



A taxonomy of creative tourists in creative tourism



Siow-Kian Tan^{a,*}, Ding-Bang Luh^b, Shiann-Far Kung^c

^a Institute of Creative Industries Design, National Cheng Kung University, No. 1, University Road (Da-Xue Road), Tainan, 70101, Taiwan, ROC

^b Department of Industrial Design, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan, ROC

^c Department of Urban Planning, National Cheng Kung University, Taiwan, ROC

HIGHLIGHTS

- This paper examines the different perceptions of creative tourists (prosumers) in Taiwan.
- Five groups of such tourists were identified.
- Groups differ as to concerns over desired tourist experiences.
- The implications of this classification are discussed.

ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 21 March 2013

Accepted 12 November 2013

Keywords:

Awareness/consciousness

Creative experience

Creative tourism

Creative tourist

Q method

ABSTRACT

This study aims to characterize creative tourists and their perceptions of creative experiences at tourism sites. Creative tourists are active co-creators of their experiences; hence, they should be treated as a heterogeneous group of co-producers who have subjective opinions and feelings toward their creative experiences. The existing literature suggests that a creative experience is constructed by 'inner reflections', which include not only 'consciousness/awareness', 'needs/motivations' and 'creativity', but also 'outer interactions' which refer to 'environment', 'people' and 'activity' (Tan, Kung, & Luh, 2013). However, how a particular mix of factors interact and define an individual's perceptions of a creative experience may vary among different types of creative tourists. Q methodology was used to reveal the tourists' inherent subjectivity of creative experiences with regard to the constructions of personal meaning. Five distinct groups of creative tourists were identified: novelty-seekers, knowledge and skills learners, those who are aware of their travel partners' growth, those who are aware of green issues, and the relax and leisure type. Each consists of a different composition of factors which can provide new insights into how different creative tourists construct their personal creative experiences at these sites.

© 2013 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.

1. Introduction

The demand for creative tourism experiences has been rising in the 'experience economy' (Pine & Gilmore, 1998) or 'educational tourism' context (Bodger, 1998). Nowadays, tourists are searching for more interactive and fulfilling experiences rather than just being served by the travel industry. According to Greg Richards, this growing search for experiences is linked to the increasing need for consumers to define their identity through the things they consume (Saile, 2013). The concept of creative tourism has been developing for a number of years in many countries, and although definitions vary, it is generally seen as related to '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). Moreover, more people now have the opportunity to engage in intellectual improvement while on vacation due to general increases in leisure time and disposable income, as well as relative decreases in the cost of travel (Bodger, 1998).

A creative tourist is the active co-creator or co-producer of their own experience (Jelinčić, 2009; Jelinčić & Žuvela, 2012; O'Dell, 2007; Raymond, 2003; Raymond, 2009; Richards & Raymond, 2000; Richards & Wilson, 2006). This concept of 'consumers producing their own goods and services' is not new. Futurologist Alvin Toffler (1980) argued that as society moves toward the post-industrial age, consumers will be replaced by 'prosumers', which he defined as people who produce their own goods and services, for example, making their own clothes or cooking their own food. By examining Toffler's prosumer concepts and implications, Kotler (1986) later argued that prosumers should be looked at as another market segments and should be studied more closely. Yet, studies of prosumers in tourism, especially creative tourists, remain

* Corresponding author. Tel.: +886 911027919.

E-mail addresses: siowkiantan@gmail.com (S.-K. Tan), luhdb@mail.ncku.edu.tw (D.-B. Luh), sfkung@mail.ncku.edu.tw (S.-F. Kung).

scarce (Gordin & Matetskaya, 2012; Lindroth, Ritalahti, & Soisalon-Soininen, 2007). Creative tourists have their own perceptions of creativity and creative experiences (Tan, Kung, & Luh, 2013). For instance, some may perceive a specific experience as creative, while others feel that it features no creativity at all. Creative tourists can be divided into a broad range of categories. For example, the Creative Tourism Network counts artists as part of creative tourists (“Creative tourism network,” 2013), while Raymond (2003) includes all ordinary tourists who are interested in learning about the local culture while on vacation. Nevertheless, these categorizations are too broad to be characterized. Not only will artists have different perceptions from general tourists, ordinary tourists themselves should also be seen as a heterogeneous group as well. This study addressed two problems, namely, the classification and understanding of creative tourists at creative tourism sites in Taiwan.

Creative tourism experiences have implications for sustainable tourism due to creativity resources being more sustainable than tangible products, and further, creativity allows suppliers to innovate their products relatively rapidly (Prentice & Andersen, 2007; Richards & Wilson, 2006). For example, industry practitioners may use their creativity to add buzz or atmosphere to places (Richards, *in press*). Consequently, increasing amounts of tourism businesses have ‘transformed’ into creative tourism in the ‘experience economy’ context (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999). This growing competition ‘forces’ the suppliers to add more experiential elements in order to distinguish their products; however, only those who are able to capitalize on tourist demand will survive in this competitive market because unique experiences are invaluable. Nevertheless, the development of creative tourism experiences is mostly considered from a supply-led perspective, with few studies having examined what tourists think of these experiences. Of the works that have considered this issue from a demand-side perspective, Maisel (2009) found that many tourists desire small, intimate and personal experiences. In addition, Tan, et al. (2013) explored the essence of ‘creativity’ from a tourist perspective and noted that in order to have a creative experience, one must first have either self-, social-, cultural- or environmental- related awareness/consciousness.

The specifics of how different factors constitute creativity, and how the creative experience is constructed, will likely vary among different tourists because of the various values, motivations, and backgrounds of tourists. Nevertheless, there is still a lack of understanding of how different people perceive their creative experiences and what make these experiences valuable. This research was thus designed to better understand the types of creative tourists and their perceptions of the creative experience by looking at the mix of experiences as a whole, rather than only at individual components. What are the differences among different groups of creative tourists? What are the interactive factors that are important for each group of creative tourists? And, how do they construct their creative experiences at creative tourism sites? It is anticipated that the results of this study can help industry practitioners understand the different types of creative tourists in order to better target the correct consumers. Further, industry practitioners could also employ findings to enhance important factors that their creative tourists care about in order to meet their expectations.

2. Literature review

2.1. Creative tourism and creativity

The rise of the experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1998, 1999) has led to transformations of many sectors, including tourism. Traditional cultural tourism needs to re-invent itself to meet the

desire of tourists who are in search of a more meaningful experience; hence, the concept of creative tourism arose. The emergence 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, as opposed to traditional cultural tourists (Richards, 2000; Richards & Raymond, 2000). Creative tourism has been defined 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’ (Richards & Raymond, 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). It has also been defined 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). Many destinations have their own terms which they use to refer to creative tourism, such as ‘Creative Tourism New Zealand’, ‘DIY Santa Fe’ in New Mexico, ‘Creative Paris’, and ‘Creative Life Industry (CLI)’ in Taiwan. Some examples of creative tourism include traditional craft-making, perfume-making, porcelain painting and dancing (Richards & Wilson, 2006).

Creative tourism arguably has more potential for destinations than traditional cultural tourism because creativity can add value more easily. This can be achieved, for example, by giving a sense of ethical or aesthetic value to production/consumption, or allowing destinations to innovate new products relatively rapidly (Korez-Vide, 2013; Richards & Wilson, 2006). Creativity resources are more sustainable than tangible cultural products because creative tourism utilises tourist resources that are processes in essence, emphasizing the experiences based upon the natural and cultural resources, and is thus by definition is more sustainable than traditional cultural tourism based on the consumption of built environments (Prentice & Andersen, 2007; Richards & Wilson, 2006). There is no need to have built heritage or expensive preservation, not to mention the maintenance of these tangible building assets (Richards & Wilson, 2006). On the other hand, intangible cultural assets can be preserved because many traditional culture-related businesses survive after the transformation to creative tourism businesses (Tan et al., 2013). Creativity has been used in many ways in tourism, such as developing tourism products and experiences, revitalisation of existing products, using creative techniques to enhance the tourism experience, or adding buzz and atmosphere to places (Richards, *in press*). There are many approaches regarding the relationship between creativity and tourism, for example, the work of creative people, creative products and processes, and creative environments; however, these different meanings of creativity can have very different implications (Richards, 2011, *in press*).

Creative tourism businesses worldwide have their own categorization based on their popular characteristics. For example, “Creative Paris” categorizes the creative activities into “art, music, culinary, design, etc. (<http://www.creativeparis.info>)”, “Barcelona Creative Tourism” offers creative activities such as “performing art, theatre-related art, gastronomy, music, literature, etc. (<http://www.barcelonacreativa.info>)”, and the “Creative Life Industries” of Taiwan is categorized into six experience-types: food culture, life education, natural ecology, interior decoration, historic arts, and handicraft culture (www.creativelife.org.tw); however, all of these categorizations are supply-led (Tan et al., 2013). As the co-producer or co-creator of the experience, what does the tourist think of these creative activities? What factors influence the tourist’s decision on

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/1012033>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/1012033>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)