



CREATIVE CITIES IN SRI LANKA: UNDERSTANDING THE CULTURAL HERITAGE,
MODERNITY AND THE SUSTAINABILITY OF CREATIVE INDUSTRIES IN
PILIMATALAWA, MOLAGODA AND WEWALDENIYA.

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Abstract

The research project aims to introduce creative city concept to Sri Lanka. The project will align with the concept of creative cities under the UNESCO intangible cultural heritage which highlighted area of Kandy and related areas and promote access to local craft culture along with protection and promotion of cultural diversity of indigenous art and craft heritage. UNESCO world heritage city Kandy has selected as the study setting of the research. Many traditional arts and crafts based creative industries have directly facilitated to Socio-cultural economic infrastructure since the city had been a Kingdom from 15th Century AD to 1815. Even after the British took hold the capital of Kandy in the year of 1815, the traditional industries has been continued up to date. A living tradition which is based on the industries is still demanding in the life and the culture of the Sri Lankan people. The objective of the research is to investigate how sustainable the creative industries of brass wear of Pilimthalwa, pottery of Molagoda and reed work of Wewaldeniya in the context of the present city development plan. The research project started on April 2019 . This is a qualitative research approach. Research design involves field surveys, on field observations, interviews and discussions to gather data and information. A qualitative analysis of the data will be performed using the literature review and theoretical models. Mapping research with documentation will carry out according to ethnographic study methodology. This project will add value to sustainable industries of Sri Lanka. The project outcomes will be able to meaningfully implement in several institutions of Sri Lanka as well. The outcomes will be very much vital for the regional development/regional planning aspects of these industries (an angle on regional economy) within local and globalizing circuits. Review the existing development plan in relation to creative industries, Spatial distribution map of brass industries in the area towards planning a map of actor networks will forward a set of guidelines in relation to city planning to promote the industry in more sustainable way in the future. Categorization of the art and craft aspects of the industry (recording of Traditional form of art) is beneficial to stakeholders of the art and craft field (professionals/apprentices) and students to gain insight knowledge on the craft then transfer traditional knowledge into modern perspective.

Key words: Creative city, Creative industry, creative class/cluster, traditional arts and craft, Urban Development plan



Introduction

Creative city concept focuses on building up the identity of a city again in order to facilitate the concurrent economic constitution of a country. There are key driven factors in creative city ideas such as creative industry and creative cluster which provide sustainable survival of a creative city. UNESCO world heritage city Kandy has selected as the study setting of the research. Many traditional arts and crafts based creative industries have directly facilitated to Socio-cultural economic infrastructure since the city had been a Kingdom from 15th Century AD to 1815. Even after the British took hold the capital of Kandy in the year of 1815, the traditional industries has been continued up to date. A living tradition which is based on the industries is still demanding in the life and the culture of the Sri Lankan people.

Traditional creative industries have been continued in the vicinities of Kandy since the days of the Kandyan Kingdom (5th Century AD to 1815). Handloom of *Thalagune*, Brass wear of *Pilimathalawa*, *Handessa*, pottery of *Molagoda*, Kegole, *Laksha* of *Lali-ambey*, *Mathale* are some of the examples. During the Kingdom of Kandy traditional artisans were looked after by the traditional socio-economic system of *rajakariya* (Coomaraswamy 1959). The essential royal four industries were based on traditional arts and craft artisans. They were given lands and gifts of honors by the King of the Kandyan era. Many of traditional artisans still carefully protect the *sannasa* ,(grant) the gift of land or honors which have been inherited from inheritance.

UNESCO constitution defines the traditional notion of artisans, discusses their habitat of living, values, norms and customs. One significant fact that the constitution stresses on that no artisan should shift from their natural or familiar land of living where he practices the traditional industry. UNESCO constitution identifies that there is a mutual interdependence between the artisan and the land. Artists are differentially distributed among larger cities, and that this distribution is a function of artists' preferences for places to live, local efforts to nurture artistic development and livelihoods, and concentrations of artist-employing industries such as media, advertising, and publishing. Therefore, it is necessary to pay greater attention in regard to amateur practitioners' specific occupations as collective actors in urban development and to the ways that these interact with industries.

Scientific hypothesis or research question can be forward. In the context of Sri Lanka the mutual correspondence is being challenged and becoming a threat to its sustainable survival relatively to current socio-cultural, political and economic factors. Even through socio-cultural, political and economic factors affect creative industries are vary it is believed that the main structure which explains the bond between the artisan and the creative industry is remaining the same which is to be the bond between land and the artisan. It is predicted that the creative industry survives in the inherited land which is handed down from generation to generation. The original research question is therefore to investigate how sustainable the creative industries of *Pilimatalawa* (brass wear) *Molagoda*(pottery) and *Wewaldeniya* (reed) in the context of the present city development plan. In this backdrop, this study attempts to question whether the existing city plan promotes creative industries in the local area.

Maintenance of the creative industries is key task in sustainable survival of the creative city. Kandy is observed relatively to UNESCO standards characteristics of the creative city parameters. Therefore, the objective is to observe and investigate to what extent creative city characteristics with a view of creative industry in the UNESCO world cultural heritage city Kandy and said villages and in Sri Lanka. Therefore is it expected to promote the function of creative industry in creative city and integrating into planning programme and fostering scientific, technical and artistic studies with a view of effective function of creative industry.



Literature review

The important role of Creativity has arisen as a vital resource to be competitive in the worldwide. The Economy of Culture in Europe report originates by the European Commission in 2006 states that “Creativity is a complex process of innovation, combining some or all of the following dimensions: ideas, skills, technology, management, production process as well as culture. Creativity has the ability to benefit almost all economic sectors”. (European Commission 2006). In the words of Anthropologist Tylor (1988) reviews the multitude of definitions of creativity in the literature and groups the general scientific approaches into four main areas, which parallel to the 4ps of creativity (Rhods 1961).

- The creative person
- The creative process
- The creative product
- The creative environment

The idea has been recognized in UK in the 90's (Neelands& Choe,2008), Australia (Commonwealth Government 1994) Singapore (Ooi 2006) and South Africa (Rogerson 2007). Creativity is therefore attractive as a policy option for motivating range of economic, cultural and social outcomes. Creativity is attractive as a policy option for stimulating. Public sector intervention in creative development has basically involved three approaches (Campbell 2011).

- Creative industries
- Creative cities
- Creative class

- Creative industries

Creative industry plans are to stimulate the development of creative productions through support for the creative industry sector, which is broadly defined to include advertising, architecture, art, crafts, design, fashion, film, music, performing arts, publishing, software, toys and games, TV and radio and video games (DCMS 1998). Creativity was historically associated with the creative person, although Ambile (1996) suggested that in recent decades creativity research has increasingly tended to highlight the creative product. Furthermore, the definition of creative industries has been expanded to include tourism (Bagwell, 2009).

- Creative cities

Creative city has been discussed by Charles Landry in 2000.He (Landry 2000) discussed that creativity was required to solve urban problems, including the development of creative production and new governance systems to allow creativity to flourish in society as a whole.

- Creative class (Creative clusters)

The creative class approach explored by Florida (2002) is based on the idea that there are growing numbers of people engaged in creative occupations who are attracted to places because of their creative atmosphere. By attracting the creative class, a city can stimulate economic activity and improve their image.



These three approaches therefore have different emphases in terms of creativity, stimulating a specific industry sector, developing the creative potential of the whole city, or attracting a specific group of producers and consumers (Richard 2001). All three attempts come together is in the development of cultural or creative clusters, which as Flew (2005) notes are a more direct attempt to manage space to promote and develop creativity. The creative industries approach leans having on traditional economic theory about the effect of production clustery (Porter 1998).

Creative city strategies also tend to be organized around specific creative clusters (Evens 2009), creative precincts, (Hee, Schroepor, Nanxi& Ze2009) or ethnic enclaves (Show 2007). These creative hot-spots are often argued to stimulate the development of the creative industries as well as acting as a magnet for the consumption power of the creative class and tourists. These creative hot-spots are strengthening the identity, attraction power and market positions of places, stimulating a more entrepreneurial approach to the arts and culture and stimulating innovation and creativity (Mommaas 2004). Creative clusters therefore have an important role in building the local creative economy as well as attracting tourist and adding to the attractiveness of places. In the case of many creative clusters the old industrial practitioner on the basic of specific endowed resources provides the space required to develop new creative activities. City such as Kandy once at the forefront of the old industrial economy are now also at the forefront of the creative economy.

Material and Methods

This is a qualitative research approach. Research design involves field surveys, on field observations, interviews and discussions to gather data and information. A qualitative analysis of the data will be performed using the literature review and theoretical models. Mapping research with documentation will carry out according to ethnographic study methodology. The researcher is doing a preliminary research as an observer participant. The first it is expected to gather data from primary sources. Data will be collected from original actors of creative cluster samples and will be conducted via the methods mentioned as below. Questioner survey is intended to carry out gather information from artisans and scholars -paper and pencil. In-depth interviews and focus group discussions are expected to carry out. Secondary Sources will be reading books, project reports visiting district museums and universities. Sketches, photographs, video clips which identify and help mapping traditional forms of craftsmanship in post- conflict areas of Sri Lanka will be examined. The gathered data will be observed and categorized then analyzed.

Proposed activity schedule is as follows,

1. Review the existing literature pertaining to the research questions.
2. Review the existing development plan in relation to creative industries
3. Field observations.
4. Mapping the area with locations of artisans. Statistical analysis with the help of village officer and National Craft Council, Colombo according to their registration. (number of artisans in each *grama-sewa-wasama*, Contact details, address.
5. Questioner survey, non-participant observations, focus group discussions and interviews
6. Data analysis
7. Reporting and Publication of articles and papers

The expected outputs (deliverables) of the project are as follows,



- Spatial distribution map of brass industries in the area
- A map of actor networks
- Categorization of the art and craft aspects of the industry (recording of Traditional form of art)
- A report on the sustainability aspects of the industry, a classification system for types of products and their properties will be documented as follows,

Table 1: a classification system for types of products and their properties

Type of the product	Colour	Volume and properties	Shape and structure	Surface design	texture	taste	sound
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Recipe or specification sheet pertaining to each product category will be documented as follows,

Table 2: Recipe or specification sheet pertaining to each product category

Craft	materials	Recipe and specification	Colour in row and colour after the production	Process of production
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Detail research design of the study setting is explained below.

Table3: Detail research design of the study setting

Research approach	Research techniques (tools)	Outcome
<p>Literature Review</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To recognise the national, provincial and local level policies that have a direct and indirect impact on creative industries in the case study area 2. To examine relevant physical planning interventions that have an impact (positive and negative) on the selected sites. 3. To explore the historical evolution of selected sites. 4. To explore the socio-economic background of sites. 	<p>To gather secondary data, the research will employ the following techniques:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Policy Review (referring national, provincial and local level policy documents, economic reforms and development plans) - Book review (Historical reviews, folk stories and photos) - Census and statistics data - Maps (collect maps and plans) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Compile a policy review - Comprehensive analyses on the evolution of the physical and social form of sites - Visualise the development of sites on maps



<p>Mapping exercise</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To demarcate the site boundaries 2. To prepare site maps for each site 3. To observe the physical development of the sites over the past. 	<p>To achieve the mentioned objectives, the study will use</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Observation - Key informants' interviews - Secondary data - Google maps/satellite images/ survey plans 	<p>Complete site maps for each site to cover the following areas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Existing Land use pattern - Existing Street network - Previous developments on different maps
<p>Field work</p> <p>Objective:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. To understand the transformation of the physical form of the sites 2. To identify the demographic character of the sites. 3. To understand industry people's perspectives on strengths and challengers when they engage in the industry 	<p>Based on the political, economic factors of the country, the study will mainly focus on four periods to identify the physical and social transformation of creative industries.</p> <p>Periods:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Before 1948 (before independence) 2. 1950s to 80s (closed economy) 3. 1980s to 2010 (introduction and growth of open economy and civil war period) 4. 2010-2019 (post-war period with an increase of tourism/ growth of traffic along the highway/highway expansion) <p>The study will employ the following methods to capture the following areas for identified periods:</p> <p>Questionnaire survey</p> <p>Key informants' interviews</p>	<p>Compile a report on the current status and historical development</p> <p>Prepare maps</p>



	<p>Focus group discussions</p> <p>Observations</p> <p>Storytelling/folk stories</p> <p>Key focus areas:</p> <p>1. Land</p> <p>1.1 Land size (Changes in land size over 50 years)</p> <p>1.2 Land use (Residential, commercial, mixed-use etc.)</p> <p>2. Buildings</p> <p>2.1 (a) Building Typology (Use: Retail – Cane only, cottage industry, residential, mixed etc.)</p> <p>2.2 (b) Structure of buildings</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Size (floor area)- Number of floors- Material (permanent/ temporary)- Form (architectural styles) <p>3. Street network</p> <p>3.1 Main Road (Kandy Colombo road development)</p> <p>3.2 Expansion of adjoining street network</p> <p>3. Demographic change</p> <p>3.1 Number of families</p> <p>3.2 Population density</p> <p>3.3 Number of houses</p>	
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Research approach, research techniques and expected outcomes are described and expected to achieve within the project duration.

Results and Discussion

Significance of the proposed research

This research is an ongoing research started on April 2019. This project is based in the region of Kandy and its vicinities. Kandy is the last kingdom of Sri Lanka heralds a history of long and preserved traditions that date back to the times of the last indigenous King of Sri Lanka. The city and its arts and traditions have been recognized as a UNESCO cultural heritage site since 1988. In the context of *Pilimalawa (brass wear)* *Molagoda (pottery)* and *Wewaldeniya (reed)* are the signature of the cities and the areas are well known creative industry places among all the Sri Lankans and some international community. These industries have been functioning over many centuries and contribute to promote the local economy of the areas. However, we know little about how sustainable this industry even though it surviving in the area. Further, less is known about whether the existing city development plans understood the challenges encountered by people in the industry. To our knowledge such a study has not been conducted in Sri Lanka and less is known in the existing literature. Moreover, this study is significant as in this study, is aimed to uncover aspects related to sustainability and planning responses. Thereby, this study finding will contribute our knowledge in creative cities and promote to a make sustainable creative industry in the area.

Creative cities are places creative's, artists and professionals of creative industries want to be in, visit and explore, take inspiration, build a network and eventually move their activities. Their workshops, galleries, restaurants, bars are the "most superficial manifestation of a creative environment" (Leadbeater and Oakley 1999:31) and at the same time the immediate sign of a dynamic and vibrant lifestyle. In order to sustain this lifestyle, there is the existence of a whole sector of art and creativity which is able to generate employment and outputs in the services of cultural industries (Sassen 1995, Tay 2005). There are policy decision makers, from local or national governments able to get the inputs form the urban environment or international events and answer with initiatives concerned with the distribution of resources between global and local demand (Leadbeater and Oakley 1999). Moreover, the "creativity" of a certain city is also about how local urban spaces can be rejuvenated, re-imagined within a competitive global framework. This will be researched the relation of these industries with the urban environment and the public policies.

Conclusion

National relevance of the proposed research is high. The creativity can be raised to a public policy. In recent years, the urban cultural policies and major projects of cultural investments have been undertaken to rehabilitate the image of many cities and gave birth to processes strongly focused on competitive promotion of these urban areas, in which often the economic and commercial dimension tends to prevail over the cultural aspect. Large cultural projects are included in plans of urban regeneration in order to redefine the image of the city, build a new identity in which culture, creativity and innovation find a deeper rooting within the flow of economic activities and touristic promotion. Therefore it is expected to forward a set of guidelines in relation to study the city planning to promote the industry in more sustainable way in the future.

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