

Creative Tourism as a Strategy for Strengthening Creative Economy in Sri Lanka

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Abstract: Sri Lanka facing dual problems of weak creative economy performance on one hand and non-adoption of creative tourism on the other provide background to the study and the introduction of 'creative tourism' is considered a strategy for addressing both problems simultaneously. Despite worldwide adoption of creative tourism, little research has explicitly examined destination level creative tourism strategy development and ready to use framework to provide guidance and direction to countries does not exist to date. Thus, the objective of this research was to identify the components of creative tourism strategy. A three staged study comprises of both quantitative and qualitative methodology was adopted. A multi-journal review was conducted in stage 1 to identify the creative tourism strategy components used by previous studies. In stage 2 using normative Delphi technique creative tourism strategy components appropriate for Sri Lanka were identified and the findings were validated in stage 3 using a survey. The data was analysed using content analysis in stage 1 and 2 and descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were used in stage 3. The study found 22 creative tourism strategy components that fits well with both typical stages of strategy development and Porter's Diamond model. The study provides a unique contribution to existing knowledge as it is underpinned by hybrid lenses of strategic management and marketing theory that seems rear in creative tourism research. The need for

collaborative partnerships between various stakeholders led by the government is considered the main implication to practitioners to ensure successful introduction of creative tourism to Sri Lanka.

Keywords: Creative & cultural industries, Creative economy, Creative tourism, Creative tourism strategy

1. Introduction

With the emergence of creativity as a driving force in the 21st century the word creativity was used in many spheres including creative economy, creative industries, and creative tourism. Despite the opportunity afforded by creative economy for exporting of creative goods & services creative economy performance of Sri Lanka remains weak. Likewise, despite both growing demand for creative tourism and having an abundance of creative & cultural resources in the country Sri Lanka has not embraced creative tourism wholeheartedly. In resolving the dual issues faced by the country creative tourism was proposed as a strategy as previous studies confirm the contribution of creative tourism towards all four aspects of creative economy namely; economic, cultural, social, and sustainable development. Though individual components of creative tourism strategy appear in previous studies in an ad hoc manner a suitable framework for developing creative tourism strategy is yet to emerge. Therefore,

with the intension of identifying the components of destination- level creative tourism strategy for Sri Lanka this study was initiated.

2. Methodology

This study used a three-staged process. Stage 1 was to identify the creative tourism strategy components used by previous studies using a systemic multi-journal review (Siddaway et al. 2019) using 30 journal articles. Stage 2 used normative Delphi Technique to discover creative tourism strategy components appropriate for Sri Lanka using 15 multi-disciplinary Experts and 30 Key Informants from both cultural centers in the country and creative & cultural industries. Purposive sampling (judgment sampling) was used for selecting Experts, entire population was considered for cultural centers as studying all 21 districts was manageable and convenience sampling was used for choosing Key informants from creative & cultural industries. Third and final stage was based on a survey using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was developed based on the findings in stage 2 consists of 31 questions in total falling in to 4 stages of the strategy development process (independent variables) namely; Strategic analysis comprises of 6 questions, Strategic direction comprises of 5 questions, Strategy formulation comprises of 8 questions, Strategy execution & evaluation comprises of 7 questions and creative tourism strategy (dependent variable) comprises of 5 questions. Disproportionate stratified random sampling was used as all stakeholder categories in the tourism industry cannot be considered equally important in terms of practicing creative tourism and the sample size was 384 based on Krejcie and Morgan, (1970) and Saunders, (2019). For the purpose of data analysis, while content analysis was used in stage 1, Grounded theory as a methodology (Bryant and Charmaz, 2007; Charmaz, 2011;

Corbin and Strauss, 2008; Walsh et al. 2015a) was used in stage 2 and survey results in stage 3 were analyzed using the Software Statistical package used for Social Sciences (SPSS) 22.0 version and Hypotheses testing was done using Pearson's Correlation Coefficient (ρ), linear regression analysis and multiple regression analysis.

3. Results

A. Findings Stage 1

While a handful of studies (Ottenbacher and Harrington, 2013; Stipanović and Rudan, 2014; Lee et al. 2016; Dias-Sardinha et al. 2019) report creative tourism strategy components holistically the other studies adopt an ad hoc approach. A total of 10 strategy components of creative tourism were identified through previous studies comprised of 8 individual components, Marketing strategy (with 6 sub components) and Role of government (with 5 sub components) as summarised in Tables 1, 2, and 3 below respectively.

Table 1. Creative Tourism Strategy components – Individual

Strategy component	Author
Environmental scanning	Crouch and Ritchie, (1999); Dwyer and Kim, (2003); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013)
Tourism resources (factor conditions)	Litvinova, (2011); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014); Richards, (2015); Lee et al. (2016); Dimeska, (2017); Thai Government Public Relations Department, 2011 cited in Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018); Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018); Dias-Sardinha et al. (2019)
Capabilities	Landry, (2000); Heath, 2002 cited in Goffi, (2013); Dwyer and Kim, (2003); Dimeska, (2017); Roostika, (2019)

Vision	Crouch and Ritchie, (1999); Landry, (2000); Heath, (2002); Bertramini, 2002 cited in Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Chugh, (2018)
Sustainability	Hassan, (2000); Heath, (2002); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014)
Innovation	Heath, (2002); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014); Booyens and Rogerson, (2015); Lee et al. (2016); Della Lucia and Segre, (2017)
Partnerships	Enright and Newton, (2004); Landry, (2000); Saban Uyar, (2012); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckertb, (2014); Richards, (2015); Lee et al. (2016); Dimeska, (2017)
Structure	Lee et al. (2016); Dimeska, (2017); Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014)

Source: Author developed

Table 2. Creative tourism strategy components – Marketing strategy

Strategy component	Author
Target market	Hassan (2000); Heath, (2002); Dwyer and Kim, (2003); Enright and Newton, (2004); Omerzel Gomerzelj and Mihalič (2008); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Lee et al. (2016) ; Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018)
Positioning	Ritchie and Crouch, (1999); Heath, (2002); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2011); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckert, (2014)

Creative tourism product mix	Ohridska-Olson and Ivanov, (2010); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2011); Gordin and Matetskaya, (2012); Jelinčić and Žuvel, (2013); Kostopoulou, (2013); Stipanović, and Rudan, (2014); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckertb, (2014); Booyens and Rogerson, (2015); Náchér and ToMás, (2015); Lee et al. (2016); Carvalho et al. (2016); Dimeska, (2017); Jenasama and Sawant (2018); Chugh, (2018); Ramos, et al. (2018); Bakas et al. (2019); Macfarland et al. (2019); Dias-Sardinha and Gomes, (2019)
Place branding	Crouch and Ritchie, (1999); Dwyer and Kim, (2003); Heath, (2002); Landry, (2000); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckertb, (2014); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Lee et al. (2016); Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018)
Packaging (bundling)	Gordin and Matetskaya, (2012); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Booyens and Rogerson, (2015); Lee et al. (2016); Dimeska, (2017); Dias-Sardinha et al. (2019); Macfarland et al. (2019).
Performance measurement	Crouch and Ritchie, (1999); Dwyer and Kim, (2003); Heath, (2002); Sano, (2016); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013); Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014)

Source: Author developed

Table 3. Creative tourism strategy components – Role of government

Strategy component	Author
Leadership	Landry, (2000); Heath, (2002); Rogerson, (2006); Ottenbacher and Harrington, (2013); Tan et al. 2013 cited in Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014); Wattanacharoensil and Schuckert, (2014); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); OECD, 2014 cited in Radović and Piper, (2016); Lee et al. (2016); Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018); Bakas et al. (2019).
Funding	Ritchie and Crouch, (1999); Landry, (2000); Heath, (2002); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckertb, (2014); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Lee et al. (2016).
Stakeholder collaboration	Hassan, (2000); Heath, (2002); Enright and Newton, (2004); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckert, (2014); Lee et al. (2016); Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018); Chugh, (2018)
Policy	Hassan, (2000); Heath, (2002); Dwyer and Kim, (2003); Enright and Newton, (2004); Wattanacharoensila and Schuckert, (2014); Stipanović and Rudan, (2014); Lee et al. (2016); Jenasuma and Sawant, (2018)
Intellectual property (IP) law	Wattanacharoensila and Schuckert, (2014)

Source: Author developed

B. Findings Stage 2

A total of 4 creative tourism strategy components appropriate for Sri Lanka were suggested by the Experts comprised of 18 sub components namely; 5 sub components of Strategy, 7 sub components of Marketing strategy, 5 sub components of Role of government and 1 Challenge in creative

tourism development as summarised in Table 4 below;

Table 4. Creative tourism strategy components for Sri Lanka

Strategy
Tourism resources (<i>factor conditions</i>) & Capabilities
Vision
Sustainability
Backing of related and support industries
Innovation
Marketing strategy
Target market (<i>demand conditions</i>)
Positioning
Creative tourism product
Place branding
Packaging (bundling)
Environmental scanning (PESTEL)
Measurement of creative tourism performance
Role of government
Policy
Leadership & Structure
Funding
Stakeholder collaboration & communication
Intellectual property (IP) law
Challenges in creative tourism development
Impact of COVID 19

Source: Author developed

C. Findings Stage 3

The creative tourism strategy components identified in Table 4 were further expanded based on the findings to be tested using a survey in stage 3. Altogether 31 strategy components categorized under four stages of strategy development (Wheelan and Hunger, 2002; Harrison and Enz, 2005) representing the independent variables namely: Strategic Analysis (SA) with 6 indicators, Strategic direction (SD) with 5 indicators, Strategy formulation (SF) with 8 indicators and Strategy Execution & Evaluation (SE) with 7 indicators and the dependent variable Creative Tourism Strategy (CS) with 5 indicators were

considered. Four hypotheses developed based on 4 stages of strategy development were tested in stage 3 and the outcome is cited in Table 5.

Table 5: Results of hypotheses testing

Independent variable	Code	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient	Rank
Strategic Analysis	SA	0.700	3
Strategic Direction	SD	0.725	2
Strategy Formulation	SF	0.688	4
Strategy Execution & Evaluation	SE	0.794	1

Source: Author developed

In addition, relationship between sub components of each stage and the dependent variable Creative Tourism Strategy (CS) were tested and the outcome is cited in Tables 6 to 9 below;

Table 6 : Relationship between sub components of SA and dependent variable (CS)

	Code	Mean value	Pearson's Correlation value
PESTEL	SA1	4.15	0.606
Endowed resources	SA3	3.73	0.389
Created resources	SA4	4.07	0.634
Other resources	SA5	4.00	0.631
Capabilities	SA6	4.15	0.634

Source: Statistical output

Table 7: Relationship between sub components of SD and dependent variable (CS)

	Code	Mean value	Pearson's Correlation value
Vision	SD1	4.33	0.710
Uniqueness based vision	SD2	4.02	0.612
Authenticity based vision	SD3	4.05	0.533
Sustainability integration	SD4	4.22	0.629

Source: Statistical output

Table 8: Relationship between sub components of SF and dependent variable (CS)

	Code	Mean value	Pearson's Correlation value
Target market	SF1	4.15	0.624
Authenticity based positioning	SF2	3.85	0.522
Culture and heritage based positioning	SF3	3.72	0.455
Compactness based positioning	SF4	3.50	0.363
Creative experiences	SF5	3.97	0.611
Creative events	SF6	4.00	0.609
Packaging	SF7	4.02	0.555
Place branding	SF8	3.96	0.571

Source: Statistical output

Table 9: Relationship between sub components of SE and dependent variable (CS)

	Code	Mean value	Pearson's Correlation value
Leadership	SE1	3.94	0.681
Funding	SE2	3.75	0.654
Partnership with creative industries	SE3	4.03	0.754
Stakeholder collaboration	SE4	3.69	0.659
Policy	SE5	4.03	0.732
Intellectual property law	SE6	3.84	0.629
Measurement of creative tourism performance	SE7	3.96	0.752

Source: Statistical output

In addition, the findings with regard to indicators of dependent variable CS is cited in Table 10.

Table 10: Summary of mean values - Creative tourism strategy (CS)

	Code	Mean value
Demand for creative products & services	CS1	4.02
Employment opportunities	CS2	4.15
SME entrepreneurship opportunities	CS3	4.09
Cultural value of identity	CS4	4.06
Preservation of creative & cultural assets	CS5	4.01

Source: Statistical output

4. Discussion

The purpose of this research was to identify the components of destination-level creative tourism strategy for Sri Lanka using a three-staged study. The creative tourism strategy (CS) components identified in all three stages

are illustrated in Table 11. Despite the differences in designating the components, shifting categories, and merging of two components namely; tourism resources and capabilities and leadership and structure in stages 2 and 3 respectively, the creative tourism strategy components remain same or similar in all 3 stages.

Table 11: Comparison of creative tourism strategy components stages 1 to 3

Creative tourism strategy components	Stage 1	Stage 2	Stage 3
Tourism resources (factor conditions)	√	√	√
Capabilities	√		
Vision	√	√	√
Sustainability	√	√	√
Innovation	√	√	-
Related and support industries (Partnerships)	√	√	√
Target market (demand conditions)	√	√	√
Positioning	√	√	√
Creative tourism product mix	√	√	√
Place branding/image/identity	√	√	√
Packaging (bundling)	√	√	√
Environmental scanning (PESTEL)	√	√	√
Measurement of creative tourism performance	√	√	√
Leadership	√	√	√
Structure	√		
Funding	√	√	√
Stakeholder collaboration	√	√	√
Policy	√	√	√
Intellectual property law	√	√	√
Impact of COVID 19	-	√	-

Source: Author developed

As cited in Table 5, all four stages (independent variables) namely; SA, SD, SF, and SE have a significant positive relationship with dependent variable Creative tourism strategy (CS) supporting the four hypotheses. However, SE with a Pearson's Correlation Coefficient value of .794 has the strongest positive

relationship with CS followed by SD (.725), SA (.700) and SF (.688). However, innovation (SA2) and impact of COVID 19 (SD5) were eliminated as they reported a weak correlation values of .023 and -.055 respectively with the dependent variable CS.

The finalisation of components of creative tourism strategy (CS) requires further assessing the relationship between sub components of SA, SD, SF, and SE with CS. By securing both higher Pearson correlation values and mean values than SA3, other four components represent SA in creative tourism strategy as cited in Table 6. As cited in Table 7 all four strategy components of SD securing higher Pearson correlation values represent SD in creative tourism strategy. By recording both higher Pearson correlation values and mean values than SF4, other seven components represent SF in creative tourism strategy as cited in Table 8. By reporting both higher Pearson correlation values and mean values, all seven strategy components represent SE in creative tourism strategy as shown in Table 9. Accordingly, a total of 22 creative tourism strategy components comprises of 15 main and 7 sub components (in blue) falling in to stages of SA, SD and SF were identified for Sri Lanka as depicted in Figure 1.

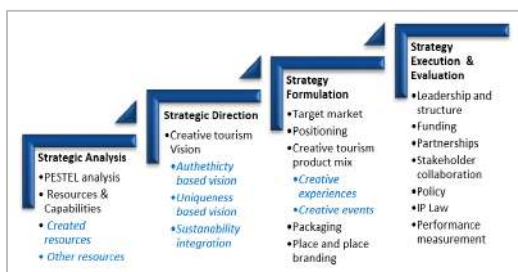


Figure 1. Components of creative tourism strategy by stage

Source: Author developed

The main components of creative tourism strategy cited in Figure 1 above shows a good fit with that of Porter's Diamond model as depicted in Figure 2.

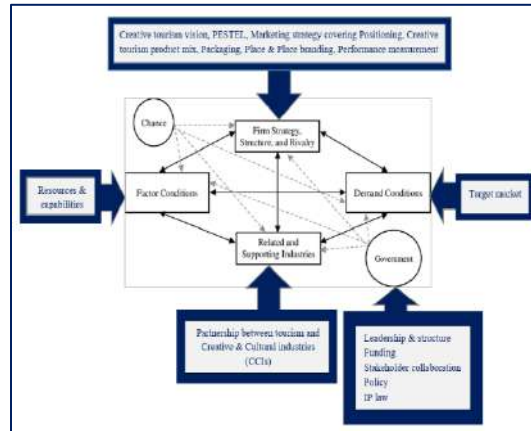


Figure 2: Revised Porter's Diamond model for creative tourism strategy

Source: Author developed

The use of Porter's Diamond model permits adopting a national competitiveness view to creative tourism strategy development as competition takes place between tourist destinations. Therefore, the revised Porter's Diamond model for creative tourism strategy cited in Figure 2 is recommended to be tested in future research.

As cited in Table 10 components of creative tourism strategy securing mean values above 4.0 confirm that introduction of creative tourism to Sri Lanka leads to following benefits namely; employment opportunities and SME entrepreneurship opportunities (social and economic benefits), cultural value of identity (cultural benefits), demand for creative products & services (economic benefits) and preservation of creative & cultural assets (sustainable development benefits).

5. Conclusion

This paper identified destination-level creative tourism strategy components under the four typical stages of strategy development with the intension of resolving dual problems faced by the country. Especially with regard to strengthening weak creative economy, the findings confirm the contribution of creative tourism towards economic, cultural, social, and sustainable development aspects that make up the creative economy. However, the implementation of creative tourism strategy requires both leadership from the government of Sri Lanka and collaborative partnerships between stakeholders in tourism and creative & cultural industries. The study provides a unique contribution to existing knowledge as it is underpinned by hybrid lenses of strategic management theory and marketing theory that seems rear in creative tourism research. Despite the contribution this research faces two main limitations namely; limiting the strategy components to experts' suggestions and the inability to generalize the strategy components as all experts represent Sri Lanka.

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