creative consumers are looking for more interactive experiences which help them in their personal development and identity creation, rather than traditional cultural tourists (Richards, 2000; Richards & Raymond, 2000). The activities on offer to tourists are the fundamental elements in the production and consumption of creative tourism. Richards and Wilson (2006) acknowledge that creative tourism has arguably more potential than traditional cultural tourism, because creativity can add value more easily, allows destinations to innovate new products relatively rapidly, and thus creative resources are more sustainable and more mobile than tangible cultural products.

Creative tourism depends heavily on tourist's active involvement, who are not just in a place and watching others, but instead interacting and co-creating the whole experience, actively learning about their surroundings and applying this knowledge in order to develop their own skills (Richards & Wilson, 2006). This means that creative tourists are a group of active stakeholders, as without their active participation, the creative experiences would not exist. However, not only creative tourism needs the active participation of tourists, but also other types of experiences, such as educational and escapist ones in an 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1998). The question thus arises as to how these experiences are different, and what can tourists get from creative tourism that they cannot from other types of tourism? Therefore, this study examines what is unique about creative tourism, and how exactly it is creative.

Creativity

The term creativity is used to attract consumers because it is seen as being 'cool' (Richards, 2011). Nevertheless, what is creativity? In his 1950 American Psychological Association presidential address, J. P. Guilford states that creativity had been sorely neglected to date by

his field, a claim that lead to increasing interest in this issue (Simonton, 2000). Creativity is pervasive in all human activities, the furniture we use, the novels we read, the movies we watch, and the technology we enjoy, are all the consequences of a creative mind. Batey (2012) reviews the literature, and finds that many researchers and psychologists (for instance, Feist, 1998; Mumford, 2003; Plucker, Beghetto, & Dow, 2004; Simonton, 1999; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999) define creativity using the terms 'new/novel/original' and 'useful/appropriate'.

Creativity is seen as a good attribute for people to possess, and at a more personal level is often seen as a sign of mental health and emotional well-being (Simonton, 2000). According to the creative cognition approach (Smith, Ward, & Finke, 1995), creativity is a mental phenomenon that results from the application of ordinary cognitive processes (Ward, Smith, & Vaid, 1997), and thus creative thought is accessible to almost everyone. Furthermore, Ericsson (1996) demonstrates that exceptional talents are less born than made, and even a creative genius cannot escape an inherently laborious period of apprenticeship (Simonton, 1991). Creativity is an activity that develops over the course of human life, and certain family environments and circumstances seem to favor the emergence of creative personalities (Simonton, 2000).

Research on creativity has changed from seeing it as a process which takes place in the mind of a single individual, to one that takes place in a social context (Simonton, 2000). Creativity can be best nurtured in both schools and the workplace (Amabile, 1996), and since creativity can be developed through education (Burleson, 2005; Fasko, 2000–2001), there is a relationship between creativity and learning.

Creativity, learning and self-actualization

Guilford (1950, p. 446) acknowledges that 'a creative act is an instance of learning . . . [and] a comprehensive learning theory must take into account both insight and creative activity'. The cognitive theories of learning that were first proposed in the early 60s have influenced our understanding of creativity (Fasko, 2000–2001), and these view thinking as a 'constructive process' (Houtz & Krug, 1995), as when individuals are thinking, they are constructing their knowledge base. The model of creative learning is composed of three levels: divergent functions, complex thinking and feeling processes, and involvement in real challenges (Treffinger, Isaksen, & Firestein, 1983).

Starting a few decades ago, psychologists have suggested a number of ways to develop creative abilities from childhood to adulthood, such as through direct instruction (Guilford, 1967; Torrance, 1963), inquiry-discovery or problem-solving (Feldhusen & Treffinger, 1980), and cognitive-affective models (Wiliams, 1969). Davis (1982) suggests a four-step model of creativity development: awareness, understanding, techniques, and self-actualization. Sternberg and Lubart (1991) identify six resources which facilitate creativity in children and adults: intelligence, knowledge, intellectual style, personality, motivation, and

environmental context. Renzulli (1992) emphasizes the role of the teacher, as both a mentor and role model, in developing creativity. However, although creativity is seen as important, even many educators do not take creativity courses seriously (Miller, 1986), and some teachers have negative views of certain characteristics that are associated with creativity (Westby & Dawson, 1995).

Notable educators such as Abraham Maslow, Teresa Amabile, Mihalyi Csikszenmihalyi, Edgar Faure, Alan Kay, Seymour Papert, and Paul Torrance, acknowledge not only that learning and creativity are essential to self-actualization, but also that self-awareness, intrinsic motivation and self-actualization are fundamental to learning and creativity (Burleson, 2005). Nevertheless, creativity should not be seen as a subject that can only be learned from formal educational institutions, but also through informal learning systems, such as playing games and craft-making. Creative tourism is thus able to help people to develop their creativity, because it provides the learning opportunities in different contexts.

Creativity in tourism

Understanding the role of creativity in the tourism industry, and how it contributes to creative experiences, is both challenging and complex. Creativity can be seen from multiple dimensions: everyday creativity, artistic creativity, and intellectual creativity (Ivcevic & Mayer, 2009). Richards (2011) indicates that the convergence between creativity and tourism lies in their grounding in everyday life. In other words, tourists wish to participate in acts of everyday creativity which are closer to the circumstances of their real lives. Ivcevic and Mayer (2009) categorize 121 items into the following five categories of 'everyday creativity': craft, cultural refinement, self-expressive creativity, interpersonal creativity and sophisticated media consumption. These everyday activities can provide the creative base needed for creative tourism, because they are 'user-friendly' and can thus inspire the tourist's active involvement.

Rhodes (1961) identifies the following '4Ps' of creativity: person, process, product and environment/press, and this view has gained relatively wide acceptance (Runco, 2004). Creativity has been historically associated with creative people, and then with creative products, while the emphasis has now shifted towards the social context and environment of creativity (Richards, 2011). Creativity is everywhere, and can be either the background or focal activity of creative tourism, depending on the level of tourist involvement (Richards, 2011). Creativity has not only become a strategy to be adopted by cities/regions in a search for growth, but also a strategy for promoting innovation and individual skills development (Ray, 1998). For instance, in the 'Creative Life Industry' in Taiwan, creativity is not only seen as a background, but also an activity where tourists can buy, see, taste or learn about the related product/experience. For more details about the development and creative tourism modes, please refer to Richards (2011).

Creativity and experience

There are a number of related dimensions that exist between creativity and experience. Anderick, Bricker, Kerstetter, and Nickerson (2006) affirm that social and environmental activities are components of the overall experience framework. Quinlan-Cutler and Carmichael (2010) identify the nature of the tour or activity, the external influences, the role of 'place', and the personal significance derived from the experience in terms of emotions, knowledge, memories, self-identity and development, as all being important dimensions of tourist experience. Moreover, McClinchey and Carmichael (2010) indicate that the sense of place that combines the physical, spatial aspects of a setting with the meanings people attach to it can be reflective, and both nostalgic for the past and anticipatory for future experiences. All of the concepts laid out above are important for both experience and creativity.

In order to clarify the relationship between creativity and experience, it is essential to understand the need for experience. Creativity seems to be located at the higher level of the hierarchy of needs. Based on the works of Berlyne (1971), Scitovsky (1976) and Maslow (1987), Andersson proposes three categories of needs with regard to experience: basic, social and intellectual, with the latter including the need for 'novelty, excitement and challenges' (Andersson, 2007). This means that experience is a process that tourists need to go through to achieve creativity. Richards (2011) acknowledges that even seemingly mechanistic and staged activities, such as bungee jumping, can become 'creative' through the way they are experienced and reacted to by the participants. It is thus important to what extent practitioners use their creativity to add value to an experience, and also how tourists perceive the activity as creative. Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) concept of flow experience emphasizes the balance between the perceived challenges and risk of a task, and the person's perceived level of skill for the task, and states that an optimal level of flow will bring a deep sense of enjoyment with life.

Pine and Gilmore (1998, 1999) identify four realms of experience: entertainment, educational, esthetic and escapist. However, experiences can only be creative and unique when people are not only playing an interactive and participative role in them, but also in creating, designing, selecting and reflecting upon them (Binkhorst, 2007). In order to create unique experiences, producers should offer ones which are able to transform the consumer (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), and the co-creative role of the consumer is thus important. Traditionally, creativity is associated with 'doing something manually' and with 'the creation of things', and in the case of experiences and transformations, the consumer is the 'product', and there is a process of co-creation between the transformer and the transformed (Binkhorst, 2007). In other words, all activities a tourist participates in throughout their trip can become meaningful experiences. However, what is creative about these experiences, and where does creativity come from, remain two

key questions with regard to developing a creative experience model, and both these are addressed in the current work.

STUDY METHODS

There has been relatively little in-depth research into creativity that adopts the tourist's perspective, especially when we talk about the creative experience in creative tourism. This research thus uses a qualitative or exploratory approach in order to gain some insights into tourist's thoughts and experiences with regard to this topic. Exploratory research is ideal for uncovering important meanings that participants have in their minds (Babbie, 1998), and is specially suitable for examining new areas where little is known about the phenomenon under study (Sekaran, 2003).

Grounded theory approach was employed in this work. Basically, grounded theory has its origins in symbolic interactionism (Goulding, 2005). Behavior evolving from social interactions is highly symbolic in itself, and involves various form of communication, both verbal and non-verbal, and the notion of symbols is intrinsic to the perspective that grounded theory adopts (Schwandt, 1994). The grounded theory approach is based on a range of qualitative research methods that use a systematic set of procedures, and simultaneous processes of data collection and analysis, to develop a theory about a phenomenon (Strauss & Corbin, 1998). It refers to an innovative approach to developing explanatory theoretical ideas and a specific set of tools for inductive and deductive analysis of empirical material to construct conceptual understandings of the phenomena being studied (Charmaz, 2006). It also enables researchers to produce conceptually dense theories that consist of relationships among concepts representing 'patterns of action and interaction between and among various types of social unit's (Strauss & Corbin, 1998, p. 278). Grounded theory offers tourism studies the potential to generate holistic theories, and this improve understanding of human behavior that is not readily quantifiable (Jennings & Junek, 2007). Theoretical sampling is adopted in this work, and this is a purposive sampling technique that enables selection of information-rich and relevant sources that provide informed empirical materials (Patton, 2002). Purposive sampling does not attempt to generate a representative sample set (Kensbock & Jennings, 2011), but involves the selection of informed participants who have had active involvement in experience-type activities.

Procedure

One hundred and forty-one 'Creative Life Industry (CLI)' businesses in Taiwan were categorized by a consultant agency into six experience-types: food culture, life education, natural ecology, interior decoration, historic arts, and handicraft culture. However, this categorization is blurred and supply-led. Furthermore, some businesses provide more

than one type of experience, and some experiences can be categorized into different types. For example, a farm that provides food culture (tasting and making local snacks), natural ecology (feeding cows) and handicraft culture (making traditional lanterns) experiences, is categorized into natural ecology experience due to its agricultural background. While 'tea culture' can be categorized not only into food culture, but also life education experience, if the practitioners are able to tell the history of tea.

Fieldwork was conducted at four different CLI businesses in Taiwan: a leisure-farm, a 'story house', a pottery-making museum with a workshop, and a wooden furniture museum with a workshop. Until quite recently, Taiwan was an agricultural economy, but some crops lost their competitive advantage in their traditional export markets when Taiwan joined the World Trade Organization in 2002, and thus many farmers converted their land into tourism farms offering agricultural-related experiences (TBROC, 2011). Moreover, Taiwan's furniture industry was once part of the island's 'economic miracle', when it was known as the 'furniture kingdom' during 70s–80s. However, it declined during late 80s due to the rising costs of land and labor (Li, 2011), and so some entrepreneurs established furniture museums and workshops to preserve this heritage. Pottery and porcelain culture has also been developed for over a thousand years in Taiwan (Chen, 2005), and tourists may now participate in pottery-making and painting activities. These businesses represent Taiwan's traditions as well as its social and cultural development. The story house, where children can hear stories being told, was chosen as a case study in this work due to its self-expressive type of experience and focus on children. Besides, the respondents also mentioned other CLI, such as a paper-making factory, and although fieldwork was not conducted there, the respondents were asked to elaborate on their creative experiences at such places, and this was recorded and analyzed.

This study first interviewed four insiders (course tutors and tour guides) and three tourists to generate the interview guide according to the research questions. In the early stage of the study, informal interviews were conducted with participants who were willing to share their experiences, since much of the richest data that can be captured comes from such informal talk (Daengbuppa, Hemmington, & Wilkes, 2006). Next, in-depth interviews and observations were conducted at the above mentioned sites. Participant and non-participant observations were conducted interchangeably. The former allowed the researchers to be directly and intimately involved in the tourist's experience; while the latter was carried out to avoid the researcher's presence, which may influence the participants and create biases. This process of data triangulation (Patton, 2002) allows different data to be explored simultaneously in the same context and setting, and not only strengthened the findings, but also increased the internal validity and reliability of the research.

Generally, the discourse started with probing questions, such as ''What motivated you to come here and to participate in this activity?'' The respondent then started to talk about their motivations/needs.

Later, the respondent was asked how he/she had learned about the activity in order to explore the information sources. The respondent was then asked, ''What do you think about this activity?'

Next, questions were asked about 'creative/creativity', the focus of this study. For example, ''Do you think this activity is creative? If yes/no, why and how?'' and ''Please define creativity from your viewpoint'' were asked in order to explore the meaning of 'creative/creativity' from tourist's viewpoints. After saying an activity was creative, some respondents who were then asked to define 'creative/creativity' soon found that their definitions contradicted their earlier statement, or vice versa, and thus they were asked to elaborate on these contradictions. It was especially interesting when respondents criticized an activity as not creative, since they then usually provided information about other activities which they thought were 'creative'. They also described and compared their creative experiences in places such as paper-making factory and other sites. Furthermore, respondents who described an activity as creative were also asked to explain in what ways it was creative.

The respondents were then asked to explain their experiences from a more macro level, considering elements rather than the activity itself, based on the questions ''Please identify the factors which you felt contributed to your experience'' and ''Please provide your own definition of what you think a creative experience entails''. When the respondent mentioned an important attribute, he/she was asked to give examples and illustrate how the attribute contributed to his/her creative experience. Besides, he/she was also asked to clarify the differences among the various attributes/components mentioned.

The data collection and analysis processes were simultaneous. When a concept was emerging from the data, the researchers started to examine the similarities and differences among the concepts, and then examined them in different sites and activities by asking the next respondent about them. This is the basic principle of theoretical sampling, where the sampling and data collection processes are informed by the emerging data analysis (Bakir & Baxter, 2011; Daengbuppa et al., 2006; Strauss & Corbin, 1998). If new concepts keep emerging from the data, the process of data collection and analysis will be continued by searching the next sample until no more new concepts are generated. This is the stage where data saturation is achieved (Strauss & Corbin, 1998), and the process of sampling can be stopped. In this study, a total of 32 respondents were interviewed by the time data saturation had been reached. The ages of the respondents ranged from 18 to 60, with the majority between 25 and 45. There were 18 females and 14 males; 17 were Taiwanese, six were Malaysians, four were Singaporeans, and five were from Hong Kong and Macau. Fifteen respondents traveled with family members (nine were parents with children, and six were adult children with parents/relatives). Fourteen respondents traveled with friends, three were teachers/instructors who were leading groups of students. Each interview took 20–30 minutes; long interviews were avoided because the respondents were on vacation. These interviews were recorded, and thick descriptions of interview

transcripts were obtained. Moreover, the observation field notes were also compiled.

The sampling in qualitative research is neither statistical nor purely personal, but is theoretically grounded (Glaser & Strauss, 1967; Silverman, 2005). After theoretical saturation has been achieved, a comparison with the literature takes place (Patton, 2002) in order to compare the emergent theory with existing ones, and to explore the extent to which there are any consistencies, divergences and conflicts, to improve the validity, conformability, credibility, transferability, and dependability of the findings (Daengbuppa et al., 2006; Lincoln & Guba, 1985). For instance, the credibility of the model was established by examining its 'goodness of fit', that is, how well the model resonated with the co-constructors of the realities studied, via participant checking (Kensbock & Jennings, 2011), which involved the researchers discussing their interpretations of the data with participants. Transferability was assessed by examining whether the proposed creative experience model resonates in the context of other creative life industry's businesses, while dependability refers to design stability, which was examined using grounded theory methodology.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Open Coding

Open coding aims to identify the discrete concepts or the building blocks of the data, with a focus on the nouns and verbs used to describe a specific conceptual world (Bakir & Baxter, 2011; Daengbuppa et al., 2006). After every interview and observation, the field notes were analyzed and open coded before moving to the next interview (Bakir & Baxter, 2011). The feature of analysis can be a sentence, paragraph, an episode or an observation (Daengbuppa et al., 2006). For example, observations showed the tourists were 'interacting and communicating', but the actual process they were presenting was 'teaching and learning': the parents were teaching children how to make an object; the tutor was demonstrating how to make a pottery; the children were creating their 'masterpiece'. About 50 concepts regarding 'creative experience' emerged in this stage, as shown in the first column of Table 1.

Axial Coding

In this stage, the open codes which seem interconnected were grouped together to generate tentative statements of relationships among phenomena (Daengbuppa et al., 2006). For example, 'hygiene factors', 'ambient factors', 'sound, music and voice' are grouped into 'the service-scape'; while 'spatial design'; 'building design'; 'landscape'; 'activity-routes' are grouped into 'design and planning'. Twenty-one subcategories emerged, and these were later regrouped into six categories, namely 'environment', 'people', 'product/ser-

Table 1. Summary table of open coding, axial coding and selective coding

Concepts and labels generated from interview transcripts	Sub-categories	Categories/Themes
Hygiene factors	Service-scape	**Learning and interacting**
Ambient factors		Environmental context
Sounds (voice, music)		
Spatial design	Design and planning	
Building design		
Landscape		
Activity-routes		
Leadership	Perceived-control	**Learning and interacting**
Ability of controlling the situation		People (tutor)
Personalization/customization	Caring/concern	
Respect/civility		
Congeniality/friendliness	Authenticity	
Sincerity/naturalness		
Knowledge-rich	Professionalism	
Active participation	Basic attributes	**Learning and interacting**
User-friendly		Product/service
Aesthetic	Advanced attributes	
Novelty		
Challenge	Excitement attributes	
Special to this region		
Relax/Leisure	Basic needs	**Needs/motivations**
Fun		
Safe		
Family	Social needs	
Friends		
Skills development	Intellectual needs	
Knowledge gaining		
Self-improvement		
Interesting	Novelty	**Creativity**
New		
Functionality	Usefulness	
Gain something mentally		
Experience for all	Controlled risk but challenging	
Exciting but safe		
Not everyone can make it		
Skills needed		
Uniqueness	Experiential	
Can only experience here		
Positive emotions: enjoy, pleasure, etc.		
Forgot about other things		
Tired but worth for it		
Self-change	Existential	
Self-confident		
Cultivate own potential		
Self actualization	Individual	**Consciousness/awareness**
Family and younger generation	Social	
Preserving the culture	Cultural	
Loving and appreciating the environment	Environmental	

vice/experience', 'needs', 'creativity' and 'consciousness/awareness', as shown in the second column of Table 1.

Selective Coding

Selective coding was used to integrate and develop the theory in this work. The six categories mentioned above were integrated into four themes: 'consciousness/awareness', 'creativity', 'needs', and 'learning and interacting', as shown in Table 1 and Figure 1. The first three are named 'inner reflection's as the reflexive process happens to the inner-self; and the final theme is named 'outer interactions, because tourists are interacting with outside factors, such as the environment, people, and product/service/experience. In addition, 'consciousness/awareness' is a prerequisite of creative experience, and the tourists must have a sense of this (whether individual, social, cultural or environmental, as will be discussed below) in order to have a creative experience, as this differentiates these from other experiences.

THEME 1: CONSCIOUSNESS/AWARENESS

There are four subthemes of 'consciousness/awareness', which are the individual, social, cultural and environmental levels. The 'individual level' of awareness is similar to 'self-actualization', where respondents wish to find their inner-self by participating in some workshop

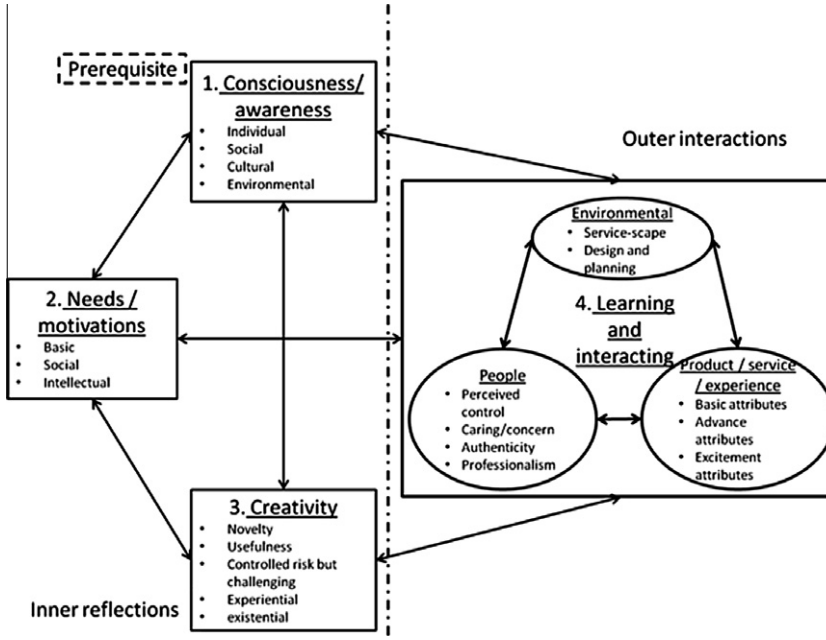

Figure 1. A model of 'creative experience'

activities. For example, a respondent stated, ''*I want to make my holiday more meaningful, I am searching for something... something inside me with which I can overcome the sense of futility, well, I am looking for something which can 'refresh' and 'recharge' me, for example, learning something which I like and enjoy*''. The 'social level' includes a sense of consciousness with regard to educating the younger generation. Most of the respondents wanted their children or students to learn by doing, because they have the consciousness that they could get something positive from participating in creative activities. For example, a mother who brought her children to the story house mentioned, ''*My daughter is good at storytelling, she can tell very interesting stories to her younger brother, and I think she can learn from the story house because the tutors here are acting, making voices, singing, and using their body language when they are telling the story. You know, children learn from adults, I think this is a very good opportunity to educate my daughter*''.

The third subtheme under 'consciousness/awareness' refers to the cultural context, in which the respondents have the sense of preserving the culture. A respondent said, ''*I want my children to know how to make the porcelain, for example, to know the history of this place, the importance of this craft in the past, how to keep it in good condition, etc. You know, we need to keep these hand-made things in the next generation; they should have the opportunity of experiencing them, not just by seeing the artifacts in the museum*''. The fourth subtheme is 'environmental' related. These respondents were more environmentally consciousness, and felt they had a responsibility to protect the earth. A respondent said, ''*We always say recycle, recycle, recycle, but we keep wasting paper, because we don't have any idea about how difficult making paper is. I have been to a paper museum where I learned the process of making paper. This is good, and I think only through making paper by ourselves can we learn to appreciate such resources*''.

THEME 2: NEEDS

Three dimensions of needs emerged: basic, social, and intellectual. The reasons why the respondents traveled to these 'creative tourism' destinations included the words '*relax*', '*enjoy*', '*fun*', and '*safe*'. Besides, most of the respondents were traveling with family or friends, with the aim of enhancing their relationships, and thus their social needs must also be fulfilled. A respondent mentioned, ''*Doing an activity together with children help us to understand each other better, especially when we are having fun, we feel much closer*''. The third dimension is the intellectual needs, and many respondents specified that they would like to '*gain knowledge*' and '*self-improvement*' through participating in creative experiences.

THEME 3: 'CREATIVITY' IN CREATIVE EXPERIENCE

Creativity in creative experience is composed of multiple dimensions, such as 'novelty', 'usefulness', 'challenge and controlled risk', 'experiential' and 'existential'. The term creativity often confused

the tourists, and the respondents gave their own definitions which can be integrated under these five dimensions. For example, most respondents stated that creativity means 'interesting' and 'new', which can be categorized under 'novelty'; whereas some focused on the 'usefulness or functionality' of the product they made, or the experience they had. Here, the respondents referred to 'creativity' as the 'prelude' provided by the suppliers. For example, the service they gave; the experience they prepared, and the product they sold. A respondent said, ''*When I enter this room and see the decoration, I found... wow, this is nice and interesting, I think they are creative*''. Another said, ''*I never think that this material can be used in this way, they inspired me, I would say they are creative*''.

The respondents were also searching for creative activities with 'controlled risk' which are 'challenging and exciting but safe', because many of them were holidaying with their family. For example, a respondent stated, ''*I am searching for something exciting and challenging, I think creativity comes together with challenges, but since I am with my family, I hope everything is safe*''. Activities which were too general and easy to accomplish were not welcomed, because many respondents believed that if they managed to complete a challenging task which '*not everyone can achieve*', it would enhance the 'existential' dimensions of creativity, with some respondents stating, ''*I find myself changed*''; ''*I have more self-confidence*''; and ''*I know I have other potentials which I can explore and develop*''. While these people were searching for 'transformation' or an 'existential' dimension, they also claimed to have an 'experience' which was '*unique*', '*I can only experience here*', and which can make them '*forget about other things*'. Some respondents felt that creative experience was related to their feelings/emotions, and some mentioned that '*feel comfortable; joy; fun; pleasure; it is tiring but really worth it'* can represent factors under the 'experiential' dimensions. These three dimensions are more related to the 'creative inner-self'.

THEME 4: LEARNING AND INTERACTING

This theme integrated the three other subthemes, because tourists interact with 'people', 'environment' and 'products/services/experience' throughout the learning process, and thus it is seen as 'outer interaction'. 'People', such as tutors/instructors, or even parents, play important roles in creative experiences. These tutors/instructors must be '*knowledge-rich*' and show their '*professionalism*' when they are teaching. Tourists also care about the '*attitude's* of such individuals, such as congeniality, civility, and sincerity. Besides, many respondents preferred small group experiences in which they can learn more from the tutors. For example, a respondent specified, ''*I wish to know more about the furniture structure, why and how it was constructed, and so on. If I am with a large group of people, I won't be able to know these*''. This is consistent with many studies which found that teachers/educators play important roles in developing student's creativity. Besides, interactions with other tourists also affected their experiences. Moreover, tourists

also interact with the 'environment' and 'products/services/experience', and are affected by the 'ambiance' and 'design and planning' of the sites. For example, the feelings of the tourists were distracted by '*not well-designed routes*', such as long queues and crowded room. Meanwhile, the attributes of the product they made, the experiences they had, and the services they encountered, all affected the learning process.

DISCUSSION

This study was undertaken to explore the essence of creativity in the creative experience of creative tourism. The findings show that 'outer interactions' and 'inner reflections' together construct the model of 'creative experience'. The 'outer interactions' refer to the process of learning and interacting with the 'environment', 'people', and 'product/service/experience', whereas 'inner reflections' refer to 'consciousness/awareness', 'needs' and 'creativity', with these factors 'interacting' within the 'inner-self'. This is consistent with the view that 'self-actualization, learning, creativity and needs operate in a synergistic cycle' (Burleson, 2005), as well as Binkhorst's idea that people are creating, designing, selecting and reflecting upon their creative experiences (2007). This study also extends the literature on creativity by specifically examining creative tourism, with factors and dimensions developed under various themes, and a model of creative experience was constructed by exploring the essence of creativity from tourist's perspective.

First, we examine the themes under 'inner reflections'. 'Consciousness/awareness', 'needs', and 'creativity' are identified in this work as important dimensions throughout the creative experience. Moreover, 'consciousness/awareness' is a key dimension and a prerequisite which differentiates creative tourism from other types of tourism.

This study is consistent with other works which suggest that the needs related to experiences can be seen from three categories: basic, social and intellectual (Andersson, 2007). This is not surprising, because these are the common attributes that people look for throughout their trips. However, distinct from other studies, this work finds that the 'consciousness/awareness' of creative tourists plays a very important role in differentiating such individuals from other experience-seeking tourists. Tourists who have 'consciousness/awareness' are more likely to engage in 'creative experience' rather than more general activities. This is consistent with Davis (1982), which suggests that awareness is the first step to the development of creativity; and also Ray and Anderson's (2000) view of 'cultural creatives', which are a group of people who have an awareness of global issues and a desire to see more action being taken on them. The current study also extends the literature by identifying four types of awareness/consciousness in creative experience. In other words, only tourists who have self-, social-, cultural-, or environmental-related consciousness/awareness can be categorized as 'creative tourists'. While tourists who 'just stand there

watching' may also be involved in creating their experience, there is a missing link between their 'inner-self' and 'outer interaction', and the local-tourist relationship is not significant. This accords with the socio-psychological study of tourism, which indicates that the tourist-local relationship is one of varying degrees (Cohen, 1984), in which 'creative tourists' will have a more stable relationships with locals, and play more significant roles in co-creating their creative experience.

Creativity in creative tourism can be viewed from 'novelty, usefulness, controlled risk but challenging, experiential, and existential' dimensions. Creativity has been defined as 'new' and 'useful' by many scholars (Feist, 1998; Mumford, 2003; Plucker et al., 2004; Simonton, 1999; Sternberg & Lubart, 1999), and tourists are always looking for new experiences, and also seeking the usefulness of the product they have made or the experience they have had. Many respondents in this study were searching for 'usefulness' rather than 'novelty', because everything seems 'new' to tourists who travel around, and thus it is easier for them to fulfill the 'novelty' dimension. In contrast, the 'usefulness' dimension, such as 'the functions of the activities I participated in' or 'this can be a souvenir for friends', is more difficult to achieve. Besides, not all activities will produce 'tangible' or 'useful' products. However, expressive-form of activities, which cannot produce 'useful' items, should have other functions, such as 'change' or 'transformation' of the inner-self, as discussed below.

The 'experiential' and 'existential' dimensions of creativity have also been uncovered, with these two dimensions are identified by Nelson and Rawlings (2009) in their measurement for artistic creativity. While the current study differs from this earlier work as it focuses on 'everyday creativity', there are some similarities in the way that the tourists examined here experienced a sense of 'pleasure' or positive emotions when they were experiencing these activities. Everyday creativity can also be seen from an 'existential' dimension, because it has a 'transformative effect'. Tourists are now searching for 'change' and 'transformation' of their 'inner-self', and thus even though creative tourism focuses on creative activities in everyday-life activities, there is still the potential to create the 'experiential' and 'existential' dimensions of creativity. Practitioners should therefore develop more activities which are 'content-rich' while 'challenging and exciting but safe', as the model of creative learning suggests the importance of real challenge (Treffinger et al., 1983), and Csikszentmihalyi's (1990) flow also notes that optimal experiences occur when the challenges we face are matched to our skills.

This study identified 'people', 'environment' and 'product/service/experience' as important dimensions which facilitate the creative learning process. Tourists interact with these elements when they are learning, as noted by Sternberg and Lubart (1991), who identify the 'environmental context', Rhodes (1961) and Runco (2004), with the 4Ps, and Renzulli (1992) who emphasizes the role of the teacher as a mentor and role model in developing creativity. Many scholars (for example, Anderick et al., 2006; McClinchey & Carmichael, 2010; Quinlan-Cutler & Carmichael, 2010) also specify that external influences,

such as the social, environmental activities, and the role of 'place', are important dimensions in tourist experiences. Moreover, as Richards and Wilson (2006) state, tourists aim to actively learn about their surroundings and apply that knowledge in order to develop their own skills. The findings of the current study go a step further, as is considers the factors under these resources/surroundings specifically with regard to 'creative tourism' and 'creative experience'. For example, 'environmental context' is composed of 'service-scape' and 'design and planning', with the former including 'hygiene factors', 'ambient factors', 'sound (voice, music)'; and the latter including 'spatial design', 'building design', 'landscape', 'activity-routes'. This study also differs from other works in that it adopts the tourist's perspective. Therefore, practitioners who wish to enhance the tourists' creative experiences should pay more attention to these factors.

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, this study contributes to ongoing efforts in tourism research to understand the essence of creativity in creative tourism from the perspective of tourists. The literature on creativity, experience, and learning was reviewed to better understand the conceptual underpinnings that clarify the relations among these concepts. Qualitative data was assembled and analyzed based on the principles of grounded theory. Outer interactions and inner reflections were used to construct the model of tourist's creative experience, with the former referring to tourist's interactions with the environment, people, and product/service/experience, and the latter to consciousness/awareness, needs, and creativity. Based on this, recommendations were provided in order to make creative tourism more creative, as defined by tourists.

From an academic perspective, this study contributes to the literature on creativity in tourism systems, and it develops a model of creative experience from the tourists' viewpoint. In order to have creative experiences, creative tourists must first have self, social, cultural, or environmental related consciousness/awareness in their minds. In other words, the same activities experienced by creative and other tourists will have different outcomes, with the former more likely to have creative experiences. For tourists who are not aware/conscious of these issues, once their consciousness/awareness has been evoked during the experience, they will become creative tourists and also have creative experiences. The uniqueness of creative tourism is thus the consciousness/awareness of the issues evoked by each activity.

From a practical perspective, this study has some implications for practitioners and policy makers to consider with regard to the allocation of resources. For example, some respondents mentioned that it is difficult to find creative tourism businesses that really provide the experiences they are looking for. Perhaps some entrepreneurs have simply transformed their traditional business to what they claims to be a creative business, without really considering the contents and

qualities that actually reflect the uniqueness of what they are offering. For instance, many enterprises located in the same region provide similar experiences, such as pottery-making, as the region is famous for this. Therefore, practitioners should think about the key success factors that can differentiate their businesses from those of others.

While this model of creative experience is particularly suitable for on-site experiences, it can be applied in other tourism sites where the industry practitioners wish to provide creative experiences for tourists. However, in order to identify the significant elements of a specific activity/site, further investigations should be conducted on a case by case basis. Moreover, while there are five categories of everyday creativity (Ivcevic & Mayer, 2009), most of the creative experiences identified here are focused on on-site experiences, such as crafts, cultural refinement, and interpersonal creativity. In contrast, self-expressive creativity, such as travel writing on blogs or sharing experiences on social-networks, also has the potential to expand this creative experience model, although they are not examined here. Perhaps further research may focus on these off-site experiences.A

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