



THE CERAMIC TABLEWARE DESIGN ELEMENTS OF LOCAL STUDIO CERAMIC DESIGNERS

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ABSTRACT

Design is a term used in the various fields of arts and product invention. Design refers to a combination of a noun namely art of design and pattern and a verb namely planning or drawing produced in showing the appearance and function or working of a product before it is made. Product design would often emphasize on aspects of design elements that resulted in a good product and the studio ceramic tableware set is not excluded. Owing to the fact that only a few research has been done on local ceramic products, this study would attempt to focus on the ceramic tableware design elements produced by the local studio ceramic designers. As such, this paper would attempt to discuss five identified design elements which include (1) Shape, (2) Form, (3) Color, (4) Decoration and (5) Texture. The research approaches via literature review in addition to interviews with the local studio ceramic designers and observations have been used in identifying the design elements of the product. The research finding reveals design elements of local studio ceramic tableware set is strongly influenced by the designer's knowledge, education, experience, expression, environmental conditions and surroundings. The study of these elements of design

would be an inspiration and knowledge to designers in particular to ceramic designers in diversifying their local ceramic products. Premised on this study, it is hope that various studies or researches on design elements can be undertaken and expended. The findings of such endeavour would certainly enhance the development of design of ceramic products embodying the identity and culture of local community.

Keyword: Design Elements, Ceramic Product, Studio Ceramic Tableware Sets, Local Ceramic Designers

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1. INTRODUCTION

Inspiration, a two dimensional visual artwork or a three dimensional product designed creates a communication and interaction between the artist and the designer with the universal human life. In the context of a three dimensional design, design elements become the main factor in creating a design that meets the criteria of a good product's beauty, esthetic, splendor and functionality (Siti Zainon 1986; Syed Ahmad 1992; Ocvirk et. al 2002; Hamdzun et.al 2014). Emphasis on the final three dimensional products has been made by the designer based on the cultural background of a particular race or country. This is done in light of the emergence of various home ware products which has a contemporary design, elegance, simple and easy to use suitable for current modern living.

In Malaysia, IKEA, Home Pro, Index Living, Living Quarters, Ombak Asia and SSF are among the notable establishments which offer home ware products. Sales of imported home ware products in particular the ceramic tableware by these establishments have encouraged further creations of these products of various designs. In light of such current positive developments in ceramic tableware in the market, local studio ceramic designer has also played a role in offering products collectively known as Studio Ceramic Tableware Sets. Ceramic products which are handmade by the Malay local ceramic designer are very unique and creative. Prior studies on local ceramic products are mainly focused on Malay traditional pottery (Salwa 2008; Azmi et. al 2010; Hamdzun & Narimah 2013; Zahirah et. al 2013). A study of local ceramic from the point of view of design elements of studio ceramic would be useful in providing knowledge to the designer as well as the community of the existence and potential of studio ceramic products.

Thus, this study would be discussing on five design elements of studio ceramic tableware namely Shape, Form, Color, Decoration and Texture. Among the notable local ceramic designers are 1) Ilham Studio; 2) Bendang Studio; 3) Bangkita Studio and 4) Nizan Design. It is envisioning that this study would be an important study in an effort to introduce to the society the local studio ceramic products as well as to further develop the local ceramic studio industry.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Design

A three dimensional design is formed from design elements which can give a good splendor, beauty and the usefulness of a product. It is also being defined as planning a pattern, form etc. so as to establish an arrangement, structure or building aspects and so forth (Kamus Dewan

2014). To a majority of designers, design refers to their past experience, observation and situation. Among others, design must focus on materials, technology and innovation as well as the energy that would be uniting the whole community (Rossella & Stefania 2014; Hamdzun & Narimah 2014) design is an instrument to help a particular race (Starck 2016); the creation of a design requires excitement in giving a new perspective, dare to take risk, intuition and delighting (Diez 2016); and a good design must possess useful traits and emotion so as to establish a creation of a real feelings (Aixing et al. 2016).

The definition of design by these designers is an inspiration to other designers in translating their product innovation to the society. The process of designing of studio ceramic product requires thoroughness starting from the early stages including the process of sketching the two dimensional view, and then followed by creation of a three dimensional model using material such as clay, Plaster of Paris as well as other materials depending on the desire and objective of the product designer. In the process of design, the designer must take into consideration the product's function and its useful traits. The final product is produced with choices of colors, decorations and textures, through a process and techniques which would give the surface quality of the product its' beautiful, exquisite, long lasting and ease of use.

2.2. Shape and form

According to Quinn (2007), shape in the field of ceramic is defined as ideas in two dimensions. It is important features in designing process which include model sketches before a particular product is being produced. Among the elements, the shape that is most often highlighted by designer are organic and geometrical while classic, elegance and retro are based on designer's experience and excitement towards arts as well as design (Quinn 2007). Both Studies by (Norton 1956; Ishardita 2015) highlighted shape as straight line, circle, parabola, S curve and ellipse. Shape is defined by Rice (1987) as collaborations between building structures, function, decoration and proportion which form the shape of the ceramic. In producing of a shape and form design, anatomy of the human body can be used as a guide and interpreted in the production of various form of ceramic products. Form encompasses proportion of height including diameter of ceramic base and ceramic lip; volume of the product; and surface quality which are product surface lip design and size.

2.3. Color

Colour does provide prominent appearance to a product and gave expression to viewers as well as attract the attention of buyers. In the field of ceramic, ceramic material handling and type of application does give different effects (Quinn 2007). Ceramic colours come from ceramic colour materials such as cobalt, copper, chromium, red iron, rutile, manganese and nickel. Colours in glaze of ceramic spectrum can change depending on the atmospheric conditions of kiln use (Robin 2013). Study of colour in the field of ceramic by (Ishardita 2015) with employing the Kansei Engineering and Kano model in interpretation of consumers' perception has categorised colour into four segments: 1) ceramic product using one colour; 2) many colours; 3) blocked/solid colour and 4) colour gradation. Production techniques of glazed colour by means of dipping, spraying, combination of colour by overlapping and the use of tools such as brush, pencil and crayon from ceramic materials give diversity and attraction to consumers.

2.4. Decoration

Decorations, in the field of ceramic, are produced from various materials and undergo various techniques as well as processes in arriving at a special features or the intended decoration planned from the beginning. Materials used are engobe (clay which has been undiluted with water), commercial ceramic stain colour, coloured clay, ceramic pencil, ceramic crayon, ceramic water color, decal, lustre as well as glaze. These materials are then used in various techniques and processes such as inlay, stencil, sgraffito, ceramic wax, hand painting, trailing, piercing, engraving, sprigging, stamping and mocha magic (Robin 2004; Quinn 2007; Norhasliyana Hazlin Zainal Amri et.al 2018). From the observations of interconnected decorations to patterns of production always reflect the cultural heritage of a country. To produce a decoration that meets the needs of the universal society, the cultural background, customs and behavior of a society should be guided by the designers (Dehua 2015).

2.5. Texture

Texture is imprint or surface quality of a particular material, goods or product which can be felt by touch. Texture also gives psychological impact to consumers and always related to milieu, experience and object (Ocvirk 2002). Ishardita (2015) put forward three types of categories which represent ceramic texture which are glazed texture, Matt and Porous. Firing temperature is greatly emphasized by the maker in order to get the desired textural effect. Although texture features in the production of ceramic product is less studied by researchers, based on observation and interview with local ceramic designer namely Iqbal; Khairul; Radzi; Rozana (2016) it is found that texture features do give the product its expressional effect, interaction and communication with consumer. A food dish served on ceramic tableware does influence and accentuates the dining experience and thus generates the appetite for consuming the various colored dishes.

2.6. Local studio ceramic tableware

According to Copper (2010), the establishment of Craft Centre of Great Britain in London in 1948 had boosted the involvement of studio pottery designer in hand made pottery. This product which has features such as dark colored glaze, minimal decoration and thick wall thickness are sold to the public at an affordable price. These pottery products continue to remain with traditional influence throughout the years of 1950s and 1960s. While in 1970s, ceramic product is showing good progress from the point of view of diversity of material used, color, technique and decorations which comes from a number of countries namely Britain, America, France, Greece, New Zealand, Italy, Japan, Korea and Taiwan. Ceramic products continue to progress showing the identity of the designer as well as its community culture (Copper 2010; Zainal Zakaria & Hamdzun Haron 2013). In Malaysia, studio ceramic is relatively a new concept being put forward in art and design world of local ceramic product. This new concept does possess its own potential if given proper attention and opportunity by all levels of society.

The specialty of studio ceramic tableware is in its handmade production by local Malay designers who are graduates in the field of ceramic from local universities as well other local educational institutions. It represents the seriousness of local designer, appreciative of local cultural values and heritages. Handmade product gives a symbolic perception of love towards one's effort, product quality, uniqueness, originality and pride. Product potential is having a good opportunity considering that studio ceramic product has been introduced by Director General National Visual Arts Development Board (Prof. Dato Dr. Mohamed Najib Ahmad Dawa) as daily use products to the local society at the Ceramic Studio 2016 Exhibition held at Hotel Seri Pasifik, Kuala Lumpur. This research attempts to highlights part of the product

produced by local ceramic studio designers consisting of ceramic plate, bowl and cup. The emergence of diversity concept of café, restaurant, resort and hotel has given an opportunity to ceramic studio designers to produce studio ceramic tableware sets according to the theme desired by their clients.

3. FINDING

3.1. Ilham Studio

Ilham Studio was established by artist and ceramic designer Mohamad Radzi Ismail. Langkawi, Kedah, being his birthplace, has become his main source of inspiration in highlighting studio ceramic products. The design of studio ceramic tableware product has been inspired by sea life theme. As such, many studio plates product has his identity like a small sea coral placed on the product's lip surface. Product design showed durability with the combination of geometrical shape and organic as well as fusion between symmetrical and unsymmetrical shape. Form with different sizes of product thickness giving consumer choice of use based on type of choice of meal. Product colours derived from colored glazed materials characteristically contrasting would be embellishing the plate background space and the front in such a way that a focus would be on the food dishes. Colours various from dark brown, light brown, dark blue, light blue, dark green and grey are derived from metallic oxide such as cobalt, red iron and nickel would give a balance effect of the product. Product decoration is more concentrated on combination of overlay technique between two glaze colours which create a different colour as well as to show the effect like an image on surface of sea water. Swirl lines texture and spotted effect showed that this product has been inspired by the local life of nature. Studio ceramic tableware set product by Mohamad Radzi has had a demand and been commercialized in the country in particular at hotels in Langkawi, Kedah and Kuala Lumpur.



3.2. Bendang Studio

Rozana Musa is the owner of Bendang Studio located at Kampung Sungai Petai, Alor Gajah, Melaka. Her persistence, seriousness, steadfastness and determination in the field of studio ceramic have become a point of departure to step further in her endeavour. Her design of studio ceramic tableware set is modern and retro with selections of color diversity and decorations. Design element of shape encompasses geometrical shape and most of the product possesses symmetrical shape based on production technique of throwing machine. Basic shape of this utensil such as plate, bowl and drinking cup without stalk has been used as a guide in product making. The studio ceramic tableware can be purchased as a set or separately. Colour plays a significant role in accentuating Rozana's studio ceramic product identity. Rozana employs a combination of natural colors such as brown, white and black in order to reveal the color prevalent in her village. Blue and white as well as a combination of unglazed circular pattern appear as retro and modern. The use of pink, point pattern technique and luster from gold enamel create a different to the product; it looks harmonious as well as exhibits tenderness characteristic and appears luxurious.



3.3. Bangkita Studio

Muhammad Iqbal Awang Damit's involvement in ceramic business world began in 2012. He has been making ceramic products since then in his studio known as Bangkita Studio. Today a diversity of studio ceramic tableware set has been produced from his studio. He has gained vast experiences in this field firstly as a student of ceramic in local Public University, secondly as participant in ceramic workshops conducted both locally and externally and thirdly as a participant in an intensive learning program conducted at Incheon Ceramic Village, Korea. He has been able to create various studio ceramic products by employing throwing machine and hand built technique efficiently and consistently. The studio ceramic tableware products are made from clay obtained directly from Kuala Kangsar, Perak. Iqbal product shape design consists of a combination of geometry and organic. Shape and form of various sizes and unsymmetrical highlighted the designer's expression of being fond of experimenting with materials and techniques of production. At the request of clients, a combination of shining glaze comprising of the colors of blue and white, brown and blue as well as white and dark blue are highlighted. Decorative motif and pattern is derived from natural plant available in the designer surrounding. Motif and pattern have been arranged in stamping technique so as to exhibit a unique textural design effect and showing local touch of contemporary pattern. By his participation in Trade Fair Ambiente in Frankfurt, Consumer fair L'Artigiano in Fiera, Milan, Consumer fair Foire de Paris, Consumer fair Bazaar Berlin German, Festival Kraf and Art Bazaar, Iqbal's products have gained attention and demand from a number countries mentioned above. Career in the field of ceramic is viewed by Iqbal has great potential and opportunities. In light of this, he intended to open a café in which studio tableware products from his Bangkita Studio are used.



3.4. Nizan Studio

Nizan Design is relatively a new local ceramic studio established in 2017. Khairul Nizan Mohd Aris being the founder has gained his knowledge and experience in the field of ceramic from his formal studies in Malaysia, Japan and England. He has in-depth knowledge of arts and designing of studio ceramic products. Khairul Nizan's product designs comprise of shape and geometrical form, organic and streamlined. His choice of colors is characteristically blue pastel, green, light yellow and a combination of black. The texture is satin and semi matt. Thus, his product looks pleasing and comfortable to the eyes. Studio ceramic tableware products consist of various sizes with right proportion which can be stack together owing to the product's rounded corner. Pastel colours of the product have an effect of food dishes of various colour looks prominent. Hence, it has a psychological attraction for the consumer to enjoy the dishes and at the same time use the product. In producing this product, combination of the following techniques is used i.e. throwing machine, press mould and hand built; as for the glaze colour: dipping and spraying technique are employed. These products have gained

recognition and attention from a number of countries. Khairul Nizan's participation in the recent Arts and Design Exhibition held at Bandung, Indonesia has open new door of opportunity him to collaborate with other designers and businessman dealing in ceramic to expand and promote the local ceramic business.



4. DISCUSSION

Design elements play an important role in the production of studio ceramic tableware products. Adequate knowledge of design elements i.e. shape, form, colour, decoration and texture can be used as a guide to designer in producing and delivering the products to consumers via expression of the usage of the said elements. In addition, knowledge, learning process, experience, expression, surrounding circumstances as well as designer natural surrounding can also be used as guidance to a designer in his effort to sharpen his skills, knowledge, creativity, material experimentation and techniques continuously. Based on this research, other researches in the field of ceramics can be pursued such as a study of production of ceramic products based on consumer or clients' desires both from local and external clients. Thus, this process would enable the designer to create products that meet the taste of a universal society. Innovative study on ceramic product invention identifiable with the national heritage by way of design elements can also be undertaken so as to provide information to designer for the expansion of ceramic field.

5. CONCLUSION

The objective of this paperwork is to highlight the design elements of studio ceramic tableware set by the local ceramic designer. These five design elements comprising of shape, form, decoration, colour and texture are the contributing factors towards a good design appearance. Thus at the same time, a good design appearance does project well the identity of the designer as well as the local studio ceramic products. These design elements can be used as guidance to researcher and designer who are involved in arts and product design. It is hope for that by this study, a significant expansion in field of ceramic can be achieved in terms of production of local ceramic products and may the local studio ceramic products continue to grow and expand. It is envisioning that the expansion of the local ceramic industry would attract new local designers to be born and be involved in ceramic business world.

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