

Innovative Knowledge Destination Model For Sustainable Competitive Advantage

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this research was to analyze the trend of cultural intelligence in ASEAN Economic Community and then to synthesize such trend to be the innovative knowledge destination model in order to attain sustainable competitive advantage to creative tourism of Thailand. This research is a qualitative research using opinions of experts through Delphi technique collecting opinions of academicians who concern in cultural intelligence and tourism, and creative tourism marketers from public and private sector, including both local and ASEAN Economic Community. The sample consisted of 17 persons based on Thomas T. Macmillan criteria with standard error level of 0.04. The research applied conceptual research framework of Hopeken (2013); Chox Leung (2002); Olmedax Sheldon (2002); M. Fuchs T. et al. (2010); G. Richards and J. Wilson (2006). From 3-round Delphi Technique, the result outcome will be used to design a guideline of strategic innovative knowledge destination model, consisting 4 dimensions of management of knowledge quality, quality of utility management, management of knowledge transferring to customers /tourists, and training management for tourism service. The findings shall be used for designing curriculum of cultural intelligence for creative tourism entrepreneurs to gain the competitive advantage in ASEAN Economic Community and be further submitted as a guideline for national strategic competitive advantage to Thailand.

Keywords : Cultural intelligence, ASEAN Economic Community, Competitive advantage, Innovative Knowledge Destination, Creative Tourism

1. Introduction

Thailand has to prepare the country to be able to compete and thrive against the other members of the community by the year 2015.

One of the most important problems apart from education system and language proficiency is Cultural Intelligence – the ability, including communication skills, to effectively

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learn and understand in culturally diverse situation. Cultural intelligence can create competitive advantage to the marketing of innovative tourism of Thailand. Because cultural intelligence is not only the ability to deal with or see through the diverse cultures, but also the ability to cross divides and thrive in multiple cultures. Culturally intelligent people play an important role in bridging divides and knowledge gaps in an organization: educating their peers about different cultures; transferring knowledge between otherwise disparate groups; helping to build interpersonal connections and smooth the interpersonal processes in a multicultural workforce. They also possess the potential to drive up innovation and creativity, due to their ability to integrate diverse resources and help the business make best use of the multiple perspectives that a multicultural workforce brings to the workplace. The finding from The Global Competitiveness Report 2013 - 2014 by World Economic Forum (WEF) shows that

cultural intelligence is one of key success factors to business.[1][2][3] Creative Tourism of Thailand should use the intelligence to build and communicate that Thailand is an innovative knowledge destination.

The theoretical concept from Zhang Yu, Rong, and Zheng Tao defines creative tourism as a new direction of tourism permitting tourists and hosts of the places to exchange and learn the differences of culture so that they acknowledge and perceive as if they are the owners of the place together. Creative tourism consists of 2 dimensions: production and consumption sectors.[4] The cultural intelligence is more important because the hosts need to prepare tourist attraction as a common everyday culture for the tourists.[4] In addition, creative tourism can also create competitive advantages under concept of G. Richard and J. Wilson (2006), G. Richard (2011), Rhodes (1961), and LCEEI (2009) as shown in the Figure 1 below.

Figure 1 Relationship between Culture and Creative Tourism

Type of Relationship between culture and creative tourism	Relationship	Focal Points on Knowledge or Cultural Wisdom	Tourists' Consumption	Competitive Advantages
Cultural Knowledge oriented Tourism	Utilize historical culture to attract tourists to current culture.	Likely to be Localism culture.	Culture process and product might not bind physically and mentally.	Rather continuous adjustment, not a break-through.

Type of Relationship between culture and creative tourism	Relationship	Focal Points on Knowledge or Cultural Wisdom	Tourists' Consumption	Competitive Advantages
Creative Tourism	Utilize both historical and current culture to revisit, together with create current culture and recover the old ones for the future.	Able to create both old and new knowledge and create wisdom with cultural intelligence.	High mutuality between tourists and local host. Easy to be one part of the local.	Sustainable development from instant interaction between tourists and local hosts.

Source: Adapted from G. Richard, and J. Wilson (2006). G. Richard (2011), M. Rhodes (1961 and LCEEI (2009).[5] [6] [7] [8]

Moreover, Strategy and Evaluation Department, Bangkok Metropolitan Administration plans to prepare the readiness to join AC (ASEAN Community) by the year 2015. Under Strategy no.3: Toward ASEAN Socio-Cultural Community and Strategy no.5: Building an ASEAN identity, aiming to drive Bangkok to be the center of exchanging ASEAN art and cultures[9] show the relation to cultural intelligence as called 'The ASEAN Way'. From HA NOI DECLARATION ON THE ADOPTION OF THE MASTER PLAN ON ASEAN CONNECTIVITY, Chapter 1 Master Plan on ASEAN Connectivity under article 79 with reference to The ASEAN Committee for Culture and Information (COCI) established on 1978 to promote the cultural and information collaboration efficiency to create common understanding and solidarity

among ASEAN members. The plan also builds regional development as well.[10]

Besides, the commitment of Thai tourism under ASEAN Mutual Recognition Arrangement on Tourism Professionals, which is one of the key ASEAN tourism initiatives to support the establishment of ASEAN Economic Community 2015, the ASEAN tourism attractiveness needs to be accompanied by excellent quality of services provided by the tourism industry within the region. Having high-skilled tourism workers to deliver services should become a norm to guarantee satisfaction of tourists visiting the region. To accomplish this commitment, tourism workers need to have cultural excellence as well.[11] As a result, the authors are interested in studying about cultural intelligence to make innovative knowledge

destination model for sustainable competitive advantage for Thailand. The research applied conceptual research framework of G. Richards and J. Wilson (2006)[5], Hopeken (2013)[12]; Chox Leung (2002)[13]; Olmedax Sheldon (2002)[14]; M. Fuchs et. al. (2010)[15]; D. Livermore (2010)[16] to make an open-ended questionnaire for the first round and the answers from the first round would be constructed into questionnaire in the second and third round further.

2. METHODS

This research is a qualitative research using opinions of experts through 3-iteration Delphi

technique collecting opinions of academicians who concern in cultural intelligence and tourism, and creative tourism, marketers from public and private sector, including both local and ASEAN Economic Community. The sample consisted of 17 persons based on Thomas T. Macmillan criteria with standard error level of 0.04.[17] The conceptual framework refers to 4 strategic dimensions: 1) management of knowledge quality, 2) quality of utility management, 3) management of knowledge transferring to customers /tourists, and 4) training management for tourism service personnel.

Table 1 Number of Panelists used in Delphi Technique

No. of Panelists	Range of Error	Decreased Error
1 - 5	1.02 - 0.70	0.50
5 - 9	0.70 - 0.58	0.12
9 - 13	0.58 - 0.54	0.04
13 - 17	0.54 - 0.50	0.04
17 - 21	0.50 - 0.48	0.02
21 - 25	0.48 - 0.46	0.02
25 - 28	0.46 - 0.44	0.02

Source: Thomas T. Macmillan (1971)[17]

The author used 3 sets of questionnaire as a research instrument.

- Questionnaire of the first round is open-ended questionnaire to collect opinions from the panelists and should be returned within 2 weeks.

- Questionnaire of the second round is 5-rating scale constructed by synthesizing the answer from the first round to create each item and send back to the same panelists to answer.

- Questionnaire of the third round is 5-rating scale but also show mean, median and interquartile range (IR), together with the answers in second round

The data had been collected from November 2014 to March 2015. Data in the second and third round had been collected and analyzed with descriptive statistics: median, and interquartile range. The value of median should not less than 4.00 and the interquartile range should not greater than 1.50 to confirm the consensus of the answers, otherwise considered dissension.

3. Results

The answers in the first round can be analyzed and classified into subgroups as follows:

1. Management of Knowledge Quality
 - 1.1 Belief Management
 - 1.2 Management of Knowledge Quality
 - 1.3 Awareness Management
 - 1.4 AEC Culture Management
 - 1.5 Management of Local Entrepreneurs and Local Administration
2. Quality of Utility Management
 - 2.1 Value Creation Policy
 - 2.2 Personnel Skill Improvement
 - 2.3 Integrated Collaboration Building
 - 2.4 Cultural Knowledge Exchange
 - 2.5 Building Cultural Knowledge Management Skills via Internet/Social Network
3. Management of Knowledge Transferring to Customers /Tourists

3.1 Consideration of Feedback from Customers / Tourists

3.2 Building Opinion Exchange Activity

3.3 Customers / Tourists' Behavior Analysis

3.4 Common Everyday Culture Creation

3.5 Creative Tourism Oriented Education

4. Training Management for Tourism Service Personnel

4.1 Integrated Training to Tourism Service Providers.

4.2 Training to collaborate between Local Government and Civil Society

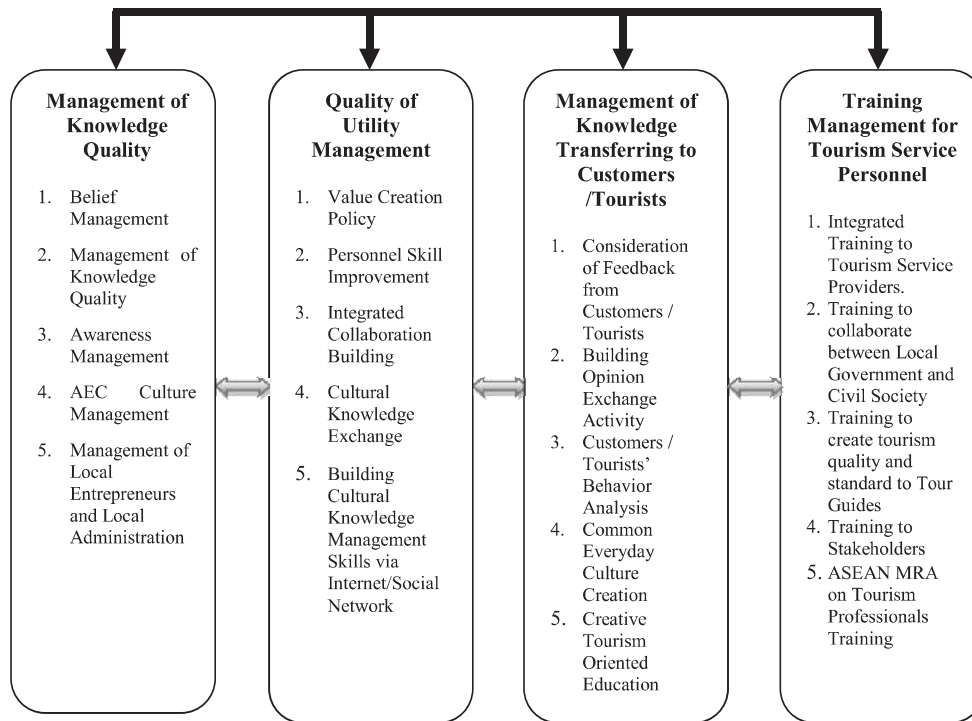
4.3 Training to create tourism quality and standard to Tour Guides

4.4 Training to Stakeholders

4.5 ASEAN MRA on Tourism Professionals Training

After synthesizing the answers in the first round, the authors constructed the 5-rating scale questionnaire for the second round and the third round. The data was analyzed with median and interquartile range. For the third round, the values of median and interquartile were presented to the panelists in order that the panelists could confirm or change their answers. For all items, the values of median is not less than 4.00 and the value of interquartile range is not greater than 0.99 showing the harmony or consensus in opinion complying with 4-dimension strategy in the first round.

Figure 2 Innovative Knowledge Destination Model for Sustainable Competitive Advantage



From the model, the authors have proposed a strategic guideline for cultural intelligence management in AEC to create sustainable competitive advantages for creative tourism in Thailand.

4. Conclusion And Suggestion

4.1 Conclusion

The purpose of this research was to analyze the trend of cultural intelligence in ASEAN Economic Community and then to synthesize such trend to be the innovative knowledge destination model in order to attain sustainable competitive advantage to

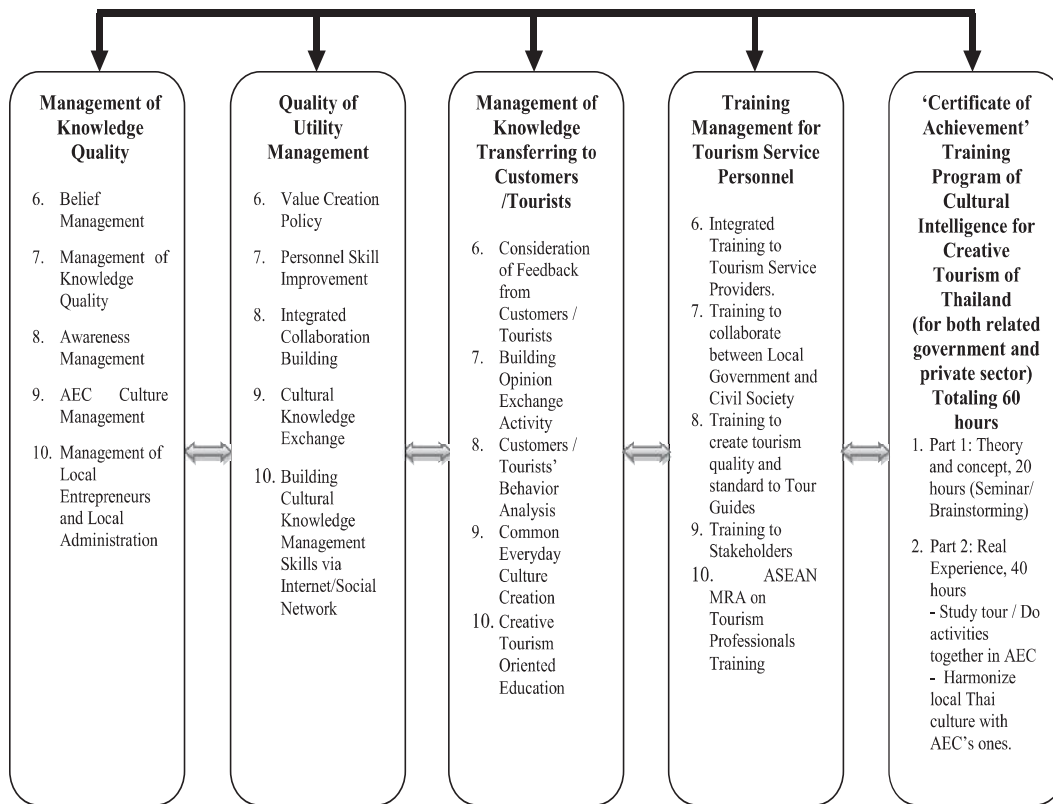
creative tourism of Thailand. The experts and savants has consensus opinions that strategy of cultural intelligence for tourism business should comprise of 4 dimensions: 1) management of knowledge quality, 2) quality of utility management, 3) management of knowledge transferring to customers /tourists, and 4) training management for tourism service personnel. This model might create marketing approach for creative tourism as well.

From the model above, the authors have developed to be the training curriculum of cultural intelligence in AEC to gain competitive

advantage in sustainable creative tourism industry for related government and private sectors, totaling 60 hours. The attendants of the training will receive ‘Certificate of

Achievement’ or ‘Graduate Diploma’. Then the model will be proposed to be national strategy to gain a competitive advantage for Thailand further.

Figure 3 Innovative Knowledge Destination Model for Sustainable Competitive Advantage with 60-hour Certificate-of-Achievement Training Curriculum



4.2 Suggestion

General Suggestion

1. Ministry of Culture should collaborate with Ministry of Foreign Affairs establish authorized organization dealing with educating and informing related government and private sectors about ASEAN and other foreign culture to indoctrinate cultural intelligence.

2. To accomplish insight cultural intelligence, the authorized organization should disseminate knowledge of cultural intelligence to targeted tourist provinces under the Road-map toward ASEAN MRA, such as Bangkok, Chonburi, Khonkaen, Chiangmai, Trad, Chantaburi, etc.

3. Educational institution and/or public and private sector should be promoted to conduct research and development to gain knowledge of cultural intelligence in ASEAN and other foreign culture complying with ASEAN MRA No. 8.

Suggestion for future research

1. This research aims to search for cultural intelligence model for sustainable competitive advantage in creative tourism business only; therefore, the future research might search for sustainable competitive to other industries such as apparel exporting business, agricultural business, education service business, fashion designing business, etc.

2. There should be future research for other businesses in order to increase cultural intelligence oriented competitive advantages after AEC in the year 2015.

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