

Pleasure or Pain or Both? Exploring Working Holiday Experiences through the Lens of Transformative Learning Theory

ABSTRACT

Research on tourist transformation and transformative experiences is in its infancy. How tourists are triggered in a transformative dynamic of positive and negative components is little understood. This study attempts to fill this gap by using transformative learning theory (TLT) to explore working holiday experiences, based on evidence from Hong Kong tourists. A working holiday is a unique informal learning context involving an extended stay at a destination, which offers both pleasures and challenges. Interviews with working holiday tourists reveal that pleasurable and painful experiences are included in their working holiday recollections. Working holiday tourists transform themselves informally through these experiences, attaining psychological, behavioural and convictional outcomes. Our results provide managerial insights for government agencies, host destinations and other stakeholders, showing how they can enhance working holiday tourists' experiences and enable transformative learning outcomes.

KEYWORDS

Working holiday; Working holiday tourists (WHTs); Transformative learning theory; Pleasure; Pain

1. INTRODUCTION

A working holiday is an increasingly popular form of travel amongst young adults around the world. Working holidays have been increasingly recognised as a way of promoting international understanding and cultural exchanges. In 2019, 60 countries and territories worldwide signed bilateral reciprocal working holiday agreements to encourage young people to seek self-development opportunities through valuable overseas experiences (wherecani.live.com, 2020).

Working holiday tourists (WHTs) usually consider travel to be their primary objective and work a secondary objective (Pizam et al., 2000; Uriely, 2001). They travel to another country as tourists for an extended holiday to seek pleasure and fun; at the same time, they perform labour-intensive, low-paid work to finance their trip (Ho et al., 2014; Meng & Han, 2018a). On a working holiday, they can engage deeply with the host destination through diverse working and tourism experiences, in contrast to traditional tourism, which features short stays and focuses on leisure activities (Pung & Del Chiappa, 2020). Thus, WHTs experience a variety of peak moments and incidents, cultural shocks and challenges in a transformative process (Rice, 2007, 2010). Working holidays are expected to result in personal growth. Although the growing literature on working holidays has focused on WHTs' improved skills (Tsaur & Huang, 2016), personal growth (Zhu et al., 2019) and concerns and risks (Nagai et al., 2020; Tsai & Collins, 2017), few studies have attempted an in-depth exploration of WHTs' transformative process.

A range of tourism and transformation theories have been used to explain tourist transformation (Pung et al., 2020a), such as theories of existential authenticity (Kirillova et al., 2017) and value changes (Christie & Mason, 2003). The existential authenticity theory has a limited focus on tourists' state of being, whereas the value changes theory only discusses changes in values. By

46 comparison, the transformative learning theory (TLT) (Mezirow, 2000; Taylor, 2007) is the most
47 comprehensive theoretical framework for understanding tourist transformation (Pung et al.,
48 2020a). It thoroughly explains the reasons and process of the transformation.

49
50 However, TLT has several theoretical gaps that need to be addressed. First, TLT has mainly been
51 adopted in formal education settings (Taylor, 2007). Stone and Duffy (2015) revealed that most
52 travel and tourism research focuses on educational travel as a modality for achieving
53 transformative learning. Volunteer tourism is a popular context for applying TLT, as it usually
54 involves structured learning programmes (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011). Even though informal learning
55 offers epistemological opportunities (Chen, 2012), it has not been fully recognised by TLT (Chen,
56 2012; Pung et al., 2020a; Taylor, 2007). Working holidays are an overlooked context within TLT
57 (Pung et al., 2020a). This may be because WHTs' learning is largely informal and self-directed,
58 without a structured pedagogy and pre-identified learning outcomes. Thus, our study aims to fill
59 this research gap, by focusing on informal learning without pre-determined outcomes. Second,
60 according to Mezirow's (2000) seminal TLT framework, transformative learning stems from a
61 'disorienting dilemma', a kind of personal crisis and challenge. Pung et al. (2020a), in their new
62 framework, added 'peak episodes' to indicate the triggers or stimuli for transformation. Still, the
63 nature of these triggers and learning experiences has not been fully discussed. Although the
64 transformation and learning outcomes can be cognitive throughout the process or at the end, the
65 triggers can be emotional or result in emotional experiences (Kirillova et al., 2017). Taylor (2007), in
66 his review of TLT, stated that different kinds of emotions, positive or negative, can be generated
67 earlier in the learners' transformative process. Thus, in this study, we argue that pleasurable and
68 painful experiences co-exist in a working holiday, as triggers of transformative learning (Soulard et
69 al., 2020). Third, Mezirow's (2000) 10-stage process of transformative learning was not completely
70 supported by empirical studies (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011). The transformation process may not
71 necessarily take place progressively in a fixed way. In our study, we clarify this by arguing that these
72 stages may be more appropriate to represent elements of WHTs' transformation; moreover, the
73 learning and self-reflection of WHTs may be scattered (Pung et al., 2020a), taking place
74 simultaneously during the working holiday or at a later stage after they return home and
75 'reintegrate into society' (Taylor, 2007). Fourth, the transformative learning outcomes have not
76 been fully revealed by TLT. Although some conceptual frameworks have been developed (Clark,
77 1991) to shed light on this area, they lack empirical proof. A simple summary of 'self-actualisation'
78 (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011) or 'self-assurance' (Soulard et al., 2020) is hardly enough. Meanwhile,
79 how transformative learning outcomes can be generated from the experiences remains little
80 understood (Soulard et al., 2020).

81
82 Based on these theoretical contributions, this study draws attention to working holiday schemes
83 (WHTs) and provides managerial insights that will be of interest to policymakers and potential
84 WHTs. The objectives of this study are as follows:

- 85
86 1) Explore the pleasurable and painful experiential dimensions of the working holiday
87 experience.
- 88 2) Identify the transformative learning outcomes attained by WHTs.
- 89 3) Explore the subtle relationship between working holiday experiences and tourist
90 transformation.

91
92

93 **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

94

95 **2.1 Working holidays and working holiday tourists (WHTs)**

96

97 The working holiday phenomenon originated in 19th-century Europe, when young working-class
98 men travelled to find jobs or learn a particular trade. Working holiday tourism is a special form of
99 tourism combining work and holiday travel (Jarvis & Peel, 2013). A range of work, leisure and
100 tourism activities may be embedded in a WHT's journey. WHTs can be regarded as long-term
101 budget-conscious working tourists, who seek job opportunities at different places to subsidise their
102 prolonged trip. Other than work, travel offers young people opportunities for sightseeing and
103 adventure (Adler, 1985, as cited in Loker-Murphy & Pearce, 1995). They may travel as backpackers
104 and meet up with other backpackers on their travels (Clarke, 2004). Thus, WHTs travel for
105 hedonistic and self-development purposes. They have many opportunities to seek pleasure and
106 happiness or encounter pains and disappointment on their working holidays.

107

108 Several studies in the past decade have identified the attributes of working holidays and what
109 WHTs are seeking. For instance, Meng and Han (2018b) explored the generic attributes of working
110 holidays, which include 'immersion of the destination', 'economy of the trip', 'experience of
111 working' and 'self-fulfilment'. Tsaor and Huang (2016) systematically identified 11 factors affecting
112 WHTs' acquisition of knowledge, skills and abilities: 'organising and planning capability', 'emotional
113 management', 'self-confidence and independence', 'physical capability', 'social communication',
114 'learning from friends', 'understanding local environment', 'cross-cultural adaptability', 'geospatial
115 recognition', 'employability' and 'speaking up for labour rights'. Some studies instead emphasise
116 the challenges and issues of working holidays. Nagai et al. (2020) found that English language
117 proficiency and cultural adaptation are significant factors in WHTs' travel risks. Tsai and Collins
118 (2017) highlighted 'social expectations', 'social infrastructures' and 'temporal limits' as other
119 concerns. Although it provides a generic understanding of working holidays and WHTs, the
120 literature does not systematically explore how WHTs obtain enjoyment, learning and achievement
121 through their dynamic experiences. Working holiday source markets and host destinations might
122 benefit from this information for planning and promotion.

123

124 **2.2 Tourist transformation and transformative learning theory**

125

126 Today, many tourists seek self-development and transformative experiences, and host destinations
127 provide more opportunities for tourist transformation (DeCrop et al., 2018; Kirillova et al., 2017;
128 Pung & Del Chiappa, 2020; Pung et al., 2020a, 2020b; Soulard et al., 2020). The experience
129 economy theory (Pine & Gilmore, 2014) implies that the ultimate stage of the experience economy
130 focuses on consumer transformation. Kirillova et al. (2017) highlighted its important implication
131 that transformative travel fits this final stage perfectly because it involves tourists' changing and
132 improving through travel. Such transformative tourists are expected to be more capable of
133 handling challenges and uncertainties when they return home (Soulard et al., 2020). Pung et al.
134 (2020b) noted that both male and female travellers attach importance to their identities during
135 tourism experiences, but the former are more concerned about adaptation and a sense of
136 community whereas the latter care more about bodily feelings and self-consciousness. DeCrop et
137 al. (2018) discussed tourist transformation using a sharing economy approach, in which
138 transformative tourists make their choices during travel in the form of collaborative consumption.

139 Tourists generate an enhanced relationship and a sense of belonging through closer host–guest
140 and guest–guest interactions at the host destinations.

141
142 Multiple theories have been used to explain tourist transformation. Existential authenticity theory
143 was proposed by Wang (1999), who argued that tourists could escape their daily lives through
144 liminal spaces. In line with this thinking, tourists in these liminal spaces can develop new
145 experiences and process personal transformation (Kirillova et al., 2017). According to the theory of
146 value changes, tourism may expose tourists to a new world and thus challenges their existing value
147 systems. Tourists ultimately experience changes in their values (Christie & Mason, 2003). TLT has
148 been more widely used to conceptualise tourist transformation (Pung et al., 2020a). It has been
149 well documented and researched for more than 30 years. Taylor (2007) noted that an extensive
150 body of transformative learning studies has investigated adult learning (Jones, 2015).
151 Transformative learning, as its name suggests, involves deep learning against taken-for-granted
152 assumptions and informative learning (Dirkx, 1997; Mezirow, 2000). Kegan (2000, as cited in Jones,
153 2015, p. 270) proposed that ‘informational learning deepens the resources available to an existing
154 frame of reference ... and transformational learning involves not only changes in what we know but
155 also how we know – the ability to move beyond concrete thinking into abstract reasoning, where
156 one is situated within a pre-existing frame of mind and the other actually reconstructs the frame
157 itself’.

158
159 Mezirow (2000) identified 10 stages of the transformative learning process leading to a
160 transformed state. They are ‘disorienting dilemma’, ‘self-examination’, ‘assessment and alienation’,
161 ‘sharing’, ‘exploring’, ‘building competence’, ‘plan for action’, ‘acquiring knowledge’, ‘trying new
162 roles’ and ‘reintegration’. Among these, ‘disorienting dilemma’ is fundamentally important as the
163 first step and is usually produced naturally or by invisible individual/social factors (i.e. values,
164 beliefs) (Chang et al., 2012). Such dilemmas are personal crises or life difficulties (Mezirow, 2000).
165 The dilemma may result in the subjects’ discomfort or even painful experiences (Taylor, 2007). As
166 outcomes of the transformative learning process, people’s ‘habits of mind’ (ethical, philosophical,
167 psychological, aesthetic) and ‘frames of reference’ (Mezirow, 2000) may be modified through self-
168 reflection in different circumstances. Despite the popularity of Mezirow’s work, others have
169 proposed their own interpretations of transformative learning (Nino et al., 2011). For instance,
170 Dirkx (1997) discussed transformative learning from a depth psychology perspective and
171 emphasised the relationship between one’s outer and inner world and lives. He highlighted the
172 importance of engaging one’s emotions in transformative learning (Dirkx, 2006). Clark (1991)
173 presented three dimensions of transformative learning outcomes: psychological (understanding of
174 one’s self), convictional (revising belief systems) and behavioural (changing one’s lifestyle).
175 Affective learning is also highlighted, as cognitive changes derive from and co-exist with emotional
176 and affective changes.

177
178 A growing body of literature connects tourism to transformative learning (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011;
179 Stone & Duffy, 2015). For instance, transformative learning could be applicable to higher education
180 in tourism (Cavender, Swanson, & Wright, 2020; Thomas, 2012). Stone and Duffy (2015) found that
181 transformative learning is present in study tours, work placements, service learning, volunteer
182 tourism and other forms of tourism. Coghlan and Gooch (2011) reflected close connections
183 between most stages of the transformative learning process and volunteer tourism activities. They
184 noted that Mezirow’s (2000) 10 stages may not necessarily take place sequentially in a fixed way
185 but manifest more as elements rather than stages in volunteer tourism transformation. They

186 further argued that volunteer tourism participants ‘learn and change as a result of their
187 experiences’ (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011, p. 714). Unfortunately, they merely concluded that self-
188 actualisation is the outcome of transformative learning without providing a more detailed empirical
189 account.

190
191 TLT is applicable to the working holiday phenomena and WHTs. First, working holiday tourism
192 provides a suitable context and place (i.e. host destination and workplace) that enable
193 transformative learning (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011). Choy (2009) affirmed that workplace features
194 usually support transformative learning. Moreover, in the working holiday context, WHTs are
195 immersed in a new cultural and social environment but for a longer period when compared with
196 traditional tourists. Pung and Del Chiappa (2020) argued that in traditional tourism, a
197 transformative process is usually inhibited by short stays, repeated leisure activities, familiar travel
198 companions and lack of access to residents’ lifestyles. By comparison, working holidays do not have
199 these inhibitors; rather, they facilitate WHTs’ transformative learning at the host destinations
200 through longer stays, diverse tourism/leisure activities and new people and lifestyles. TLT studies
201 (Müller, et al., 2020) have proved the cultural shocks as triggers of transformative learning, but this
202 may take longer effects in working holidays. In fact, many WHTs try various new roles (e.g. long-
203 term tourist, worker at a new job, planner, problem solver, socialiser, etc.), which may be
204 interpreted as ‘first-time’ life experiences at the host destinations. They consciously or sub-
205 consciously engage in an acculturation and learning process through a longer-term interaction with
206 the destination. However, working holidays differ greatly from volunteer tourism due to their
207 unique nature. WHTs work at host destinations to subsidise their travel expenses, whereas
208 volunteer tourists work to fulfil their altruistic motivations with pre-determined learning outcomes
209 (Lo & Lee, 2011). Although WHTs may not consistently undertake self-examination and reflection,
210 they continually review their experiences and may even engage in critical thinking and
211 interpretation when they return and reintegrate into their home society (Taylor, 2007). They
212 become increasingly aware of their changes over time. In conclusion, WHTs’ transformative
213 learning is informal and usually self-directed. This line of thinking for understanding informal
214 transformative learning has been implied in previous research, particularly in the contexts of
215 independent travel, ecotourism and wellness tourism (Pung et al., 2020a; Sen, 2020).
216 Unfortunately, informal transformative learning has not been highlighted as a means to enrich our
217 understanding of tourist transformation.

218 219 **2.3 Transformative learning originating from pleasurable and painful tourism experiences**

220
221 Recently, Pung et al. (2020a) developed a theoretical framework of tourist transformation
222 supported by TLT. In the framework, transformative experience is initiated by stimuli (liminality,
223 culture shock and challenges) in the form of ‘peak episodes and disorienting dilemmas’ (p. 7). They
224 further emphasised that tourists may be aware of the striking episode but their self-reflection will
225 be ‘separate’ (p. 7) from the later transformation of their attitudes and behaviour. The
226 transformation may take place when tourists return from the destination to their daily lives.
227 Although Pung et al. (2020a, p. 8) acknowledged that peak episodes may strike tourists in the form
228 of moments of ‘transcendence and connectedness’, they did not fully decipher the emotional
229 nature of such episodes. Conceptually, peak episodes are unique life incidents (Lawton & La Porte,
230 2013) or extraordinary moments in tourism (Arnould & Price, 1993). They may not be necessarily
231 painful or result in personal crises, as ‘disorienting dilemma’ might imply, but can be pleasurable
232 and have a transformative function (Soulard et al., 2020). In this regard, Soulard et al. (2020) made

233 some important empirical findings. They developed and tested a measure of transformative
234 tourism experiences based on four factors: 'local residents and culture', 'self-assurance',
235 'disorienting dilemma' and 'joy'. Their study shed light on how to integrate the positive and
236 negative components of experiences and tourist transformation outcomes. Unfortunately, these
237 factors cannot happen simultaneously. According to Ho et al. (2014), they must occur in a cause-
238 and-effect manner. In a similar vein, tourist experiences filled with positively and negatively
239 valenced components may generate transformative learning outcomes.

240
241 In fact, the experiential approach indicates that many tourism phenomena integrate pleasure and
242 meaning-seeking activities, behaviours and outcomes (Lengieza et al., 2019). In their contribution
243 to the psychological and marketing literature, Alba and Williams (2013) highlighted the importance
244 of consumers' hedonic consumption and pleasure-seeking behaviours. In this process, consumers
245 are expected to secure 'heightened involvement, perceived freedom, fantasy fulfilment and
246 escapism' (Babin et al., 1994, p. 646). According to Pine and Gilmore's (1999) experience economy
247 framework, tourists' experiences reflect their perception of entertainment, education, escapism
248 and aesthetics and are subject to different degrees of participation and involvement (Hosany &
249 Witham, 2010). At the same time, tourists may have painful experiences, such as culture shock
250 (McKercher & Chow, 2001). Failure to match their environment will create anxiety. In the
251 literature, some factors have been found to contribute to pain during travelling, such as encounters
252 with unusual situations (Müller et al., 2020), injustice (Frazer & Waitt, 2016) and poverty and
253 suffering (Gius, 2017). Previous scholarly attempts have recorded the coexistence of pleasure and
254 pain in some forms of tourism, such as volunteer tourism (Frazer & Waitt, 2016; Gius, 2017).
255 However, such studies have been limited and do not account for various tourism phenomena.

256
257 Our study proposes that working holiday experiences involve pleasure and pain that contribute to
258 transformative learning as individuals deeply engage with various activities over a long period of
259 time, leading to a transformed state. The critical incidents and observations, both pleasurable and
260 painful, have already been shown to have effects on the continuum of learning, particularly in an
261 intercultural context (McAllister et al., 2006). Transformative learning can be a lifelong process
262 (Lawton & La Porte, 2013). In the working holiday context, meaningful and unique (e.g. first-time)
263 life occurrences and experiences, regardless of pleasure or pain, can be easily recollected (Jansari &
264 Parkin, 1996) and have a strong influence on an individual. Thus, our study fills the gap in the
265 framework of Pung et al. (2020a) by exploring 'disorienting dilemmas' and 'peak episodes' in
266 connections to both pleasurable and painful experiences. It also addresses the limitations of the
267 study of Soulard et al. (2020) by showing how working holiday experiences generate transformative
268 learning outcomes.

269 270 271 **3. RESEARCH PARADIGM**

272
273 Given the research objective of exploring WHTs' experiences and transformative learning process
274 and outcomes, a constructivist ontology was considered appropriate for investigating the nature of
275 reality, an interpretative epistemology helped the researchers to make sense of the meanings
276 expressed by the WHTs, and an inductive qualitative methodology was the selected research
277 paradigm for this study. Personal experiences and learning outcomes are complex and subjective in
278 nature (Patton, 2015). Individual in-depth semi-structured interviews were adopted for data
279 collection, to elicit WHTs' pleasurable and painful experiences and transformative learning

280 outcomes. These experiences are affective in nature and comprise the most important peak
281 episodes that trigger tourist transformation (Pung et al., 2020). Neutral or unmemorable
282 experiences (Tung & Ritchie, 2011) were not counted because of their lack of importance in this
283 process. The interviewees were also asked to explain the benefits of working holidays and their
284 personal changes. The underlying reasons for their interpretations of the experiences and
285 perceived learning outcomes were explored in depth.

286
287 Hong Kong WHTs were selected as the study population. Hong Kong launched its WHS in 2001, in
288 partnership with the governments of Australia, Austria, Canada, France, Germany, Hungary,
289 Ireland, Italy, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Sweden, the Netherlands and the United Kingdom
290 (Labour Department, The Government of the HKSAR, 2020). As of 2019, 11,750 reciprocal
291 exchanges have allowed young people, between the age of 18 and 30, from Hong Kong and
292 participating countries to engage in cultural and educational exchange through the WHS
293 (immd.gov, 2018). Purposeful and snowball sampling techniques were used to identify participants
294 for the interviews. Facebook pages on working holidays for Hong Kong residents (e.g.
295 <https://www.facebook.com/groups/138611156832/>) were reviewed, and invitations were sent to
296 participants who posted their experiences on those pages. The target participants must have
297 completed their working holidays within the past three years and have returned to Hong Kong. A
298 three-year time frame was suggested by two experienced WHTs, who considered it as a valid
299 period for WHTs to have clear enough memories for an in-depth interview. They were invited to
300 recommend other qualified participants of their acquaintance. At the end of the interviews,
301 supermarket cash coupons were given to the participants as a token of appreciation. Interviews
302 were conducted by the researchers and trained research assistants.

303
304 Twenty-three face-to-face interviews were conducted and analysed. The sample size was not pre-
305 determined; the interview process was continued until redundancy of data occurred (Jennings,
306 2010). Each interview lasted between 45 and 90 minutes. Table 1 summarises the interviewees'
307 profiles. The interviewees completed their working holidays in Australia, Austria, France, Germany,
308 Ireland, Japan, Korea, New Zealand, Sweden and the UK. Fifteen interviewees were female, and
309 eight were male. Most were 26 years old or above (91.31%). Most had bachelor degrees (69.57%).
310 During their trip, they mainly worked in the service sector, such as restaurants, hotels and
311 supermarkets, or in sales; a few worked as office workers.

312
313 The interviews were voice-recorded and transcribed. The data coding process was modelled on
314 Glaser and Strauss (1967), and thematic analysis was undertaken. Open coding was conducted
315 followed by axial coding to identify the relationship between the open codes. The transcripts were
316 read multiple times to produce information units for subsequent analysis. In the process of data
317 coding, the themes were categorised and grouped into higher-level themes to represent the
318 structure of working holiday experience, with the support of Nvivo software. Keywords were also
319 'compared across all interviews to reveal trends, patterns, alignments and contradictions amongst
320 the different interviewees' responses' (Suntikul, 2018, p. 2108). The deductive process was based
321 on the literature on transformative learning and tourism experiences. Two researchers
322 simultaneously performed data analysis. The second coder checked the work of the first coder and
323 marked down passages for further amendment or discussion. Their coding, analysis and
324 interpretation results were compared and consolidated to ensure credibility (Korstjens & Moser,
325 2018). For greater reflexivity, selected interviewees were asked to provide comments on the
326 draft data analysis results.

327
328 Informant triangulation and multilevel triangulation were also adopted to ensure the
329 trustworthiness of the data set (Decrop, 2004). Informants with diverse backgrounds in terms of
330 their working holiday (destination, job completion, duration) and demographic information (age,
331 gender) were approached. Interview results were also compared with relevant secondary sources
332 (e.g. www.whver.net) and the official website of the Hong Kong WHS
333 (<https://www.whs.gov.hk/en/>), which contains experience sharing and activity highlights by Hong
334 Kong WHTs. We judged whether the themes derived from this study were also evidenced by their
335 sharing and if any of the major themes identified could be attributable to their sharing. Although
336 these websites and shared information also contain other information such as working holiday
337 applications and visa issues, we avoided any comparison, as they did not fit our focal research
338 topic.
339

340
341

Table 1: Detailed Sample Profile for Each Informant (N=23)

Informant No.	Gender	Age	Destination	Workplace/Job	Completion*	Duration#
1	M	≥ 31	Germany	Restaurant	> 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
2	F	≥ 31	United Kingdom	Restaurant, Hotel	> 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
3	F	26 - 30	United Kingdom	UNIQLO (sales), Exhibition (helper)	> 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
4	M	26 - 30	Korea	Airbnb (office, clerk)	1 – 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
5	F	≥ 31	Japan, Australia	Hotel (conciierge)	> 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
6	F	26 - 30	Germany	Restaurant	1 – 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
7	M	18 - 25	Sweden	Restaurant	< 12 months	1 - 6 months
8	F	≥ 31	Australia	Farm	> 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
9	M	26 - 30	United Kingdom	Clerk, sales	> 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
10	M	18 - 25	Japan	Café (cashier), Private Business, Tourism office	< 12 months	≥ 13 months
11	F	26 - 30	France	B&B, Babysitter, Camp site reception, Grape farming, Home care	1 – 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
12	F	26 - 30	Ireland	Supermarket, Restaurant (waitress)	> 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
13	F	≥ 31	Germany	Freelance, Consultant	> 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
14	M	26 - 30	Germany	Catering	1 – 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
15	F	26 - 30	France	Restaurant	> 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
16	F	≥ 31	Australia	Farm (picker)	> 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
17	F	26 - 30	Ireland	Supermarket, Home care	1 – 2 years ago	7 - 12 months
18	F	≥ 31	Australia	Busker, Housekeeper	> 2 years ago	1 - 6 months
19	F	≥ 31	Australia	Restaurant, Factory	> 2 years ago	1 - 6 months
20	F	≥ 31	Australia	Beautician, Farmer, Sales, Catering	> 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
21	M	≥ 31	Australia	Office work, Farm, Construction site	> 2 years ago	≥ 13 months
22	M	26 - 30	New Zealand	Office work	< 12 months	≥ 13 months
23	F	26 - 30	Austria	Sales, Waitress	< 12 months	7 - 12 months

342
343
344
345
346
347

* Completion: Date of completion of the working holiday; # Duration: Duration of working holiday experience

348 **4. FINDINGS**

349

350 **4.1 Working holiday experience: Pleasure**

351

352 A working holiday, as a form of tourism, generates pleasure and a sense of escape. The pleasures of
353 working holidays were found to include *social experience, decompression and relaxation, escapism*
354 *and aesthetic experience.*

355

356 **4.1.1 Social experience**

357

358 The most frequently cited type of pleasurable experience in the interviews is *social experiences*.
359 The WHTs felt happy being with friends and colleagues and making new friends on their travels.
360 Their social experiences were a major part of their leisure activities and time during their working
361 holidays. A representative quote is the following:

362

363 *'The most pleasing thing to do was to go skiing with all my colleagues. Our job depends on*
364 *the weather. If the weather is not good, then we will have no customers, and we may have*
365 *to leave early or even choose to take the day off ... because it only takes approximately 30*
366 *minutes from Queenstown to the snow mountain, we would go skiing together.... We chat,*
367 *learn skiing, drink and listen to music – quite a lot of fun.'* (Informant 22)

368

369 **4.1.2 Decompression and relaxation**

370

371 Another important theme was *decompression and relaxation*. Living a simple life in a different
372 cultural environment was appreciated. For instance, one interviewee stated, 'One could feel
373 decompressed and relaxed by simply taking a stroll in a park. It is easy to feel satisfied and fulfilled.
374 The Swedish's lifestyle is not that stressful. Swedes are not as materialistic as Hong Kong people ...
375 you can easily see people smiling genuinely to you on the streets' (Informant 7).

376

377 **4.1.3 Escapism and aesthetic experience**

378

379 Similar to other tourists, WHTs felt that escapism was intertwined with their appreciation of the
380 aesthetic beauties of the destination. The interviewees provided various examples of this; for
381 instance:

382

383 *'I did not feel very free in Hong Kong, particularly concerning my relationship with my family,*
384 *but during my working holiday in Germany, I felt relieved; I did not have to face these*
385 *problems.'* (Informant 13)

386

387 More than half of the interviewees referred to the *flexibility and convenience of their travelling and*
388 *tourism activities* during working holidays to explain the escapism perception. They recalled their
389 travels during working holidays compared with regular travel in Hong Kong. For example,

390

391 *'...when I felt like travelling during my working holiday, I just searched for the information,*
392 *booked the trip, and left. ... It was easy. Time was not an issue.... I was able to take short*
393 *trips, taking time to observe local people and experience the local culture.'* (Informant 8)

394

395 Working holidays were found to provide sufficient opportunities for travellers to appreciate the
396 aesthetic qualities of the destination, such as the unique scenery, e.g.:

397
398 *'The happiest moments were at Santorini, a magnificent island. Montserrat was another*
399 *place, with beautiful monasteries on the mountain top ... Although it was a very exhausting*
400 *three-hour walk to reach the monasteries, the views were stunning.'* (Informant 6)
401

402 **4.2 Working holiday experience: Pain**

403
404
405 Despite the pleasurable aspects of working holiday experiences, some experiences were perceived
406 as negative or painful. The major themes generated from the interviews were *work stress*,
407 *homesickness* and *discrimination*.

408 **4.2.1 Work stress**

409
410
411 Concerning *work stress*, some reported the hardships and challenges they encountered. Long
412 working hours with a low pay, disrespect from customers and employers, bad job-seeking
413 experiences and other environmental factors contributed to this factor. For instance:

414
415 *'I was under a lot of stress from work and settling down in a new environment. The sushi*
416 *restaurant where I worked was always busy during lunchtime. I felt stressed out when my*
417 *boss was yelling at me and picking on my mistakes.... When I was looking for jobs, I stopped*
418 *at virtually every shop on the street to ask if a job was available. I was refused most of the*
419 *time. I felt really useless.'* (Informant 7)
420

421 The unique working environment, which required interacting with foreign consumers in an
422 unfamiliar language, was frequently cited:

423
424 *'One challenge was language. It is not my native language, and I did not speak fluently*
425 *when I arrived there. Sometimes I asked the guests to repeat their orders, and they were*
426 *annoyed.'* (Informant 14)
427

428 **4.2.2 Homesickness**

429
430 *Homesickness* was another painful experience mentioned by the WHTs. WHTs longed for their
431 homes when working overseas for a long time. For instance, 'this was my first time being by myself
432 on my birthday. My mum sent me some of my childhood photos. I felt homesick particularly when I
433 encountered challenging situations. ... and I had an accident whilst travelling... I never told [my
434 family] as I didn't want them to worry. I was sad ... but I managed to deal with the situation myself'
435 (Informant 7).
436

437 **4.2.3 Discrimination**

438
439 One surprising painful experience related to discrimination, particularly from people with a similar
440 cultural background. 'When I talked to those people [from the Chinese mainland], we sometimes
441 argued, as they felt that we Hongkongers perceived ourselves as superior to them...but I never did.

442 I never felt I was discriminated against by foreigners but by those from the same country'
443 (Informant 6). A similar view was also expressed by another informant: '...especially for fellows
444 from the same place, either Hong Kong or mainland China, we did not trust each other... I could feel
445 the discrimination from others' (Informant 21). Some painful experiences were also recorded that
446 involved unfriendly people at host destinations and discrimination.

447

448 **4.3 Transformative learning outcomes as a result of 'self-examining/assessing' through working** 449 **holiday experiences**

450

451 Informal transformative learning processes and outcomes resulted from the pleasure and pains
452 that WHTs experienced. The three perspective outcomes (psychological, behavioural and
453 convictional) of transformative learning (Clark, 1991) were well evidenced in the interviews. When
454 the WHTs reflected on their transformations, they also recalled the pains and pleasures of their
455 working holiday experiences.

456

457 **4.3.1 Psychological outcomes**

458

459 *Self-awareness* was important for the WHTs. To an extent, *self-awareness* encapsulates all of the
460 transformative learning outcomes. Representative quotes are included below, in which WHTs
461 reflect on important moments in both work and leisure/travel contexts.

462

463 *'I could think more about my past, present and future. I learned more and knew more about*
464 *my strengths and capabilities... I recall some difficult times there, but I realised that*
465 *eventually I could deal with it.'* (Informant 1, connecting to pains)

466

467 *'I picked up other sports in Sweden, for instance, ice sports; Swedes are very famous for*
468 *playing ice sports, as you know...when I was there, I tried many of them ... I also feel a sense*
469 *of accomplishment, despite my lack of professionalism in these sports.'* (Informant 7,
470 connecting to pleasures)

471

472 Many informants highlighted their improved *self-confidence and courage*. They had to be
473 independent on their travels, handling everything by themselves. For instance:

474

475 *'I became more courageous in many ways. I was particularly afraid of doing job interviews.*
476 *The more I did them, the better I was. I became more confident each time.'* (Informant 17,
477 connecting to pains)

478

479 **4.3.2 Behavioural outcomes**

480

481 The behavioural changes during working holidays involved the acquisition of knowledge and skills.
482 The interviews revealed some basic skills that WHTs acquired: *language, cooking and other self-*
483 *care abilities*. These are important basic skills throughout an individual's lifetime, although they
484 may not be linked to specific pains vs. pleasures. A majority of the informants emphasised their
485 improved *language skills*. Language proficiency grows more quickly in a suitable learning
486 environment. One informant emphasised,

487

488 *'I was forced to speak English when I was abroad. My English has made a great*
489 *improvement. But now in Hong Kong, I don't need to use English very often, so maybe now*
490 *my English has regressed.'* (Informant 18)

491
492 Moreover, many informants considered *cooking* an important part of their working holiday lives,
493 and many made significant improvements or developed this basic skill during the trip. Some were
494 highly motivated to learn to cook local cuisine. One stated,

495
496 *'One of my goals [for the working holiday] was to try French food and learn to cook French*
497 *cuisine. I did it. When I visited my French friends' home, they taught me different French*
498 *cuisines, such as cream of mushroom soup and foie gras ... I really tried making many French*
499 *dishes.'* (Informant 15)

500
501 *Other self-care abilities* were also sporadically reported, such as packing skills and taking care of
502 household chores, which the respondents all considered important for their future lives. They
503 either picked up those skills from scratch or developed existing skills during the trip.

504
505 The WHTs also showcased changes in other aspects of their behaviour. They tended to be *more*
506 *organised, adaptable* and *problem-solving-oriented*, and *treated others differently (through*
507 *appreciation, respect, support and sharing)*. These were the results of living in a culturally dissimilar
508 place for a much longer period than traditional travel, and involved both positive and negative
509 experiences.

510
511 Some informants emphasised the importance of *planning* during their working holiday, to ensure
512 its success. For example, one informant stated: 'I really think more before acting, as you have to
513 rely on yourself during this one-year period... Before I acted like a blunderbuss, but now, I may not
514 look for a job simply for my own interest. I may think and plan more about saving some of my
515 disposable income for my family' (Informant 17, connecting to pains and pleasure).

516
517 *Problem solving and adaptability* is another major theme. The challenges encountered during a
518 working holiday inevitably foster a solution-oriented mindset and problem-solving skills. One
519 subject remarked:

520
521 *'In fact, I didn't like the job I was working there...The working holiday helped me learn how*
522 *to solve problems and adapt to changes. One major benefit for me has been knowing how to*
523 *survive in different environments.'* (Informant 16, connecting to pains)

524
525 The last major theme in this category is the *social relationships* derived from working holiday
526 experiences, which incorporate the pleasure and pain dimensions. The WHTs tended to *appreciate,*
527 *respect, support* and even *share* with others:

528
529 *'sometimes my colleagues were so rude ...they discriminated against others from out of*
530 *town...gradually, I learned to appreciate others. In Hong Kong, I was not very vocal with my*
531 *appreciation of others ... but this is common abroad. Now, I feel more comfortable in*
532 *expressing my appreciation of others.'* (Informant 23, connecting to pleasure and pains)

533

534 *'If I saw other travellers who needed help, then I was happy to offer help. This is because I*
535 *also received assistance from others on my trip. Now, if I see a traveller looking puzzled on*
536 *the street in Hong Kong, I may approach them to ask if I can help...'* (Informant 20,
537 *connecting to pleasure*)
538

539 Lastly, the informants were eager to share their working holiday experience with others,
540 particularly the pleasurable or painful experiences. Working holiday experiences were treasured as
541 memorable moments in their lifelong learning. Some of them told us they shared their working
542 holiday stories via different channels during the trip and after they returned home.
543

544 **4.3.3 Convictional outcomes**

545
546 Concerning the convictional factor of transformative learning (change of belief system), *work–life*
547 *balance*, *cultural sensitivity* and *changed view of money* were major features of their new belief
548 systems. One important theme related to a greater belief in *work–life balance*. The informants
549 compared their life at the working holiday destination and in Hong Kong. The experiences they
550 recalled and shared were not necessarily related to pain and work challenges. Their intercultural
551 observations (including both pleasurable and painful experiences) also strongly affected their belief
552 adjustment. For example:
553

554 *'The greatest learning is about work–life balance. Hong Kong people spend a lot of time*
555 *working, but foreigners pay a lot of attention to their holiday time. They definitely won't*
556 *work during a holiday, even with double pay. When I returned to Hong Kong, this became*
557 *the greatest change in my value system...I engaged more in leisure activities to seek more*
558 *balance in my life.'* (Informant 20)
559

560 Another main theme was *cultural sensitivity*. One interviewee emphasised, 'when I was there, I
561 learned how foreigners express their views and make judgments, which is different from Hong
562 Kong people. I realised different cultures have different values and ways of life. I have broadened
563 my horizon and became more respectful of diverse cultures' (Informant 21).
564

565 Lastly, informants also perceived a change in their *views on money*. However, notably, they also
566 compared their new views with their previous views of money in Hong Kong. 'Before the working
567 holiday, I might teach students to earn more money, but actually, there is no end to craving money.
568 The more money you make, the more you want to make. I think an average job is quite fine for me
569 now, and I don't have an urge to find a job with higher pay' (Informant 18).
570

571 **5. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

572
573
574 This study used the lens of TLT to explore and interpret working holiday experiences. Pleasure and
575 pain informed the memories of WHTs' working holiday experiences (Objective 1). The informants
576 reflected on their transformative learning outcomes (Objective 2). The subtle way in which
577 pleasures and pains interrelate to enable transformative learning was also explored (Objective 3).
578

579
580

581 **5.1 Pleasurable and painful working holiday experience and transformative learning outcomes**

582
583 This study found that social experience, decompression and relaxation, escapism and aesthetic
584 experience explain the pleasurable experiences of working holidays. The heightened involvement
585 and emotions (Babin et al., 1994) experienced by the WHTs created extraordinary, memorable
586 peak moments (Mody et al., 2017). Social experience has already been discussed at length in
587 tourism studies (Ho et al., 2014; Tsaur & Huang, 2016). It is even more important in the sharing
588 economy (Decrop et al., 2018). Decompression and relaxation are central to the experience
589 economy (Xu & Chan, 2010). Like Ho et al. (2014), this study also found that escapism is an
590 important experiential consequence of working holidays. Furthermore, the pains encountered on a
591 working holiday create a learning context due to a 'disorienting dilemma' (Mezirow, 2000; Taylor,
592 2007). Painful working holiday experiences were further decomposed into work stress,
593 homesickness and discrimination. Concerning work stress, previous studies (Nagai et al., 2018;
594 Nagai et al., 2020) have pinpointed that poor language proficiency is a significant barrier.
595 Homesickness used to be a common phenomenon among migrants (Matt, 2007). For WHTs', it is a
596 disorienting dilemma because it creates personal crises and challenges, particularly when the
597 traveller lives in a different context for a long period of time (Scopelliti & Tiberio, 2010). Last,
598 discrimination usually coexists with culture shock in tourism settings (Pung et al., 2020a).

599
600 This study identified the transformative learning outcomes derived from working holiday
601 experiences. The psychological (self-awareness, self-confidence and courage), behavioural (basic
602 skills, planning, problem solving and adaptability, relationships with others) and convictional
603 (work-life balance, cultural sensitivity, changed views on money) learning outcomes successfully
604 extended Ho et al. (2014) and Tsaur and Huang (2016) in the working holiday literature. The
605 interviews can be considered as a part of WHTs' extended 'self-assessments' or 'self-examinations'
606 (Mezirow, 2000). Among the learning outcomes, the literature has indicated that the psychological
607 aspect of the transformative process focuses on self-understanding (Clark, 1991; Peltz & Clemons,
608 2019). Zhu et al. (2019) noted personal changes among WHTs regarding increased independence
609 and bravery. The behavioural changes (Clark, 1991; Peltz & Clemons, 2019) through the working
610 holidays were found to foster the acquisition of knowledge and skills (Mezirow, 2000). Newman
611 (2012) stated that people's transformations originate in the acquisition of new skills and
612 knowledge. The WHTs successfully acquired relevant knowledge and skills and built up their
613 competence (Mezirow, 2000). These findings confirm the working holiday studies of Ho et al.
614 (2014) and Tsaur and Huang (2016) to a certain extent. The convictional outcomes are also
615 diversified. For example, work-life balance reflects how WHTs have rebuilt the relationship
616 between their inner and outer worlds (Dirkx, 1997). Cultural sensitivity is an important outcome of
617 experiential learning in tourism (Pennings et al., 2020), and this study also revealed its importance
618 in the working holiday context. The WHTs' views on money also changed after working holidays
619 due to their new belief systems (Ho et al., 2014).

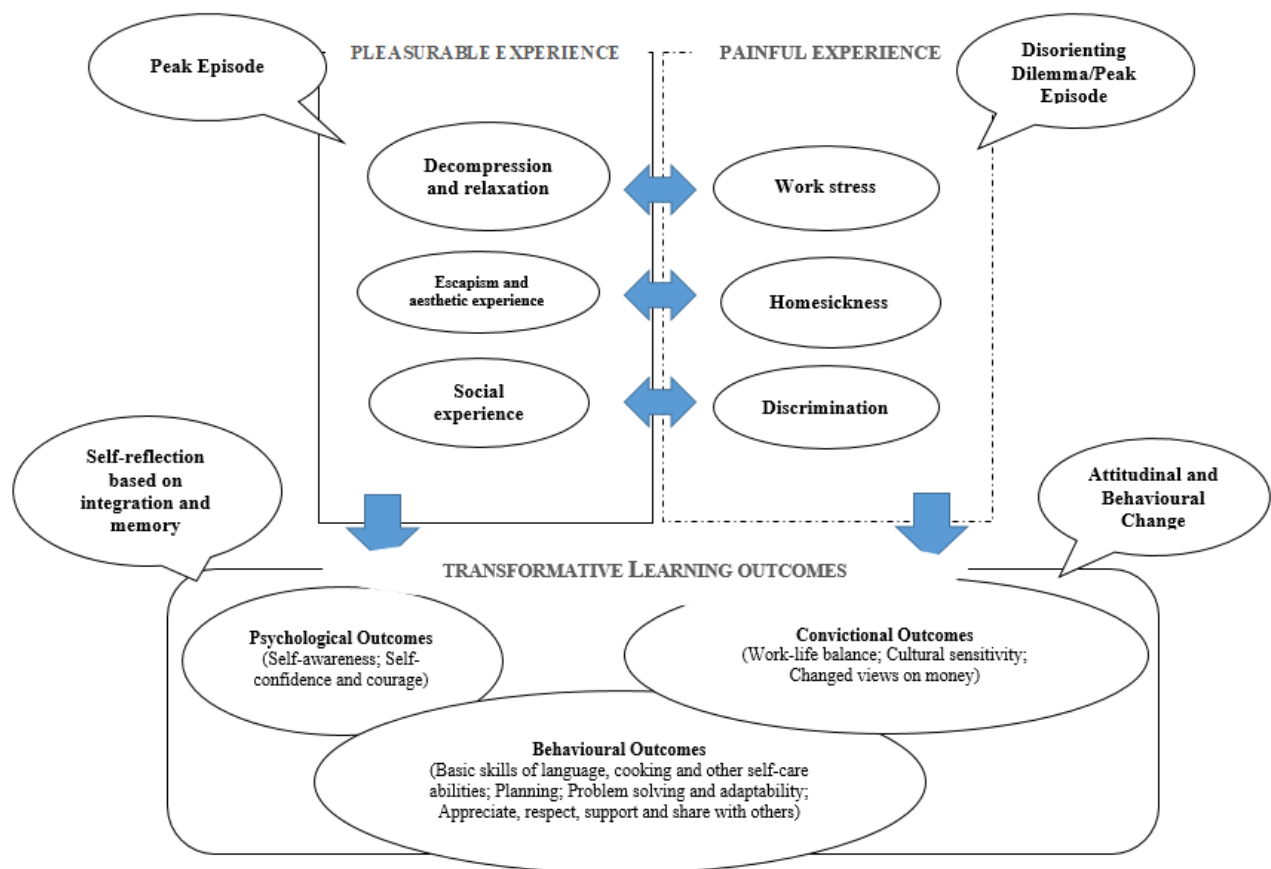
620
621 **5.2 Conceptualising tourist transformation in working holiday tourism**

622
623 This study developed a conceptual framework for tourist transformation in working holiday
624 tourism. Figure 1 records pleasurable and painful working holiday experiences, transformative
625 learning outcomes, and their subtle interrelationships. The three factors of pleasure and three
626 factors of pain were considered as paired opposites. Pleasure and pain occur at different times in
627 different working holiday contexts (leisure activities vs. work). For example, work stress can be

628 reduced or eliminated by travelling between destinations. WHTs may feel they have escaped to a
 629 different world sometimes and may occasionally be nostalgic or homesick. Their social experiences
 630 with different people can be positive or negative. Different WHTs interpreted their working holiday
 631 experiences in different ways, possibly due to their personalities, family backgrounds and other
 632 experiences. Some were more positive or optimistic when reporting their experiences, whereas
 633 others showcased negative perceptions when recounting certain episodes or encounters from their
 634 working holiday.

636 As Figure 1 shows, the pleasure and pain components of WHTs' experiences were connected to
 637 their self-reflection through informal transformative learning. For instance, the WHTs gained in
 638 self-awareness, self-confidence and courage through work and life challenges and participation in
 639 leisure activities and adventures. They gained new skills, and found their behaviour was altered by
 640 their painful and pleasurable experiences. They gained problem-solving skills and adaptability
 641 owing to the problems and situations they encountered. Alternatively, their social skills improved
 642 because of the social and tourism activities they took part in with others. Overall, their convictional
 643 conditions were transformed when the positive and negative episodes of their working holiday
 644 lives were integrated. A new cultural environment interweaving cultural novelty and shocks
 645 facilitated cultural sensitivity and changes in their value systems. The pursuit of work–life balance
 646 became the life goal of many WHTs after experiencing pleasurable activities and painful challenges
 647 in working holiday contexts.

648



649

650

651

652

Figure 1
Tourist transformation in working holiday tourism

653

654 **5.3 Theoretical implications**

655

656 First, although TLT originated in the education field (Taylor, 2007), it has been applied in other
657 fields, including tourism (Pritchard et al., 2011; Stone & Duffy, 2015). Unfortunately, few hospitality
658 and tourism studies have adopted a systematic transformative learning perspective to study the
659 working holiday phenomenon. Our study extended the understanding of tourist transformation in
660 an unusual tourism context, which involves longer stays at the host destination and deeper
661 involvement with the place and local people. These features usually inhibit tourist transformation
662 in traditional tourism (Pung & Del Chiappa, 2020). Volunteer tourism is a popular focus in the
663 tourism context from the perspective of TLT (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011; Knollenberg et al., 2014).
664 However, our study has contributed to the literature, as WHTs may not have an altruistic
665 motivation similar to volunteer tourists (Lo & Lee, 2011) and they are not formally involved in an
666 organised learning context. The WHTs in our study conducted their 'self-reflection' in an informal
667 and self-directed manner. They tended to engage continuously in self-reflection even after
668 returning from the host destination. In general, 'self-reflection' is a process of reviewing external
669 objects and people that are influential in one's cognitive system (Pintrich et al., 2000). Pung et al.
670 (2020a) implied that self-reflection is an important feature of tourist transformation.

671

672 Second, our study extended the TLT by identifying the transformative triggers for emotional
673 experiences of various types. These should not be restricted to 'disorienting dilemmas' (Mezirow,
674 2000). Our study largely concurred with Pung et al. (2020a) on these transformation stimuli (peak
675 episodes, disorienting dilemmas), but we have more explicitly argued that WHTs' 'self-assessments'
676 originate from both pleasurable and painful experiences. This finding parallels Taylor (2007), who
677 found that both positive and negative experiences triggered the transformative learning process.
678 Moreover, in line with this thinking, we consolidated the experiential approach to understanding
679 tourism phenomena. The findings of this study are linked to representative theories of the
680 experience economy (Pine & Gilmore, 1999), hedonic consumption (Alba & Williams, 2013) and the
681 sharing economy (DeCrop et al., 2018), as they facilitate WHTs' transformative process.

682

683 Third, this study paralleled the findings of Coghlan and Gooch (2012) that the 10 elements of
684 Mezirow (2000) may not necessarily occur stepwise. However, the elements are reflected in our
685 analysis of working holiday tourism. A 'disorienting dilemma' was uncovered, particularly in
686 working environments (Choy, 2009) and being geographically and psychologically distant from
687 home. Through experiential 'exploration' and 'trying new roles' at host destinations, they 'acquired
688 new knowledge' and 'built up competence' (Mezirow, 2000), which were perceived as beneficial
689 for their whole life. After returning and 'integrating' back into home society (Mezirow, 2000), they
690 continued their 'self-examining/assessing' and 'shared' their working holiday experiences. Their
691 experiences triggered them to think and behave differently during and after their working holiday.
692 Further, this study contributes to the literature by considering the cross-cultural interface. Many
693 interviewees compared their past and present lives and beliefs in Hong Kong. Hong Kong was
694 reported to feature congested living conditions, fast-paced work and materialism. Based on their
695 observations of the cultures of host destinations and people's behaviour, the WHTs modified their
696 beliefs and behaviours. For example, some expressed the importance of personal life/leisure and
697 work after returning to Hong Kong.

698

699 Fourth, this study enriched the TLT literature by connecting transformative learning outcomes to
700 working holiday experiences. It addressed the limitations of Soulard et al. (2020) in uncovering this
701 relationship, and made a full exploration of psychological, behavioural and convictional learning
702 outcomes (Clark, 1991). Thus, the details of WHTs' self-actualisation (Coghlan & Gooch, 2011) and
703 self-assurance (Soulard et al., 2020) have been unveiled. These provide insights to the stakeholders
704 involved in working holiday tourism and WHSs.

705

706 **5.4 Managerial implications**

707

708 This study provides significant insights for governments, WHTs, destination marketing
709 organisations and other stakeholders, such as employers at the host destinations and the future
710 employers of the WHTs after they return. Governments should reconsider the importance of WHSs
711 and develop them sustainably. They should use the transformative learning outcomes attained by
712 WHTs as a way to evaluate the effectiveness of WHSs in nurturing young talents who can
713 contribute to society in the future. The knowledge and skills acquired are important and useful for
714 the WHTs, and the psychological, behavioural and convictional changes may contribute to their
715 personal growth and generate long-term positive effects on society. Adaptiveness and resilience
716 are important transformative learning outcomes, which may help individuals and society to
717 overcome the challenges that arise from the global pandemic, economic downturns,
718 unemployment, social unrest and political instability (yahoo.com, 2020).

719

720 The transformative learning process of self-reflection on the differences between their home place
721 and the host destination may go beyond the trip and continue when the WHTs return home. For
722 example, beliefs in *work-life balance*, *views on money* and *cultural sensitivity* may become new
723 frames of reference for WHTs upon their return. Different stakeholders can facilitate the
724 reintegration of WHTs into society upon returning home. Government agencies can learn from the
725 WHTs' experience and seek their feedback to improve WHSs and other talent development
726 programmes.

727

728 This study's findings will help service providers at the host destinations to satisfy the needs of
729 WHTs. For example, enforcement of employment rules and regulations may ease the pain of
730 holiday working. By better understanding the needs of WHTs and developing responsive strategies,
731 host destinations can improve their reputation and be competitive in sustaining their tourism
732 business for this segment. The pleasurable experiences from working holidays may provide
733 valuable insights to host destination marketers. For instance, because *social experience* is regarded
734 as a considerable part of the pleasure, tourism destinations can emphasise fun interactions
735 between tourists and host communities in their marketing communications.

736

737 **5.5 Limitations and future study**

738

739 This study focused on qualitative rather than quantitative data. Future research could seek
740 additional evidence using survey data. For example, the relative importance of the WHTs'
741 transformative learning outcomes is a topic worth exploring. This study also focused only on Hong
742 Kong youths, rather than a full-scale study of WHTs with different cultural backgrounds. The
743 theoretical and managerial implications might be different with a broader sample. Future cross-
744 cultural studies are suggested. Another limitation was sampling bias, as a majority of participants
745 worked in the service industry; the sample failed to include sufficient participants with working

746 experience in the agricultural industry, for example. The transformative outcomes might be
747 different among other types of workers. A more in-depth study is expected in the future. Last,
748 future researchers could further explore the transformative dynamic in WHTs of different genders
749 (Pung et al., 2020b). The gender difference and the subsequent way of experiencing a tourism
750 working context would merit attention.

751 **REFERENCE**

- 752
- 753 Alba, J. W., & Williams, E. F. (2013). Pleasure principles: A review of research on hedonic
754 consumption. *Journal of Consumer Psychology, 23*(1), 2-18.
755 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jcps.2012.07.003>
- 756 Arnould, E. J., & Price, L. L. (1993). River magic: Extraordinary experience and the extended service
757 encounter. *Journal of Consumer Research, 20*(1), 24-45.
758 <https://doi.org/10.1086/209331>
- 759 Babin, B. J., Darden, W. R., & Griffin, M. (1994). Work and/or fun: Measuring hedonic and utilitarian
760 shopping value. *Journal of Consumer Research, 20*, 644-656. <https://doi.org/10.1086/209376>
- 761 Cavender, R., Swanson, J.R., & Wright, K. (2020). Transformative travel: Transformative learning
762 through education aboard in a niche tourism destination, *Journal Hospitality, Leisure, Sport &*
763 *Tourism Education,*
764 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhlste.2020.100245>
- 765 Chang, W. W., Chen, C. H., Huang, Y. F., & Yuan, Y. H. (2012). Exploring the unknown: International
766 service and individual transformation. *Adult Education Quarterly: A Journal of Research and*
767 *Theory, 62*(3), 230-251. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713611402049>
- 768 Chen, P. (2012). Empowering identity reconstruction of indigenous college students through
769 transformative learning. *Educational Review, 64*(2), 161-180.
770 <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131911.2011.592574>
- 771 Choy, S. (2009). Transformative learning in the workplace. *Journal of Transformative Education,*
772 *7*(1), 65-84. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1541344609334720>
- 773 Christie, M. F., & Mason, P. A. (2003). Transformative tour guiding: Training tour guides to be
774 critically reflective practitioners. *Journal of Ecotourism, 2*(1), 1-16.
775 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14724040308668130>
- 776 Clark, C. M. (1991). The restructuring of meaning: An analysis of the impact of context on
777 transformational learning (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Athens: University of Georgia.
- 778 Clarke, N. (2004). Free independent travelers? British working holiday makers in Australia.
779 *Transactions of the Institute of British Geographers, 29*(4), 499-509.
780 <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.00202754.2004.00144.x>
- 781 Coghlan, A. & Gooch, M. (2011). Applying a transformative learning framework to volunteer
782 tourism. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism, 19*(6), 713-728.
783 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2010.542246>
- 784 Decrop, A. (2004). Trustworthiness in qualitative tourism research. In J. Phillimore & L.
785 Goodson (Eds.), *Qualitative research in tourism*(pp. 156-169). London: Routledge.
- 786 DeCrop, A., Del Chiappa, G., Mallarge, J., & Zidda, P. (2018). Couchsurfing has made me a better
787 person and the world a better place: The transformative power of collaborative tourism
788 experiences. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing, 35*(1), 1-16.
789 <https://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2017.1307159>
- 790 Dirkx, J. M. (1997). Nurturing soul in adult learning. In P. Cranton (Ed.), *Transformative learning in*
791 *action: Insights from practice* (New directions for adult and continuing education, pp. 79-88).
792 San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass. <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.7409>
- 793 Dirkx, J. M. (2006). Engaging emotions in adult learning: A Jungian perspective on emotion and
794 transformative learning. *New Directions for Adult and Continuing Education, 109*, 15-26.
795 <https://doi.org/10.1002/ace.204>
- 796 Frazer, R., & Waitt, G. (2016). Pain, politics and volunteering in tourism studies. *Annals of Tourism*
797 *Research, 57*, 176-189. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2016.01.001>

- 798 Gius, C. (2017). Facing the pain of others: perspectives on international volunteer tourism between
799 agency and spectatorship. *Current Issues in Tourism*, 20(15), 1620-1632.
800 <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2015.1047330>
- 801 Glaser, B. G., & Strauss, A. L. (1967). *The discovery of grounded theory: Strategies for qualitative*
802 *research*. New York: Aldine Publishing Company.
803 <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780203793206>
- 804 Ho, C. I., Lin, P. Y., & Huang, S. C. (2014). Exploring Taiwanese working holiday-makers' motivations:
805 An analysis of means-end hierarchies. *Journal of Hospitality & Tourism Research*, 38(4), 463-
806 486.
807 <https://doi.org/10.1177/1096348012461549>
- 808 Hosany, S., & Witham, M. (2010). Dimensions of cruises' experiences, satisfaction, and intention to
809 recommend, *Journal of Travel Research*, 49(3), 351-364.
810 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287509346859>
- 811 Immd.gov. (2018). Working holiday scheme. Retrieved on 26 July 2018, from
812 http://www.immd.gov.hk/eng/services/visas/working_holiday_scheme.html
- 813 Jansari, A., & Parkin, A. J. (1996). Things that go bump in your life: Explaining the reminiscence
814 bump in autobiographical memory. *Psychology and Aging*, 11(1), 85-91.
815 <https://doi.org/10.1037/0882-7974.11.1.85>
- 816 Jarvis, J., & Peel, V. (2013). Tourists for- hire: International working holidaymakers in a work based
817 destination in regional Australia. *Tourism Management*, 37, 114-124.
818 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2012.10.014>
- 819 Jennings, G. (2010). *Tourism research*. Wiley Australia Tourism Series.
- 820 Jones, P. (2015). Transformative learning theory: Address new challenges in social work education,
821 In M. Li & Y. Zhao (eds.), *Exploring Learning & Teaching in Higher Education*, Springer-Verlag
822 Berlin Heidelberg (p.267-896).
823 http://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-642-55352-3_12
- 824 Kegan, R. (2000). What "form" transforms? A constructive-developmental approach to
825 transformative learning. In J. Mezirow & Associates (Eds.), *Learning as Transformation: Critical*
826 *Perspectives on a Theory in Progress* (pp. 35-69). San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
827 <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781315147277-3>
- 828 Knollenberg, W., McGehee, N. G., Boley, B. B., & Clemmons, D. (2014). Motivation-based
829 transformative learning and potential volunteer tourists: facilitating more sustainable
830 outcomes. *Journal of Sustainable Tourism*, 22, 922-941.
831 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2014.902065>
- 832 Korstjens, I., & Moser, A. (2018). Series: practical guidance to qualitative research. Part 4:
833 Trustworthiness and publishing. *European Journal of General Practice*, 24(1), 120-124.
- 834 Kirillova, K., Lehto, X., & Cai, Lo. (2017). What triggers transformative tourism experiences? *Tourism*
835 *Recreation Research*, 42(4), 498-511. <https://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2017.1342349>
- 836 Labour Department The Government of the HKSAR (2020). Hong Kong/Japan Working Holiday
837 Scheme annual quota to increase significantly to 1500. Retrieved 24 July 2020 from
838 https://www.whs.gov.hk/en/news_detail.php?id=7
- 839 Lawton, P. H., & La Porte, A. M. (2013). Beyond traditional art education: Transformative lifelong
840 learning in community-based settings with older adults. *Studies in Art Education, A Journal of*
841 *Issues and Research*, 54(4), 310-320. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00393541.2013.11518905>
- 842 Lengieza, M. L., Hunt, G. A., & Swim, J. K. (2019). Measuring eudaimonic travel experiences. *Annals*
843 *of Tourism Research*, 74, 195-197. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2018.05.002>
- 844 Lo, A.S., & Lee, C.Y.S. (2011). Motivations and perceived value of volunteer tourists from Hong Kong,

- 845 *Tourism Management*, 32, 326-334.
846 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2010.03.002>
- 847 Loker-Murphy, L., & Pearce, P.L. (1995). Young budget travelers: Backpackers in Australia, *Annals of*
848 *Tourism Research*, 22(4), 819-843.
849 [https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383\(95\)00026-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/0160-7383(95)00026-0)
- 850 Matt, S. J. (2007). You can't go home again: Homesickness and nostalgia in the U.S. history. *The*
851 *Journal of American History*, 94(2), 469-497.
852 <https://doi.org/10.2307/25094961>
- 853 McAllister, L., Whiteford, G., Hill, B., Thomas, N., & Fitzgerald, M. (2006). Reflection in intercultural
854 learning: Examining the international experience through a critical incident approach. *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*, 7(3), 367-381.
855 <https://doi.org/10.1080/14623940600837624>
- 856 Mckercher, B., & Chow, S. M. (2001). Cultural distance and participation in cultural tourism. *Pacific*
857 *Tourism Review*, 5(1/2), 23-32.
- 858 Meng, B., & Han, H. (2018a). Investigating individuals' decision formation in working-holiday
859 tourism: The role of sensation-seeking and gender. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*,
860 35(8), 973-987.
861 <http://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2017.1422455>
- 862 Meng, B., & Han, H. (2018b). Working holiday tourism attributes and satisfaction in forming word-
863 of-mouth and revisit intentions: Impact of quantity and quality of intergroup contact. *Journal of*
864 *Destination Marketing & Management*, 9, 347-357.
865 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.jdmm.2018.03.009>
- 866 Mezirow, J. (2000). Learning as transformation: Critical perspectives on a theory in progress. San
867 Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
868 [http://doi.org/10.1016/S0099-1333\(01\)00248-8](http://doi.org/10.1016/S0099-1333(01)00248-8)
- 869 Mody, M. A., Suess, C., & Lehto, X. (2017). The accommodation experiencescape: a comparative
870 assessment of hotels and Airbnb. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality*
871 *Management*, 29(9), 2377-2404.
872 <https://doi.org/10.1108/IJCHM-09-2016-0501>
- 873 Müller, C. V., Scheffer, A. B. B., & Closs, L. Q. (2020). Volunteer tourism, transformative learning
874 and its impacts on careers: The case of Brazilian volunteers. *International Journal of Tourism*
875 *Research*, 22, 726-738.
876 <http://doi.org/10.1002/jtr.2368>
- 877 Nagai, H., Benckendorff, P., & Tkaczynski, A. (2018). Differentiating Asian working holiday makers
878 from traditional backpackers on the basis of accommodation preferences. *Journal of*
879 *Hospitality and Tourism Management*, 35, 66-74.
880 <http://doi.org/10.1016/j.jhtm.2018.03.003>
- 881 Nagai, H., Tkaczynski, A., & Benckendorff, P. J. (2020). Exploring the role of language proficiency
882 and cultural adaptation in travel risk perception: A study of Asian working holiday makers in
883 Australia. *Journal of Vacation Marketing*, 26(2), 166-181.
884 <http://doi.org/10.1177/1356766719880249>
- 885 Newman, M. (2012). Calling transformative learning into question: some mutinous thoughts. *Adult*
886 *Education Quarterly*, 62(1), 36-55.
887 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0741713610392768>
- 888 Nino, M., Cuevas, M., & Loya, M. (2011). Transformational effects of service-learning in a university
889 developed community-based agency. *Advances in Social Work*, 12(1), 33-48.
890 <https://doi.org/10.18060/590>
- 891

- 892 Patton, M. (2015). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (4th ed.). Thousand Oaks: SAGE.
- 893 Peltz, D. P., & Clemons, A. C. (2019). *Multicultural andragogy for transformative learning*. IGI
894 Global: Hershey PA, USA.
895 <https://doi.org/10.4018/978-1-5225-3474-7>
- 896 Pennings, M. W., Cushing, D. F., Gomez, R., & Dyson, C. (2020). Making the intangible, tangible:
897 Assessment design that fosters curiosity, confidence and collaboration during international
898 short-term study tours for Australian students. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 60(1), 113-
899 137.
- 900 Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (1999). *The experience economy: Work is theatre and every business a*
901 *stage*. Boston MA: Harvard Business School Press.
902 <https://doi.org/10.5860/choice.37-2254>
- 903 Pine, B. J., & Gilmore, J. H. (2014). A leader's guide to innovation in the experience economy.
904 *Strategy & Leadership*, 42(1), 24-29.
905 <https://doi.org/10.1108/SL-09-2013-0073>
- 906 Pintrich, P. R., Wolters, C. A., & Baxter, G. P. (2000). Assessing metacognition and selfregulated
907 learning. In G. Schraw & J. C. Impara (Eds.), *Assessing metacognition and self-regulated*
908 *learning* (pp. 43–97). Lincoln, NE: Buros Institute of Mental Measurements.
- 909 Pizam, A., Uriely, N., & Reichel, A. (2000). The intensity of tourist-host social relationship and its
910 effects on satisfaction and change of attitudes: the case of working tourists in Israel. *Tourism*
911 *Management*, 21, 395-406.
912 [https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177\(99\)00085-0](https://doi.org/10.1016/S0261-5177(99)00085-0)
- 913 Pritchard, A., Morgan, N., & Ateljevic, I. (2011). Hopeful tourism: A new transformative perspective.
914 *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(3), 941-963.
915 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.01.004>
- 916 Pung, J. M., Gnoth, J., & Del Chiappa, G. (2020a). Tourist transformation: Towards a conceptual
917 model. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 81, 102885.
918 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2020.102885>
- 919 Pung, J. M., Yung, R., Khoo-Lattimore, C., & Del Chiappa, G. (2020b). Transformative travel
920 experiences and gender: a double duoethnography approach. *Current Issues in Tourism*,
921 23(5), 538-558. <https://doi.org/10.1080/13683500.2019.1635091>
- 922 Pung, J. M., & Del Chiappa, G. (2020). An exploratory and qualitative study on the maining of
923 transformative tourism and its facilitators and inhibitors. *European Journal of Tourism*
924 *Research*, 24, 2404. Retrieved from <https://ejtr.vumk.eu/index.php/about/article/view/406>
- 925 Rice, K. (2007). Push, pull, and paradox: The significance and irony of working-holidays for young
926 Canadians in Edinburgh. Master thesis at Concordia University, Montreal, Quebec, Canada.
- 927 Rice, K. (2010). 'Working on holiday': Relationships between tourism and work among young
928 Canadians in Edinburgh. *Anthropology in Action*, 17(1), 30-40.
929 <https://doi.org/10.3167/aia.2010.170104>
- 930 Scopelliti, M., & Tiberio, L. (2010). Homesickness in university students: The role of multiple place
931 attachment. *Environment and Behavior*, 42(3), 335-350.
932 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0013916510361872>
- 933 Sen, V. & Walter, P. (2020). Community-based ecotourism and the transformative learning of
934 homestay hosts in Cambodia. *Tourism Recreation Research*.
935 <http://doi.org/10.1080/02508281.2019.1692171>
- 936 Soulard, J., McGehee, N., & Knollenberg, W. (2020). Developing and testing the transformative
937 travel experience scale (TTES). *Journal of Travel Research*,
938 <https://doi.org/10.1177/0047287520919511>

939 Stone, G.A., & Duffy, L.N. (2015). Transformative learning theory: A systematic review of travel and
940 tourism scholarship, *Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism*, 15, 204-224.
941 <https://doi.org/10.1080/15313220.2015.1059305>

942 Suntikul, W. (2018). Cultural sustainability and fluidity in Bhutan's traditional festivals. *Journal of*
943 *Sustainable Tourism*, 26(12), 2102-2116.
944 <https://doi.org/10.1080/09669582.2018.1533021>

945 Taylor, E. W. (2007). An update of transformative learning theory: A critical review of the empirical
946 research (1999-2005). *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, 26(2), 173-191.
947 <https://doi.org/10.1080/02601370701219475>

948 Thomas, R. (2012). Business elites, universities and knowledge transfer in tourism. *Tourism*
949 *Management*, 33(3), 553-561.
950 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tourman.2011.06.009>

951 Tsai, L.L., & Collines, F.L. (2017). Youth and mobility in working holidays: Imagined freedoms and
952 lived constraints in lives of Taiwanese working holidaymakers in New Zealand, *New Zealand*
953 *Geographer*, 73, 129-140.
954 <https://doi.org/10.1111/nzg.12149>

955 Tsauro, S-H., & Huang, C. C. (2016). Working holiday tourist learning: Scale development and
956 validation. *Journal of Travel & Tourism Marketing*.
957 <http://doi.org/10.1080/10548408.2015.1064851>

958 Tung, V. W. S., & Ritchie, J. R. B. (2011). Exploring the essence of memorable tourism experiences.
959 *Annals of Tourism Research*, 38(4), 1367-1386.
960 <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.annals.2011.03.009>

961 Uriely, N. (2001). 'Travelling workers' and 'working tourists': Variations across the Interaction
962 between work and tourism. *International Journal of Tourism Research*, 3(1), 1-8.
963 [https://doi.org/10.1002/1522-1970\(200101/02\)3:1<1::AID-JTR241>3.0.CO;2-M](https://doi.org/10.1002/1522-1970(200101/02)3:1<1::AID-JTR241>3.0.CO;2-M)

964 Wang, N. (1999). Rethinking authenticity in tourism experience. *Annals of Tourism Research*, 26,
965 349-370.

966 Wherecani.live.com (2020). Working holiday visas. Retrieved 24 July from
967 <https://wherecani.live/explore-options/working-holiday-visa/>.

968 Xu, J. & Chan, A. (2010). A conceptual framework of hotel experience and customer-based brand
969 equity: Some research questions and implications. *International Journal of Contemporary*
970 *Hospitality Management*, 22(2), 174-193.
971 <https://doi.org/10.1108/09596111011018179>

972 Yahoo.com (2020). 36% of interviewees were found to have post- trauma pressure and depression
973 symptoms. Extracted on 7 Aug 2020 from <https://hk.mobi.yahoo.com/news/>

974 Zhu, H., Duncan, T., & Tucker, H. (2019). Personal changes of young Chinese through working
975 holidays in New Zealand, *Journal of China Tourism Research*.
976 <http://doi.org/10.1080/19388160.2019.1700862>

977
978
979
980