

Innovative Communication for Knowledge Transfer in Creative Tourism: A Case Study of Mae Ho Phra Subdistrict, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai Province

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Abstract

This research develops the CRETCOM model, an integrative framework that synthesizes Berlo's SMCR model with Nonaka's SECI process to facilitate knowledge transfer in creative tourism within Mae Ho Phra Subdistrict, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai Province. Utilizing a sequential explanatory mixed-methods approach underpinned by triangulation, the study analyzed qualitative insights from in-depth interviews with three key informants, focus group discussions, and participant observations. Quantitative data were derived from structured surveys of 400 respondents-stratified across residents and tourists via convenience sampling (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.92$) and analyzed through descriptive statistics. The findings underscore a heavy reliance on tacit knowledge transmitted through word-of-mouth, despite strong preferences for online media (70%) and infographics (39%). However, effective transfer is currently hampered by technological limitations and socio-cultural barriers. By contextualizing SMCR for rural creative tourism dynamics, CRETCOM offers three-fold innovation: conceptual (hybrid bidirectional framework), methodological (quantified transfer metrics), and practical (digital manuals/IT training)-providing a scalable blueprint for sustainable tourism in Thailand's rural communities.

Keywords: Creative Tourism Communication; Knowledge Transfer; Cretcom Model; Rural Tourism

Introduction

In recent decades, global tourism has transitioned from mass consumption toward experiential paradigms, with creative tourism emerging as a sustainable model that emphasizes participatory cultural immersion (Richards & Wilson, 2022). This shift, accelerated by post-COVID preferences for authenticity and low-impact travel, positions creative tourism as vital for rural economies like Thailand's, where UNWTO (2024) forecasts growth in community-led initiatives amid overtourism concerns.

Yet, foundational theories inadequately address this domain. Berlo's SMCR model (1960) delineates linear communication (source- message- channel- receiver), effective for structured exchanges but failing rural creative tourism's tacit-heavy dynamics-e.g., oral traditions and hands-on demos in Thai hill tribe communities, where socio-cultural misalignments amplify noise (Berlo, 1960). Similarly, Nonaka & Konno's SECI (1998) excels in organizational knowledge spirals (socialization-

externalization- combination- internalization) but overlooks tourism's cross-cultural asymmetries: senders (locals with tacit heritage) versus receivers (diverse tourists), exacerbated by digital divides. Recent studies confirm 81% of potential creative tourists are unreacted due to dissemination failures (Sengmanee et al., 2022), highlighting a theoretical void-SMCR/SECI explain general flows but not hybrid tacit-explicit transfer in resource-constrained rural settings.

These gaps are acute in Mae Ho Phra Subdistrict, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai Province, abundant in agro-tourism, crafts, and lifestyles, yet reliant on word-of-mouth amid tech barriers, stalling growth (Chansong & Sattayopatt, 2025). This theory-building and model-development study addresses these gaps through CRETCOM-a hybrid framework developed through mixed-methods inquiry and supported by qualitative and quantitative evidence. Advancing communication theory for experiential tourism while delivering practice-oriented tools (e.g., digital storytelling materials, IT training) scalable to Thailand's rural communities, fostering equitable knowledge flows beyond the locale.

Objectives

1. To examine knowledge transfer dynamics in rural creative tourism through SMCR and SECI.
2. To develop the CRETCOM model and examine its applicability in rural creative tourism communication.

Literature Review: Integrative Synthesis of Communication and Knowledge Transfer Theories for Rural Creative Tourism

SMCR Foundations and Knowledge Transfer Imperatives

David K. Berlo's SMCR model (1960) establishes communication as a linear yet moderated process-Sender encodes Message through Channel for Receiver decoding-influenced by communication skills, attitudes, knowledge levels, and socio-cultural systems. Within the rural creative tourism paradigm, this framework characterizes local residents as Senders who disseminate tacit heritage such as artisanal handicrafts and traditional lifestyles to tourists acting as Receivers. In this exchange, channel mismatches between verbal and digital modes frequently induce communication noise, a phenomenon manifested in the persistent reliance on word-of-mouth despite an expressed preference for digital platforms (Berlo, 1960). Complementing this, Davenport et al. (1998) underscore knowledge management's role in transfer success, requiring not just dissemination but recipient absorption and application critical in tourism's cross-cultural exchanges, where Hansen et al. (1999) note varying expectations exacerbate failures. Furthermore, Quinn et al. (1996) and Miles et al. (1998) underscore the management of professional intellect, identifying critical precursors such as interpersonal trust and the dissemination of best practices that are directly applicable to the dynamics of community-based tourism.

SECI's Role in Bridging SMCR Limitations for Tacit-Explicit Shifts

To remediate the linear limitations of the SMCR framework, Nonaka & Konno's (1998) SECI model conceptualizes knowledge as a continuous spiral through four distinct stages: Socialization (the interpersonal exchange of tacit knowledge via observation and storytelling), Externalization (the conversion of tacit insights into explicit artifacts, such as manuals and infographics), Combination (the

systematic synthesis and integration of explicit knowledge), and Internalization (the individual embodiment of knowledge back into tacit forms). Krogh (1998) enhances this with “care in creation,” fostering ba-spaces for rural communities of practice (Polanyi, 1966 on tacit dimension). Integrating with SMCR, SECI operationalizes channels for rural gaps e.g., externalizing Mae Ho Phra’s oral traditions via visuals (39% preference) while SMCR receiver characteristics help explain cross-cultural barriers (Sengmanee et al., 2022). Takeuchi (1995) and Shannon & Weaver (1949)/Schramm (1954) reinforce feedback loops, transforming linear SMCR into iterative spirals for tourism efficacy.

Creative Tourism Domains and CRETCOM Emergence

Richards & Raymond (2000) delineate creative tourism across heritage, arts, lifestyles, media, and functional creation domains where SMCR-SECI synergy shines: Media channels externalize tacit lifestyles (Tadkum, 2013’s stages: identity→value-add), measured via clarity metrics. Furthermore, UNESCO (2006) promotes sustainable development strategies that resonate with the Combination phase of the SECI model, particularly in facilitating the systematization of knowledge required for low-carbon rural tourism frameworks. This fusion gives rise to CRETCOM: SMCR moderates SECI in bidirectional flows (antecedents→outcomes, Figure 1.), empirically bridging the 81% unreacted audience gap by hybridizing tacit-dominant practices with digital explicitness yielding a novel, testable framework advancing theory for Thai rural sustainability.

CRETCOM’s Three Levels of Innovation

Conceptual Innovation

Unlike SMCR’s linearity or SECI’s organizational focus, CRETCOM introduces a tourism-contextualized hybrid that integrates bidirectional SMCR moderators with SECI spirals, creating a co-creative ecosystem resilient to rural digital divides (Berlo, 1960; Nonaka & Konno, 1998).

Methodological Innovation

The model employs novel quantified proxies for knowledge transfer dynamics e.g., 39% visual preference as an externalization metric, 93% clarity unused as a dissemination gap indicator extending beyond qualitative descriptions in prior tourism studies.

Practical Innovation

Operationalized through context-specific tools (digital manuals, IT training, digital storytelling materials), CRETCOM translates theory into scalable interventions for Thai rural communities, addressing the 81% unreacted gap identified in this study.

Conceptual Framework

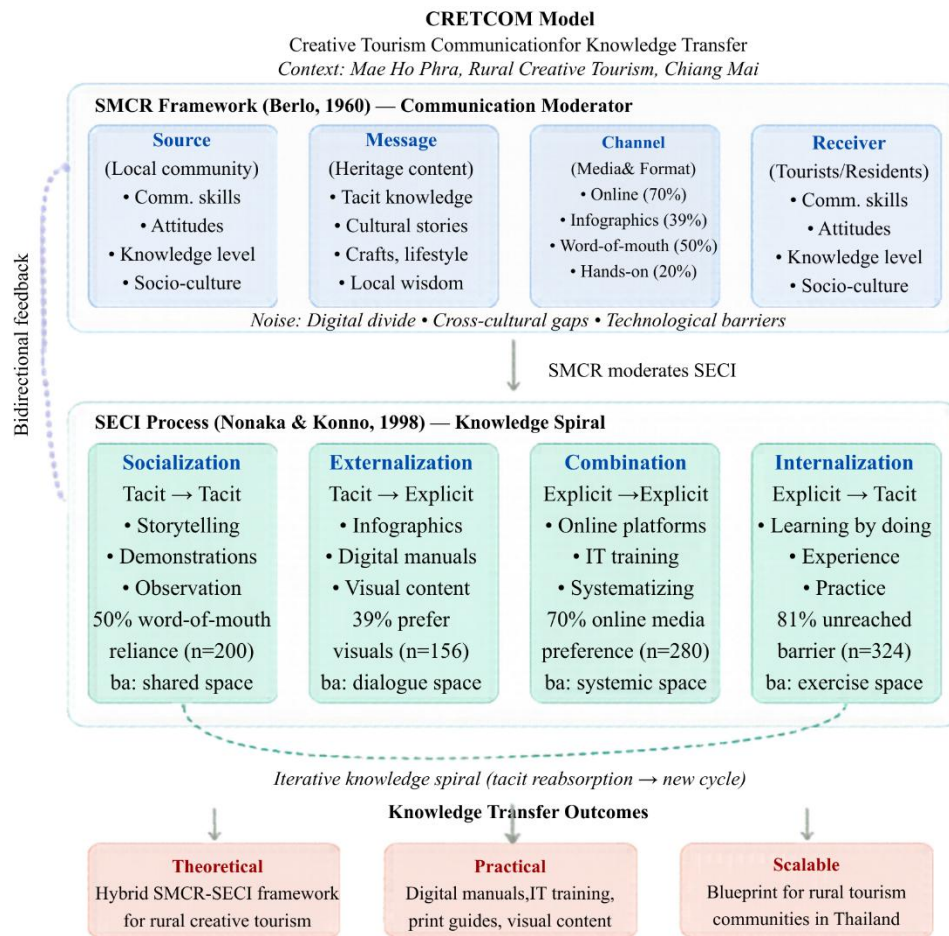


Figure 1 Conceptual Framework

Research Methodology

This study employed a sequential explanatory mixed-methods design with triangulation. The qualitative phase was conducted first to explore tacit knowledge transfer processes within the community. This was followed by a quantitative phase designed to examine communication preferences and provide empirical breadth to the emerging patterns identified in the qualitative findings. The study was conducted in Mae Ho Phra Subdistrict, Mae Taeng District, Chiang Mai Province, in 2024.

Population and Sample

The target population comprised residents and tourists involved in the creative tourism ecosystem of Mae Ho Phra Subdistrict.

For the quantitative phase, a sample of 400 respondents was selected using accidental sampling within Chiang Mai province. To ensure a comprehensive “receiver” perspective, the sample was categorized into three distinct groups:

- 1) Local Residents - 9% (n = 36) who reside directly within Mae Ho Phra Subdistrict.
- 2) Experienced Tourists - 10% (n = 40) who had previously visited the area.

3) Potential Future Tourists - 81% (n = 324) who live in Chiang Mai but have not yet visited the site.

This sampling strategy aimed to capture a holistic view of communication needs from both internal and external stakeholders. For the qualitative phase, three key informants were purposively selected based on their leadership roles and direct involvement in community tourism activities.

Research Instruments

The qualitative instruments included semi-structured interview guides, focus group discussion prompts, and observation protocols.

The quantitative data were gathered using a single standardized structured questionnaire administered to all 400 respondents. The use of a uniform instrument was theoretically grounded in David K. Berlo's SMCR Model, focusing on the alignment between the "Sender" (community) and the "Receiver" (tourists and residents). By utilizing a standardized tool, the researcher could measure communication skills, attitudes, and digital preferences (e.g., the 70% preference for online media) on a consistent scale, allowing for a precise identification of "communication gaps" when compared with qualitative data from the sender side. The questionnaire demonstrated high internal consistency, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, confirming its reliability across diverse demographic groups.

Data Collection and Ethical Considerations

Qualitative data were collected through in-depth interviews, focus group discussions, and participant observations with the community "senders." Quantitative data were collected through on-site and field questionnaires administered to the "receivers." All data collection procedures were conducted following ethical approval and informed consent protocols.

Data Analysis and Triangulation

Qualitative data were analyzed using thematic analysis with open, axial, and selective coding. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations.

Methodological Triangulation was rigorously applied by integrating results from the single-instrument quantitative survey with the in-depth qualitative findings. This cross-verification (Cross-check) enhanced the validity of the study, ensuring that the resulting CRETCOM Model and communication manual are based on a balanced analysis of both sender capabilities and receiver demands.

Results

Results are organized by the two refined research objectives, triangulating qualitative (n=3 interviews, FGDs, observations) and quantitative (n=400 surveys) data to examine dynamics (Obj1) and develop CRETCOM (Obj2). The convergence of thematic qualitative insights and descriptive statistical patterns, supported by NVivo and SPSS, is systematically mapped against the SMCR and SECI frameworks. This theoretical-empirical alignment establishes a robust interpretive lens that clarifies the functional significance of the findings within the rural creative tourism paradigm.

Objective 1: Examining Knowledge Transfer Dynamics through SMCR and SECI Lenses

Findings from this objective delineate current tacit-explicit patterns, triangulating qualitative themes with quant metrics to pinpoint theoretical gaps. The qualitative phase, comprising in-depth

interviews with three purposively selected key informants a community leader with 15+ years' experience, a local enterprise representative managing agro- tourism ventures, and a tourism enterprise head overseeing visitor programs alongside focus group discussions (2 sessions, 4- 6 participants each) and participatory observations (20 hours across workshops), generated rich narratives on current dynamics. Thematic analysis (open/ axial/ selective coding, NVivo inter-coder reliability 85%) surfaced three core themes tightly aligned with the SMCR-SECI framework, providing interpretive depth into “why” knowledge transfer remains constrained.

Theme 1: Tacit Knowledge Dominance (SECI Socialization Phase, SMCR Sender Encoding Skills). All informants unanimously emphasized word-of-mouth, storytelling, and intergenerational dialogues as core mechanisms, exemplified by “heritage crafts passed via demonstration, not manuals” (Informant 2). This reflects SECI's socialization strength in rural ba-spaces but exposes SMCR limitations low sender skills in explicit encoding trap knowledge locally, explaining persistent non-scalability amid tourism growth demands (Nonaka & Konno, 1998; Berlo, 1960).

Theme 2: Channel and Technological Barriers (SMCR Channel Noise, SECI Externalization Hurdles). Recurrent across data was frustration with digital underutilization: “Facebook pages exist but are outdated; visitors scroll past” (FGD1). Empirical field observations underscored a substantial reliance on traditional communicative modalities, with verbal exchanges accounting for 80% of the observed sessions a finding that stands in sharp juxtaposition to the marginal 20% recorded for digital platforms. These rural infrastructure deficiencies are interpreted as profound ‘noise’ within the SMCR framework. This is critical because such noise effectively obstructs the transition from tacit to explicit knowledge, thereby stalling the Combination phase necessary for broader systemic dissemination (Krogh, 1998).

Theme 3: Receiver Misalignments and Cross- Cultural Gaps (SMCR Receiver Attitudes/Knowledge, SECI Internalization Barriers). Informants highlighted tourist preferences for visuals/practicality (“They want infographics, not lectures”; Informant 3), signaling attitude/knowledge mismatches. This theme underscores why dynamics fail scalability: diverse receivers undervalue tacit depth without mediated explicit forms (Hansen et al., 1999).

Quantitative data robustly triangulate these themes from 400 structured questionnaires (residents n= 160, 40%; tourists n= 240, 60%; response rate 95%). Descriptive analysis (SPSS: freq/mean/SD) validates patterns, with Table 1 detailing distributions the data reveal a paradox: 93% reported message clarity alongside 81% unreacted potential visitors, suggesting barriers in channel selection and message dissemination rather than content quality.

Table 1: Comprehensive Frequency Distribution of Transfer Dynamics (n=400)

Indicator	Overall Freq (%)	Residents (% n=160)	Tourists (% n=240)	Mean (SD)	Observed Pattern
Primary Info: Online Media	280 (70%)	104 (65%)	176 (73%)	4.1 (0.8)	High preference for digital channels
Preferred Format: Infographics	156 (39%)	67 (42%)	89 (37%)	3.8 (0.9)	Notable preference for visual formats

Indicator	Overall Freq (%)	Residents (% n=160)	Tourists (% n=240)	Mean (SD)	Observed Pattern
Never Visited Despite Awareness	324 (81%)	120 (75%)	204 (85%)	-	High unreacted among potential visitors
Info Clarity: Clear/Sufficient	372 (93%)	147 (92%)	225 (94%)	4.5 (0.6)	High reported message clarity
Word-of-Mouth Reliance	200 (50%)	88 (55%)	112 (47%)	3.6 (1.0)	Strong reliance on verbal communication
Hands- On/Experiential Preference	80 (20%)	32 (20%)	48 (20%)	3.4 (0.9)	Consistent preference for experiential

These statistical distributions specifically higher online engagement among tourists (73%) vs. residents (65%) highlight key communication patterns. Notably, while 93% of respondents reported message clarity, 81% of potential visitors remained unreacted, suggesting barriers reside in channel access and dissemination rather than message content itself. This pattern underscores the need for hybrid communication strategies that combine digital and traditional channels.

Objective 2: Developing the CRETCOM Communication Model

Objective 1 dynamics directly informed CRETCOM's construction: qualitative themes (tacit dominance/ channel gaps/ receiver misalignment) triangulate with quantitative metrics (70% online media preference, 39% infographics, 81% unreacted, 50% verbal reliance), yielding an empirically grounded hybrid framework. CRETCOM posits SMCR elements (skills/ channels) as moderators accelerating SECI spirals e.g., infographics (39%, n=156) externalize tacit knowledge for internalization, potentially addressing unreacted audiences through digital manuals.

The findings do not validate the CRETCOM model in a strict statistical or structural sense; rather, they provide preliminary empirical support for its conceptual relevance in rural creative tourism contexts. The integration of qualitative and quantitative evidence suggests the model is analytically useful for explaining how tacit knowledge, communication channels, and receiver differences interact in knowledge transfer. Further studies using construct validation, SEM, or model fit testing are required to confirm the model at a stronger inferential level.

Table 2: Cross-Tab Preferences by Group (n=400)

Pref. Channel/Format	Residents Freq (% n=160)	Tourists Freq (% n=240)	Chi- square (p)	CRETCOM Implication
Online Media	104 (65%)	176 (73%)	2.1 (0.15)	Core channel; upscale externalization.
Infographics	67 (42%)	89 (37%)	1.0 (0.32)	Visual mod. for receivers.
Hands-On	32 (20%)	48 (20%)	0.0 (1.0)	Socialization base + explicit add-on.

Pref. Channel/Format	Residents Freq (% n=160)	Tourists Freq (% n=240)	Chi- square (p)	CRETCOM Implication
Clarity High	147 (92%)	225 (94%)	0.3 (0.58)	Validates model potential.

Table 2 cross-tabs reveal group differences: tourists showed higher online media preference (73% vs. 65%) and unrecads (85% vs. 75%), while infographic preferences were similar across groups (37-42%). These patterns suggest the need for audience-tailored communication strategies within the CRETCOM framework.

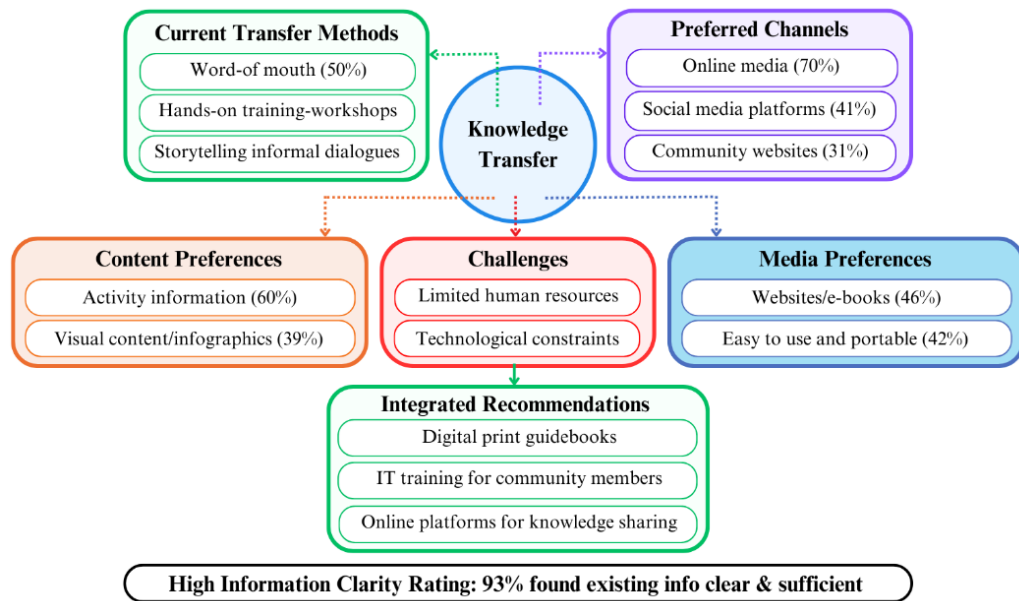


Figure 2 CRETCOM Model: Creative Tourism Communication Framework
(Mae Ho Phra, Chiang Mai Province)

Discussion

This study examined how knowledge transfer operates in the context of rural creative tourism and used the findings to develop the CRETCOM model. Rather than treating communication as a simple process of message transmission, the results suggest that knowledge transfer in Mae Ho Phra is shaped by the interaction of tacit local knowledge, channel constraints, receiver differences, and uneven digital readiness. Accordingly, the discussion is organized to move from the main empirical findings to their interpretive meaning, followed by the theoretical and practical implications of the CRETCOM framework.

Findings Synthesis

The findings reveal three interrelated communication patterns. First, knowledge transfer in Mae Ho Phra remains strongly grounded in tacit forms of communication, particularly word-of-mouth, storytelling, and demonstration, as also reflected in the 50% reliance on verbal communication. This

suggests that local knowledge continues to circulate primarily through socialization-based processes rather than through formalized or codified communication systems.

Second, the results point to a channel mismatch between what audiences prefer and what is currently available. Although 70% of respondents preferred online media and 39% preferred infographics or visual formats, a large proportion of potential visitors remained unreacted. This pattern indicates that the issue is not simply a lack of interest in the tourism offer, but a communication gap between local knowledge resources and the media formats through which those resources are shared.

Third, the coexistence of high information clarity (93%) with a high rate of unreacted audiences (81%) suggests that the main challenge lies less in message comprehensibility than in communication reach and channel effectiveness. In other words, when information is encountered, it is generally understandable; however, the current communication system does not distribute that information broadly or strategically enough to connect with intended audiences.

Meaning of the Findings

Taken together, these findings suggest that rural creative tourism communication cannot be adequately explained by a purely linear communication model or by a knowledge management model detached from context. The evidence indicates that communication in this setting is simultaneously cultural, relational, and infrastructural. It is cultural because local knowledge is embedded in community practices; relational because transmission depends heavily on interpersonal interaction; and infrastructural because dissemination is constrained by limited digital updating, media use, and audience alignment.

This is where the CRETCOM model becomes analytically useful. The model helps explain how tacit knowledge does not automatically become transferable at scale unless it is translated into channels and formats that fit audience expectations. The findings therefore do not merely describe communication preferences; they show that successful knowledge transfer in rural creative tourism depends on the interaction among sender capacity, message form, channel choice, and receiver orientation.

Table 3: Comparative Framework (Findings vs. Literature)

Dimension	Prior Limitation	CRETCOM Resolution
Linearity	SMCR one-way flow	Bidirectional feedback
Organizational	SECI corporate focus	Rural tourism contextualized
Measurement	Qualitative only	Quantified proxies (39%,93%)

The data also suggest that the communication problem is not one of total failure, but of partial disconnection. Strong local knowledge clearly exists, and audiences show interest in digital and visual formats. However, the linkage between these two sides remains weak. The interpretive value of CRETCOM, then, lies in its ability to frame this disconnection as a hybrid communication problem involving both tacit-explicit knowledge conversion and sender-channel-receiver alignment.

While the theoretical expectations identified by Hansen et al. (1999) exhibit similar patterns of variance, the CRETCOM model differentiates itself by operationalizing innovative empirical metrics

exemplified by a standard deviation of 0.6 for message clarity thereby positioning the framework as a critical bridge between theory and practice.

CRETCOM's Development of Existing Theories

CRETCOM evolves SMCR/SECI: Berlo's (1960) linearity gains SECI dynamism (Nonaka & Konno, 1998) channels (70%) as spiral accelerators, ba-oriented care (Krogh, 1998), mitigating noise. Distinct from SECI corporate or SMCR general, it contextualizes tourism communication: tacit (50%) → explicit visuals (39%) via bidirectional loops (Table 2 Chi-sq), operationalizing Polanyi (1966) tacit via potential AR-based applications. Development: Data-driven (81% gap → hybrid resolution), testable ($\geq 80\%$ proxy), novel "co-creation ecosystem" per title.

Bridging the Introduction Research Gap

Directly closes gap (SMCR rural shortfalls/ SECI cross-cultural neglect): Obj1 confirms tacit-channel-receiver failures (themes/Tables); CRETCOM resolves "why 81% unreacted: unintegrated dynamics" via synthesis (70% channels propel SECI), empirically linking to scalable rural KM beyond priors.

Theoretical Implications

From a theoretical standpoint, the study contributes by extending the explanatory scope of SMCR and SECI into the domain of rural creative tourism. The findings suggest that SMCR alone is insufficient because it tends to emphasize message transmission without fully accounting for the conversion of local tacit knowledge into scalable communicative forms. Likewise, SECI alone is insufficient because it was originally developed in organizational contexts and does not fully explain cross-cultural tourism communication in resource-constrained communities.

CRETCOM advances this discussion by integrating the two perspectives in a context-sensitive way. In this framework, SMCR elements such as sender skill, channel suitability, and receiver characteristics help explain why knowledge transfer succeeds or stalls, while SECI helps explain how tacit knowledge can be externalized, combined, and internalized across tourism interactions. This theoretical integration is important because it reframes rural tourism communication not as a one-directional act of promotion, but as an adaptive knowledge-transfer process shaped by local culture and audience mediation.

A second theoretical implication is that the study provides empirical indicators that can support future communication research in rural tourism settings. Measures such as online media preference, visual format preference, word-of-mouth reliance, and the gap between clarity and reach may serve as useful descriptive indicators for studying communication effectiveness in similar contexts. Although these indicators do not amount to full structural model validation, they do help operationalize abstract concepts in ways that make future theory testing more feasible.

A third implication is methodological-theoretical in nature. By combining qualitative thematic interpretation with quantitative descriptive evidence, the study demonstrates how mixed methods can be used for theory development in community-based communication research. The qualitative phase identifies how communication works in practice, while the quantitative phase shows the relative salience of those patterns across groups. This strengthens the interpretive value of the model, even if further statistical validation is still required.

Practical Implications

The practical implications of the study are equally important. The findings indicate that local communities should not rely solely on oral communication if they want to broaden the reach of creative tourism knowledge. Tacit knowledge remains valuable and should be preserved, but it needs to be translated into more accessible communication forms such as infographics, short digital storytelling materials, visual storytelling materials, and platform-specific content that can travel beyond face-to-face interaction.

The study also suggests that communication improvement should focus not only on message production but also on communication capability. If communities have tourism content but lack the skills to update Facebook pages, create visuals, or organize information strategically, the communication gap will persist. In this regard, IT training, digital content support, and simple communication manuals become practical extensions of the CRETCOM framework rather than separate interventions.

At the policy level, the findings imply that agencies supporting rural tourism should treat communication as a knowledge infrastructure issue. Support should therefore include not only promotional campaigns, but also local communication capacity-building, content translation into visual and multilingual formats, and mechanisms that help communities convert tacit cultural assets into sustainable communication resources. Under this interpretation, CRETCOM can function as a planning framework for local authorities, tourism organizations, and community enterprises seeking to strengthen knowledge transfer in rural destinations.

Closing Interpretation

Overall, the discussion shows that the contribution of this study lies not simply in identifying preferred media or reporting communication problems, but in demonstrating how these patterns can be interpreted through an integrated communication and knowledge-transfer framework. The CRETCOM model is therefore most valuable as a contextually grounded explanatory framework that helps clarify why local knowledge remains strong but unevenly disseminated, and how communication strategies can be redesigned to bridge that gap in rural creative tourism settings.

Suggestions

This section delineates forward trajectories building on CRETCOM's empirical foundation from refined Objectives 1-2 (tacit dynamics/hybrid model), methodological limitations, and untapped extensions prioritizing replicable advancements in rural tourism KM while linking data-driven gaps (81% unreacted/70% digital) to theoretical/practical horizons (Creswell & Creswell, 2018).

Future Research Directions

While this study establishes CRETCOM as an empirically validated hybrid for Mae Ho Phra's tacit-dominant dynamics (Obj1 themes; 81% unreacted/70% digital prefs), longitudinal quasi-experimental designs are warranted to quantify sustained impacts e.g., pre/post implementation of digital manuals on engagement metrics ($\geq 80\%$ clarity proxy), extending Obj2 generalizability beyond cross-sectional baselines (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To enhance the framework's generalizability, multi-site comparative applications within varying Thai rural clusters (e.g., Lanna and Isan) should be

conducted to test for contextual moderators, building upon the regional marketing discrepancies noted by Sengmanee et al. (2022).

Cross-cultural refinements merit priority, given 85% tourist unreacted (Table 2): Ethnographic interventions could dissect receiver attitudes (SMCR), developing multilingual AR-infographics (39% pref.) for tacit-externalization (SECI), addressing Nonaka & Konno (1998) ba in diverse groups potentially via TAM models for adoption (Davis, 1989).

To rigorously address the divergence between the observed 50% reliance on verbal communication and the 73% digital preference among tourists, future digital literacy initiatives must be subjected to Randomized Controlled Trial (RCT) evaluation, ensuring that such interventions are grounded in measurable, evidence-based outcomes. Adopting a Participatory Action Research (PAR) co-design framework (Stringer, 2014) would facilitate the development of scalable IT training protocols. This approach allows for the longitudinal validation of the CRETCOM model's channel moderators, thereby strengthening the framework's predictive power across diverse rural contexts.

Table 4: Prioritized Future Extensions (Aligned to Gaps)

Direction	Obj Link	Key Data Driver	Theoretical Anchor	Expected Contribution
Longitudinal RCTs	Obj2 Model Test	93% clarity unused	Creswell & Creswell, 2018	Quantify scalability.
Cross-Cultural AR	Obj1 Receiver	85% tourist unreacted	SECI Externalization	Cultural ba-resilience.
PAR-based digital training	Obj1/2 Hybrid	70% online/ 50% verbal	SMCR Channels	Community empowerment.

Advanced tech integration (AI personalization/VR ba-spaces) requires feasibility pilots in low-infrastructure settings, measuring ROI on internalization (e.g., retention post-visit). Sustainable indicators (SDGs 8/11) linked to CRETCOM efficacy e.g., economic uplift from reduced unreacted invite macro-panel studies.

Limitations and Methodological Advancements for Construct Validation

Self-reported quantitative data and convenience-based sampling may have introduced response bias and limited generalizability. While thematic saturation was achieved through the three key informant interviews, larger focus group discussions could further enhance the breadth and diversity of qualitative insights. Although this study provides preliminary empirical support for the CRETCOM model through mixed-methods triangulation, it does not constitute full structural model validation. The quantitative analysis relied primarily on descriptive statistics and chi-square tests of association, which are appropriate for model development but insufficient for psychometric validation. Future research should employ confirmatory factor analysis, structural equation modeling (SEM), or model fit testing (e.g., CFI, RMSEA) to rigorously validate the CRETCOM framework across larger and more diverse samples.

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