Cultural Creativity in Design Exhibition –
A Case Study of Emotional Effects Experienced
by the Audience

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Abstract. From the past few years, the public and the private sectors have been
encouraging the development of culture and creative industries. Many depart-
ments of design and visual communication have their graduate exhibitions fo-
cused on the concept of culture and creativity. Among them, “Lost Memories”
was awarded with the Golden Prize in the annual design exhibition for the new
generation. The exhibition was held in Culture and Creative Expo organized by
Taipei City Government and received many resonances. This study attempts to
use the exhibited images from “Lost Memories” as the sample and via literature
review, content analysis, survey-questionnaire and statistical analysis, the im-
ages and the corresponding and related theories will be induced and integrated
for the subject analysis, which will eventually present an analytical framework
of “exhibition content-audience experience.” This will explore the contribution
of the curator towards the cultural exhibition and provide a further reference for
future studies. As a result, it is discovered that the emotional effects expe-
rienced by the audience can produce a consistent effect after the book is pub-
lished by the curator after the exhibition. Between the curator and the audience,
the spirit has lasted through the content of the exhibited images. The content of
the exhibited images in the cultural exhibition include the concepts of "touch-
ing", "adhere to the spirit," "realistic," for which the curator expects the au-
dience to appreciate and to value the traditional craftsmen of the images. A
positive influence was achieved. In terms of “liking the overall images and re-
cording of the images in the exhibition”, there is a positive effect over “this
exhibition has made me experience the insistent spirit of craftsmen in the local
industries.” This empirical study discovered that the emotional effects expe-
rienced by the audience have certainly a significant impact for the situational
interpretations of the cultural themes.

Keywords: Cultural and Creative, Design Exhibition, Audience Experience,
Emotional Effects.
1 Introduction

Taiwan has gradually become more industrialized. This change to the industrial structure has caused the rapid demise of various local and uniquely Taiwanese industries that relied primarily on selling traditional handicrafts. Local industries gave rise to creative cultural industries and, thus, the preservation of local industries has become a crucial process in the strengthening of creative cultural industries and the unification of national identity. In response to this trend, college-level design students have become increasingly focused on learning and implementing the information provided in cultural creativity courses. Taiwanese government has continually promoted the transformation of local industries into local creative cultural industries in an attempt to create an image of a “Cultural Taiwan” and a “Creative Taiwan.” The forefathers of Taiwan created handmade traditional handicrafts that are rich in character and regionally diverse. The creation of these crafts, however, largely depended upon master tradesmen who verbally and physically passed on their skills to the next generation. Without successors, these crafts are lost to history with the death of each master.

Because of global trends in the 1980s, Taiwan began applying original equipment manufacturer (OEM)-based production patterns, which are a manufacturing process based on quantity and low cost. This shift threatened the survival of numerous local industries that featured handicrafts or manual labor. In the 1990s, governments worldwide began promoting cultural and creative industries. To meet economic needs and international standards, the Taiwan government also began proposing policies and raising concerns that stressed the preservation of Taiwan’s local cultural and creative industries. This international atmosphere of valuing the development of cultural and creative industries has led to increased regulations and supportive measures aimed at preserving traditional handicrafts industries that are nearly extinguished. Taiwan considers the continuation and preservation of local industries that employ handicraft or manual labor as the primary skill or technique as a crucial topic in the sustainable development of cultural- and creative-oriented industrialization. We examined the observation experiences, cultural cognition, and attitudes toward the curated exhibit Lost Memories among Taipei-area students majoring in design-related fields.

2 Literature Review

2.1 Experience

Experience is obtained from the interaction between the mentality of a person with a certain event. During the process of gaining experience, the senses, feelings, mentality, and behavior of a person constantly interact with the surrounding environment. People feel emotions and gain empirical knowledge from these interactions, thus creating personal experiences. Pine II and Gilmore (1999) proposed a construct for consumer experience: (a) consumer participation—divided into active and passive participants; (b) the correlation between consumer status and environmental status—divided into absorption and immersion [1]. These two major dimensions form four types of experiences: (a) aesthetically pleasing experiences that
compel consumers to enter a space, sit down, and fully appreciate the surroundings; (b) an escape from reality that allows consumers to become immersed in specific activities; (c) educational experiences that require active participation from the consumers similar to the level of participation involved in escape-from-reality experiences; (d) similar to aesthetics, entertainment is a passive experience. When customers are happy, they are not required to be active, but are merely responsive to the experience.

2.2 Knowledge and Attitude

Cognition refers to the understanding of human behavior and the analysis of mental processes and memory structure. Therefore, cognition is the knowledge and opinions that people have and form following internal information processing that analyzes the stimulations resulting from the messages conveyed by external events and objects. Cognition is a process where people attach meaning to the environment, organize and interpret objects and events, and obtain information by using the senses [2]. Cultural awareness is a psychological process where humans, through the use of their senses, create various spiritual and material activities for a particular survival mode or lifestyle and subsequently develop recognition and understanding [3]. Therefore, regarding the exhibition, the attitude of the audience must be understood. The message conveyed through the contents of the exhibition illicit a certain response from the audience. Through the rationalization and emotional recognition processes undertaken by the audience, an attitude toward the viewing is evoked. Specifically, the cognition aspect refers to the understanding and evaluation of the audience regarding the content of the viewing experience, and the emotional aspect signifies the degree to which the audience enjoyed the viewing experience.

2.3 Cultural Exhibition and Curatorial

Cultural demonstrations, such as craft exhibitions, often involve the collective demonstration and display of craft objects or non-art objects. The purpose of these demonstrations is orientated toward knowledge building and the collection of research. Burcaw stated that a display is where objects are arranged in a designated fashion with explanatory details to achieve the purpose of communicating with the viewer through a public exhibition [4]. Therefore, display is an art form and interpretation outcome, where objective display skills are used to enable the communication between the audience and the implications and charm of ancient artifacts. The exhibitor must have professional and technical knowledge regarding the designation of a theme, the presentation method of an exhibition, media promotion and application, and marketing strategies [5]. Cultural exhibitions are an ongoing process. During the process of cultural participation, people internalize particular cultural objectives and values. Subsequently, the cultural similarities between individual people are emphasized, and a sense of belonging to a certain cultural group is instilled. Regarding the curatorial tasks of creating a modern exhibition, how an exhibitor should present an exhibition has become the most critical topic in the discussion of cultural curatorial activities.
2.4 Emotional Effects

Emotions are the positive and negative attitudes produced by internal changes and external manifestations towards objective things or events. There are several reasons for causing the emotions. When people get in touch with external things, several responding behaviors are produced. These responsive behaviors are commonly named as emotions and feelings. Reviewing the study of Maslow (1943), Jordan (1999) proposed the hierarchy of needs theory, classifying the product characteristics that people require into three hierarchies: functionality, ease-of-use, and pleasure [6]. Norman (2004) contended that in addition to functionality, emotion was a key element of products; Based on the classic ABC (Antecedent, Behavior, Consequences) model employed in psychology, Norman classified emotional designs into three hierarchies: instinct (the pattern and texture of the product appearance), behavior (product functionality), and reflection (individual feelings and opinions). Norman explained that emotion is critical in everyday decision-making. Furthermore, hierarchical design principles increasingly influence the design and service industries, which are gradually emphasizing customization and integration; thus, emotional designs are the key to future industrial development [7]. Lin (2007) expanded this framework, incorporating the perspectives of Norman to classify the elements needed to design cultural and creative products into three levels that affect consumers: the extrinsic (e.g., color, texture, shape, and ornamentation), the middle or behavioral (e.g., function, workability, and usability), and intrinsic or psychological (e.g., story, emotion, and cultural content) levels [8]. Fig.1. shows a comparison of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs and Jordan’s hierarchy of user needs; we also considered the product design factors proposed by Norman and Lin. As times change, people’s needs are also changing with the changing of time. Apart from the functions of products, they also need emotional manifestations. The content of the exhibition follows the same reasoning. Not only the technique and the theme are considered, but also the spiritual or emotional interactions with the viewers.

![Fig. 1. Referential chart of the hierarchical theory applied on the exhibition model](image)

2.5 “Lost Memories” Curatorial Content Analysis

The study exhibition was presented using the following four displays: (a) a large monochromatic visual display; (b) craft work; (c) a postcard tower; and (d) a DM
design depicting all one hundred crafts. The large visual display was presented using a grayscale color scheme to allow the images to be free from the interference of color. The images presented in the exhibits were established as the focal point to reflect the utmost concentration shown on the faces of the craftsmen. This exhibition emphasizes the connection between people and life and allows viewers to consider profoundly the relationship between cultural value and heritage. The emotionally touching aspect of Taiwanese culture was observed from a humanitarian perspective. By using photographic exhibits and displaying the tools used by craftsmen, real-life scenarios that had disappeared were recreated. These exhibits represented the lifestyles of people working in various industries and professions—elegance of the one hundred crafts. The postcard tower that was constructed encouraged visitors to comment on the exhibition and to directly relay their messages to the traditional master craftsmen by sending a postcard as a sign of support. A master of each trade was filmed and interviewed to produce a DM of the hundred craftsmen. Through the application of aesthetics and imagery, their stories were conveyed using simple graphics and short texts. In addition to visual efficacy, these recordings served to preserve an image of Taiwan that is emotionally touching.

3 Research Methods

3.1 Curatorial Content Planning and Study Sample

This study was based on the “Lost Memories” exhibition and supplemented by a book jointly written by four graduates of Furen University titled, the search for the one hundred crafts – the story of four youngsters and 100 street masters. The exhibition contents primarily comprise the creations of 100 local craftsmen and were divided into five categories: (a) Good taste: traditional local food and the relationship between food and people, events, time, place, and objects. (b) Refined and useful objects: artifacts related to the production of a livelihood – this category comprises all types of production tools. (c) Art and culture: artifacts created to facilitate the cultivation of the mind, to be used during leisure time, and for personal collections. (d) Traditional customs and rituals: artifacts created for the purposes of practicing etiquette or cultural customs, and crafts that were used to decorate architecture. (e) Smart living: tools or artifacts created to assist with eating and drinking, to wear as clothes, to construct shelter, and for transport. Five industries that are significantly in decline are selected, and 20 samples are chosen for the questionnaire design. Students of the department of design and visual communication are sampled. Through questionnaire
survey, this study is able to understand the emotional effect experienced by the audience after they visited the cultural exhibition of the traditional art-crafts, in particular to their attention, valuation, and the impact of the image content, so it is able to construct the emotional elements for the images in the cultural exhibition.

This study adopts Likert five-point scale for the questionnaire as to represent the degree of supportiveness to the question or item. The five-point is the following: 1. strongly disagree; 2. Disagree; 3. No comments; 4. Agree; 5. strongly agree. The questionnaires were used to explore and analyze how the work and image arrangements in the curated exhibit, Lost Memories, affected participants based on two aspects: cognition of the viewing experience, attitudes toward the viewing experience, and the degree to which the viewing experience shaped cultural identification. Participants were asked items that were categorized into two categories: (a) the viewing process (items began with “After seeing these photographs, I feel...”), (b) participant overall feelings toward the exhibition (items began with “After seeing these images, I think this exhibition is...”).

Table 1. The study sample- Shokunin photos

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A. Plants Pond</th>
<th>B. Earves Remoovers</th>
<th>C. Traditional Stage Construction</th>
<th>D. Salt Field</th>
<th>E. Straw Hat Makers Leases</th>
<th>F. Riding</th>
<th>G. Breath Oils</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>H. Woven Rattan Sake</td>
<td>I. Delicious Rice Carving</td>
<td>J. Vail Handswey</td>
<td>K. Home-Brewing Sod</td>
<td>L. Lightning Tobacco Leases</td>
<td>M. Miniature Canning</td>
<td>N. Carving Stone Monkey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G. Gate Keeper</td>
<td>P. Wreapped Flower</td>
<td>Q. Weaving Hypothesis</td>
<td>R. Pigeon Race</td>
<td>S. Paper-Cutting Scissorations</td>
<td>T. Vail Writing</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3.2 The Analytical Model of “Exhibition Content-Audience Experience”

This study has integrated the aforementioned the “exhibition mode of communication” and “hierarchical model reference” and established an analytical model of “exhibition content-audience experience.” This model is able to filter the emotional feelings of the audience towards the content of the cultural exhibition and to find out the connection between the curators’ transmitted messages. By Exhibition mode of communication, two main activities are proceeded via the communication team – the conveyed message of the exhibition content between the curator and the audience as well as the audience absorption of the messages. Through a series of learning and feelings by the audience in the exhibition, the audience emotional effects
are established by understanding the interaction of the implicit and explicit values in the cultural exhibition. This study proposes the analytical model of “exhibition content-audience experience” which is as shown in Fig.3.

![Fig. 3. “Exhibition Content-Audience Experience” analytical framework](image)

What the audience experiences is the conveyed message of the exhibition/service transmitted by the curator, so the audience can have an intensified memory and feelings as well as understanding the connotations behind the images. If the interpersonal connections will be created by story creations, then the stories shall be of much significance, so the audience can feel the deepest emotions of the images; by creating an immersive feeling for the audience, a new sensational experience can be offered.

4 Research Results and Discussion

4.1 Questionnaire Survey

The students majoring in design-related fields were chosen as participants for the following reasons:

- Analysis of the works from this exhibit showed that most of the industries were located in Southern Taiwan and are novel to students from Northern Taiwan;
- The four exhibit curators were Taipei students majoring in design-related fields. Undertaking a curated exhibit of relatively unfamiliar regional crafts that are disappearing from the viewpoint of Northern Taiwanese students could help exhibition attendees in the greater Taipei area to accept and understand the importance of this topic.

These two points were related to the beliefs the curators expressed and the experiences of the exhibit attendees. The focus of this study was to explore whether student cognition and perceptions of the viewing experience that the exhibit was designed to evoke could enhance the cultural identification of students with design-related backgrounds. The initial questionnaires were designed to obtain basic demographic data and were distributed randomly. Students who met the study criterion of having been enrolled in courses in the creative or performance arts fields were provided with a follow-up questionnaire. These were distributed to 180 students.
Overall, 32 questionnaires were incomplete or otherwise deemed unusable and analysis was conducted on the remaining 148 questionnaires. The results were obtained from 69 male and 79 female participants.

### 4.2 Statistical Results

As to the explore the impact of the degree of emotional effects of the audience towards the local craftsmen, in particular their appreciation and valuation of the eight exhibited image content, the study has designed eight independent variables of different dimensions. These include the feeling of touching, the transmitted feeling of the insistent spirit of the craftsmen, content focus, realistic, vitality, value, attractiveness and connotation of traditional culture of the images. The degree of emotional effects of the audience towards the content of the exhibition is the dependent variable. Through multiple regression analysis, the description of the result of the 20 photos is shown later (Table 2.)

**Table 2.** Multiple regression analysis summary tables with 8 evaluation items to predict the feeling of “I will appreciate and value the craftsmen of the local industries in the photo”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Predictor variables</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>β</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will appreciate and value the craftsmen of the local industries in the photo.</td>
<td>The photo is touching.</td>
<td>.345</td>
<td>.905***</td>
<td>.592</td>
<td>1.751</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The photo has transmitted the insistent spirit of the craftsmen.</td>
<td>.350</td>
<td>.923***</td>
<td>.483</td>
<td>1.201</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The content of the photo is much focused.</td>
<td>-.255</td>
<td>.851***</td>
<td>-.354</td>
<td>-1.177</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The photo is very realistic.</td>
<td>.333</td>
<td>.790***</td>
<td>.325</td>
<td>1.436</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The photo contains its vitality.</td>
<td>-.242</td>
<td>.848***</td>
<td>-.308</td>
<td>-1.101</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The photo is valuable.</td>
<td>.179</td>
<td>.890***</td>
<td>.289</td>
<td>1.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The photo is attractive.</td>
<td>-.068</td>
<td>.883***</td>
<td>-.108</td>
<td>-.340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>The photo connotes the traditional culture.</td>
<td>.058</td>
<td>.786***</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.491</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R=.956</td>
<td>R²=.915</td>
<td>F=14.750***</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***p < .001.

From the correlation between the independent variables and the content of the image content of the exhibition, the correlation coefficients of the degree of emotional effects between the eight dimensions and the image content are .905, .923, .790, .890 and .786 respectively. All of them are positively correlated with certain significance. The F value of the overall regression model is 14.750, achieving a significant standard (p < .001). This means that the scores of 5 dimensions can be the reference for the prediction of the degree of emotional effects. In the regression formula, the importance of the dependent variable depends on the standardized number of
coefficient having “the picture is touching” as the first one followed by “the picture has transmitted the insistent spirit of the craftsmen” and lastly “the picture connotes the traditional culture.” Among them, “the picture is touching” has achieved a significant standard ($\beta = .592$, $p < .001$) in terms of the nature of the image content, this exhibition inclines to be “Viewing / Realistic.” For the students of design and visual communication department, the dimensions of touching pictures, the transmission of the insistent spirit and picture realisticness are greater than the dimensions of picture focus, vitality and attractiveness in terms of the overall degree of emotional effects. Thus, audience would further appreciate and value the local craftsmen of the industries.

When exploring the four overall images of the exhibition, in terms of the degree of emotional effects (liking the overall images and recordings of the exhibition) for the students of design and visual communication department students of the region of Taipei, the study has felt the spirit of insistency, benevolence, love, caring and pricelessness, which are designed as the independent variables. The degree of emotional effects of the audience towards the image content of the exhibition is the dependent variables. The results from the multiple regression analysis of the following ten pictures are described as follow (Table 3).

**Table 3.** Multiple regression analysis summary table using 4 assessment items to predict the degree of “I like the overall images and recordings of the exhibition”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dependent variables</th>
<th>Predictor variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>$\beta$</th>
<th>t</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I like the overall images and recordings of the exhibition.</td>
<td>This exhibition makes me feel the insistent spirit of the local craftsmen of the industries.</td>
<td>.473</td>
<td>.000***</td>
<td>.422</td>
<td>5.119</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This exhibition makes me feel love.</td>
<td>.260</td>
<td>.004**</td>
<td>.264</td>
<td>2.900</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This exhibition makes me feel caring and pricelessness.</td>
<td>.120</td>
<td>.186</td>
<td>.128</td>
<td>1.329</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>This exhibition makes me feel benevolence.</td>
<td>-.042</td>
<td>.677</td>
<td>-.036</td>
<td>-.418</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

R = .657  R² = .432  F = 27.135 ***

***$p < .001$.  

From the correlation of the independent variables and the degree of emotional effects of the audience towards the overall images and recordings of the exhibition, the correlation coefficients of the four dimensions with the degree of emotional effects of the audience towards the overall exhibition are .000, .004 and .186 respectively, showing positive and significant correlations. The F value of the overall regression model is 27.135, achieving a significant standards ($p > .001$). This means that the scores of the three dimensions can be used as the reference for the prediction of emotional effects towards the exhibition. In terms of the regression formula, the importance of the dependent variables depends on the number sequence of the
standardized regression coefficient, having “this exhibition makes me feel the insistent spirit of the local craftsmen of the industries” as the first one followed by “this exhibition makes me feel love” and lastly, “this exhibition makes me feel caring and pricelessness.” Among them, the dimension of “this exhibition makes me feel the insistent spirit of the local craftsmen of the industries” has achieved a significant standard of ($\beta = .422$, $p < .001$). In terms of the nature of the overall exhibition, the exhibition is well-planned allowing the students of design and visual communication department to feel the insistent spirit of the local craftsmen of the industries.

5 Conclusion

After the transition of Taiwan towards an industrial country, changes have also produced over the societal and the business models, so traditional industries could not meet the market’s demands and would eventually disappear. For the young learners of the latest generations, there are industries that they have not heard neither been in touch resulting in their cognitive distancing. Through the exhibition design and planning as well as book publishing after the exhibition, the experience of the audience from the content can be extended as to create a resonance with them. From the resulted data, students from the design and visual communication departments from Taipei region have experienced the feeling of “the picture is touching”, “the pictures has transmitted the insistent spirit of the craftsmen” and “the picture is realistic,” and feelings to appreciate and value local craftsmen of the industries are produced. In terms of the connoted value of the overall impression of the exhibition, the audience would like the pictures and recordings of the exhibition and achieved the emotional cognition of feeling “the insistent spirit of the craftsmen.” Looking to the future, it is possible to use cultural traditional artistry when designing exhibition to trigger emotional sympathy and to root the local consciousness.

References
