

THE MULTI-CULTURAL EXPRESSION OF VISUAL RHETORIC IN FOOD PACKAGING

Farrah Hanani Ahmad Fauzi ¹

Lili Eliana Mohd Radzuan ²

Fazlina Jaafar ³

Azian Mohd Zain ⁴

¹ College Of Creative Arts, University Technology MARA, Kampus Puncak Alam, Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: farrahhanani@uitm.edu.my

² College Of Creative Arts, University Technology MARA, Kampus Puncak Alam, Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: eliana516@uitm.edu.my

³ College Of Creative Arts, University Technology MARA, Kampus Puncak Alam, Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: fazli535@uitm.edu.my

⁴ College Of Creative Arts, University Technology MARA, Kampus Puncak Alam, Bandar Puncak Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

Email: azian053@uitm.edu.my

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Abstract: *Packaging is able to play an important role in promoting racial integration in Malaysian. The cultural element design is abundantly visible and often ignored by us. A mixed method approach was employed through this study which is the quantitative and qualitative methods. Visual analysis was conducted to analyse visual rhetoric towards two food packaging design. The survey was carried out 30 respondents as data collection. From the findings, illustration such as graphic, pattern or photography was indicated as the main design element that contributed towards culture expression. Finally, it can be concluded that majority of the respondents prefer social and cultural norms characteristics elements implement into packaging design. Identification of the visual rhetoric elements are important to express cultural values. New guidance have been introduced to adopting the best visual rhetoric predominantly cultural expressions on the food packaging design that embrace Malaysians culture.*

Keywords: *multi-cultural expression, visual rhetoric, packaging design*

Introduction

The multi-cultural habits, and consumption are different which often affect their lifestyle. The integration of creative cultural expressions into packaging design has laid the foundation for the development of the local culture design. It may stimulate the better design direction for brand image and symbolic culture values. The multi-cultural phenomena and values in food packaging are more evident than before. The historical development, accumulation of all kinds

of local culture, traditional folk customs, and spiritual connotations have affected the local brands which gradually established independent design styles and became unique as cultural heritages. Relationship between culture and graphic design is abundantly ignored by us (Leena et al., 2018). By integrating local cultural elements into packaging designs, consumers may reinforce their understanding toward a product and eventually, increase their purchasing desires and promote integration through packaging design. Efforts should be made to emphasize the importance and protection of local cultures in order to create higher cultural values. The cultural communication and promotion, commodity packaging design not only beautifies products, represents the value of products, but also gives more meanings, which plays a role in spreading culture values and exerts a subtle influence on our lives (Zhou & Mingming, 2016). In the other hand, realism in art and design is not an absolute but a convention that our culture and personal background create from visual data (Bloch et al., 2003). The cultural communication, commodity packaging design not only portray beautifies products, represents the value of products, but also gives more meanings, which plays a role in spreading culture and exerts a subtle influence to improve racial integration livelihood among Malaysia. For instance, all researcher has previously elaborate in-depth analysis of visual rhetoric design on the advertisement such as print advertisement, press advertisement and digital medium advertisement. However, none research focused on the evolution of food packaging design that promote the national unity and integration harmony in Malaysia. This paper reviews some Food packaging tenets of rhetoric, show how they implement visual rhetoric and also highlights examples of visual cultural expression in design implementation perspective.

Literature Review

Visual Rhetoric Elements in packaging

Visual rhetoric is refer to visual image that communicate a compelling message as form of visual communication. Rhetoric is the study of persuasive. Aristotle wrote an early dialogue on rhetoric entitled 'Grullos'. Rhetoric theory originally was develop by Aristotle as mean of challenging a number of prevailing assumptions about what constitutes a effective presentation. Aristotle's definition of rhetoric refer "art of persuasion." He believed, Rhetoric has ability to erect its own standards is constrained or guided in three distinct dimensions: fidelity to the facts, a goal of persuading a given audience, and moral responsibility.

Visual elements are refer to the use of typography, graphic image (of photography and illustration), colour, shape, size and materials in which hold the capability in building the structure of packaging design. It is vital to have those elements in general to attract consumers and to deliver representative symbolism through design layout. Visual rhetoric is affected by the meaning that comes as a result of what we see, affected by the whole context design. We normally, look at the way things are designed and we tend to make judgments about the outer look only. Our judgment has been shifted by our past experience, education, age, and life experience. Thus, by implementing the right visual rhetoric, it can present an argument to a specific audience and convince them to think or act differently. Packaging design are able to build a story. Nevertheless, the purpose for a visual rhetoric will ensure that the correct message is articulated and results in a positive and effective response to Malaysian unity and national integration in future.

According to Regina WY Wang (Regina et al., 2011), has categorised it into the design elements and functional design elements. It refer to the design elements consist of graphics and size, shape of the packaging, in addition, considering the colour, illustration (lines, symbols,

graphics, patterns and pictures), logo and the brand, typography (company name and product name), pattern design (lines, patterns, illustrations, photos), brand name and address, product facts and usage instructions, ingredients, volume (weight) and decoration to form a layout (figure 1). Therefore, this study is conducted to identify the design elements in multi-cultural expression packaging design of selected brands that have contributed towards the visual similarities and its' influence to consumers' paramount to look at the different between cultural and design implementation perspectives.

(Wang, Regina W Y; Chou, 2011)



Figure 1: Four main packaging attributes to influence the consumer's packaged food brand (Wang, Regina W Y; Chou, 2011)

Culture Expression and Visual Communication

The consideration of customer preferences is very important and should be evaluated at an early stage of product design before continuing to the next phase of product development. That is because incorrectly identifying the preferences of customers can lead to technical issues. However, determining the suitable characteristics of food packaging from customer preference remains a challenge to designers since customers have different viewpoints on the embedded characteristics of a packaging design. The characteristics may be perceived and valued either positively or negatively, depending on the individual preferences of consumers. These preferences can be caused by cultural value influences as the natural setting of consumer characters. The consideration of cultural influences provides more insight to designers to create packaging design more relevant to customer preferences. Thus, the specification of packaging designs can be determined based on cultural influences. The consideration of cultural values in designing products also enhances the acceptance of products since the designed packaging is more suitable with customers' local characteristics. A previous research has characterised the prevailing culture packaging in different ways (Griffith et al., 2010). For example, distinguished culture packaging in terms of direction and strength - as positive/negative and strong/weak - for six elements (i.e. risk perception, communication, commitment, environment, leadership and management systems, and styles and process). Furthermore, this was recently updated with four building blocks: organisational effectiveness, organisational culture norms, learned and shared assumptions of working groups, and individual intent and behaviours (Jespersen & Wallace, n.d.). Culture is a complex phenomenon, since it is revealed at different levels: as artefacts, espoused beliefs and values, and underlying assumptions. The assessment of this complex phenomenon requires different approaches to measure it at these different levels of persuasion.

The investigating culture packaging requires the development of triangulation approaches for data collection, which can persuasion. The investigating culture packaging requires the development of triangulation approaches for data collection, which can enhance research validity by improving the accuracy of the results(Zanin, 2020). The results of triangulation could allow the assessment of culture packaging in a more systematic and detailed way, supporting the design of effective interventions to change culture packaging. Considering that traditional training does not always lead to changes in behaviour. There has been limited discussion about cultural concerns in a design practice context of overall advertisement (Lee & Bain, 2016). Roger Sametz and Andrew Maydone, argue that design elements like type, color, space and images tell stories about the product. The visual stories are able to create memorable and engaging strong feeling between “teller” and “listener” that help to build comprehension, participation, commitment, loyalty and trust. Thus, It can enhance or change consumers’ product toward brand perceptions by creating engaging, persuasive and memorable stories (Sametz, 2003).

Methodology

There are two research questions to look into in this research paper. The qualitative approaches which include the visual analysis and surveys towards two food packaging design namely; new limited-edition flavour Kopi C Cadbury Dairy Milk products and KFC limited edition #BucketSemangatRakyat (refer Table 1). The visual analysis and surveys were delve into the five important elements on the packaging design including the colour, typography, size or form, illustration or photography and the graphic design layout which might influences the food packaging preferences and identifies that portray cultural expression. These product brands were paired-up based on their visual similarities on its packaging design that embrace Malaysians culture.

RESEARCH QUESTION	APPROACH AND TECHNIQUE
1. What are the visual rhetoric elements in cultural expression packaging that contribute to visual similarity?	1. Visual expression analysis on color, typography, size/ form, illustration/ photography, graphic design layout
2. How does a visual expression on packaging design can reinforce perception and behaviours of the public toward national unity and integration harmony?	2. Survey Question; : if u see the expression, how it can educate the public on promoting the understanding and the acceptance of other ethnic culture in Malaysia?

Table 1: The Approach and Technique to Answer the Research Question.

The conformability criterion is triangulation are to reduce the effect of analysing bias and admission of researchers’ beliefs and assumptions.

The quantitative approach involved in this research. The information and data in the form of figures has been measured. This research was conducted using an online survey to 30 target

respondents from various demographic backgrounds. In order to achieve getting genuine feedback from respondents, by involved descriptive quantitative research. Descriptive research can provide findings that describes the characteristics of the population or phenomenon studied. Therefore, this approach is used to get the latest scenario from the respondents about their experience toward the culture expression that embrace Malaysians culture thru food packaging.

Results and Discussion

Visual Analysis

This iconic Cadbury Dairy Milk's packaging (figure 2) functions as an example for cultural expression by using visual rhetoric. In celebration of Malaysian flavours and culture, the sleeves of selected Cadbury Dairy Milk products will feature hand-drawn illustrations by renowned cartoonist Datuk Lat that diverse flavours that make the nation. Known for his signature drawings of Malaysian kampung life, the illustrations on the Dairy Milk sleeves will feature Lat's most iconic character, Kampung Boy in three quintessential Malaysian settings at a kenduri, a kopitiam and a sundry shop. All these beautiful moment capturing Malaysian love affair with food. Datuk Lat had showcase the spirit of togetherness of our beloved Malaysians. Each different ethnic are celebrate their differences and fully enjoy their unique way of life together.



Figure 2: Example of Visual Cultural Expression in a traditional Cadbury Dairy Milk, launched a new limited-edition flavour Kopi C exclusively for the Malaysian market

The product picture on the packaging is created in a different style by hand-drawn illustrations by cartoonist Datuk Lat. A picture can encapsulate a core proposition, and communicate it quickly and effectively by using line elements for the images. Images are tools for immediate and long-lasting communication. According to Giles Calvert (Calver, 2007), images are remembered four times better than words. Datuk Lat's point of view into local culture and flavours coupled remarkable how this information can be understood instantly without using words. Cadbury's chose to create the Kopi C flavour because it wanted to highlight something that most Malaysians grew up with. The Kopi C, was a natural choice to represent a familiar flavour enjoyed on a daily basis by Malaysian. Thus, Datuk Lat's drawings are an accurate and relatable representation of the Malaysian way of life in his hand-draw illustration. The three drawings created by Datuk Lat for Cadbury Dairy Milk revolve around the life of kampung boy, in different scenarios throughout Malaysia's life. This is synonymous to Cadbury Dairy Milk being present in most Malaysians' lives growing up. Each scenario is also centred around the

sharing of food to truly celebrate the diverse flavours of Malaysia. These scenario represent cultural value influences as the natural setting of consumer characters.

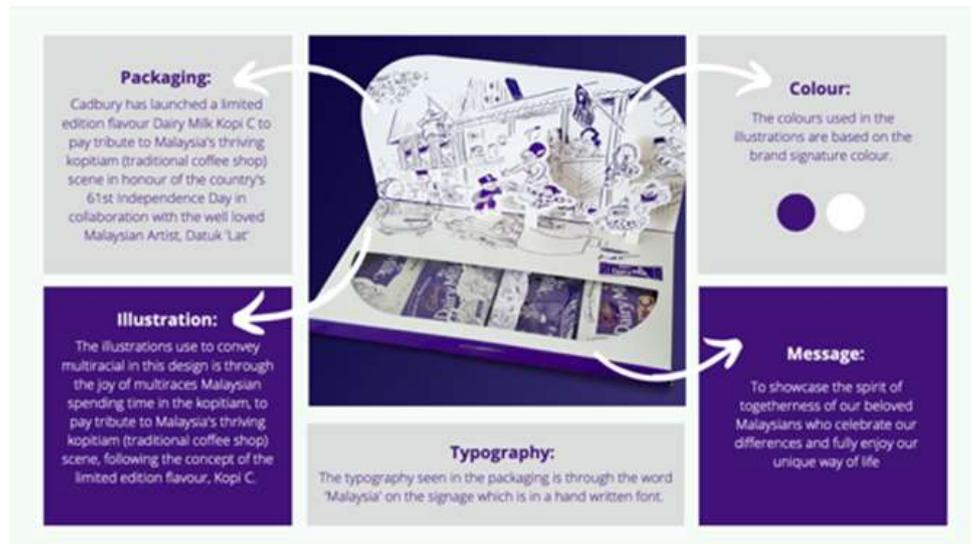


Figure 3: Example of the use of visual rhetoric as important form of visual communication Cadbury Dairy Milk's packaging

Visual rhetoric is affected by the meaning that comes as a result of what we see, affected by the whole context design. Design can “dissolve the boundaries of old fields and disciplines and establish new ones that address current and emerging problems of cultural life” (Buchanan, 2001). Visual rhetoric will help the design judgments to reduce the complexity of the situation or solve the issue that has been encountered. For instance, visual rhetoric constitutes a theoretical viewpoint that involves the analysis of the symbolic or communicative visual imagery aspects such as typography, graphic image (of photography and illustration), colour, shape, size and materials to deliver message in design (figure 3). In the other hand, visual rhetoric refers to how we interpret and understand the meaning out of anything we see. The study of Visual Rhetoric is also refer to Semiotics, a science studying signs and their meaning. Thus, image is powerful as visual communication in design. Not only does it speak to the viewer, it persuades the way they think and act in a manner that might be different from how they typically would respond. Nevertheless, visual rhetoric can be defined to encompass several things, including:

1. The strategic use of imagery in arguments
2. The way that various elements are arranged on a page
3. The specific type of font or other typography used
4. The analysis of images and visual cues on a page or in a document

In spirit of Hari Kebangsaan, the popular fast food brand wanted to add some positivity to the lives of Malaysians (figure 4-6) . KFC rallied people to cheer on their fellow citizens. Through the hashtag #BucketSemangatRakyat, people from around the country got to share their heartfelt messages on social media. Compiled and chosen by KFC Malaysia, that served as inspiration for our local artists' to work their creative magic artworks that promote national unity and integration harmony among Malaysian. Packaging design are able to play an important role in promoting racial integration in Malaysia. The issues and problems between inter-ethnic relations conflicts happened in Malaysia. In the spirit of Merdeka, KFC Malaysia

launched a campaign to spread positivity and unity among Malaysian. KFC Malaysia sought three local artists such as Katun, Nas Suha, and Adulrashadehad produce 3 different limited edition design for their limited edition bucket.



Figure 4: Example of Local artist Katun's packaging design

Katun's design celebrates the spirit of togetherness that Malaysians display, regardless of our differences. True to his statement-making signature style, Katun's vibrant artwork was inspired by comments like "susah senang bersama, kita satu keluarga," and "celebrate the small wins every day."



Figure 5: Example of Local artist Nas Suha's packaging design

Featuring pretty shades of green, red, and gold, Nas Suha's bucket design takes inspiration from principles of unity and perseverance of Malaysians, especially in the face of hardship. Some “kata-kata semangat” that he had in mind while designing was, "we struggle together, we fight together, we win together. That's the Malaysian spirit since 1957.



Figure 6: Example of Local artist Adulrashade’s packaging design

A full-time graffiti artist who merges Nusantara culture with lots of floral details, Adulrashade lends his abstract touch to the bucket's design, exemplifying, "selagi kita bersatu, kita akan berjaya." He was inspired by the noble values of the Malaysian people, plus our determined country which stands firm in achieving common success.



Figure 7: Example of the use of visual rhetoric as important form of visual communication KFC Malaysia packaging

Good visual communication in packaging is adopting a unique visual rhetoric to foster conceptualisation of culture by using all the elements in rhetoric such as typography, graphic image (of photography and illustration), colour, shape, size and materials (figure 7). Thus, the specification of packaging designs can be determined based on cultural influences. The consideration of cultural values in designing products also enhances the acceptance of products since the designed packaging is more suitable with customers' local characteristics. According to the theory of visual rhetoric by Sonja K. Foss, he described visual rhetoric as visual imagery within the discipline of rhetoric. the rhetoric perspective may applied to any human act, modify attention, perception, attitude or behaviour. rhetoric is important as medium of communication. Rhetoric functions in a variety of ways to encourage the better understanding of perspectives and message (Foss & Sonja, 2017). The other research and publication in related field of Malaysia unity have been conducted by Dr. Chandra Muzaffar in his book 'Reflections on Malaysian Unity and Other Challenges' (Chandra & Muzaffar, 2017),he investigates the response to issues and situation in Malaysia that had surfaced over a period of time. Most of the articles deal directly with national unity and challenges that impact upon people. The present collection is a sequel to his earlier writings on the challenges facing multi-ethnic Malaysia. It is necessary to discover and research our own unity culture. It can develop its cultural value, and creatively integrate best cultural meaning for F&B packaging design. Thus, it can discover the unity value and national integration that embrace Malaysians culture. Professor Marianne Klimchuk of New York's Fashion Institute of Technology (Marianne et al., 2018) , consumer can learn about the values of the culture and the region thru packaging design. She believed, packaging design is a piece of cultural anthropology. In the meantime, with the globalisation and mass branding, these value of cultural packaging started to disappear. Therefore, culture element could now be seen as a process of growth varying between several communities. Design message is segmented into content and relationship. The messages are refer to the use of oral, written, and visual media that deliver a essence and creating some understanding of reality through a social process communication (Couldry et al., 2018). It lead into consideration the factors that differentiate an individual community from others.

Consumer Survey

The bar chart below shows the data from 30 respondents in determining the main visual rhetoric elements that has contributed to the cultural expression for Cadbury Dairy Milk's and KFC #BucketSemangatRakyat packaging.

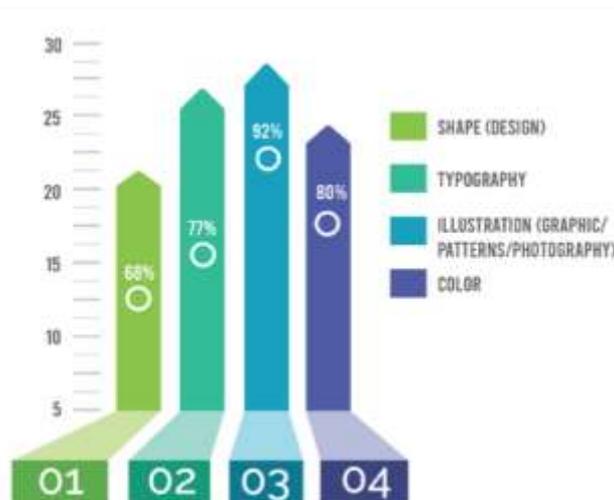


Figure 8: Visual Rhetoric elements contributed to the cultural expression design

92% of the respondents had agreed that the illustration such as graphic, pattern or photography is the main influence the predominantly cultural expression theme in food packaging design. It is followed by the Color (80%) and the Typography (77%) as visual rhetoric consideration elements in design. In the other hand, some respondents agreed the shape design also important (68%) as visual communication, refer (figure 8).

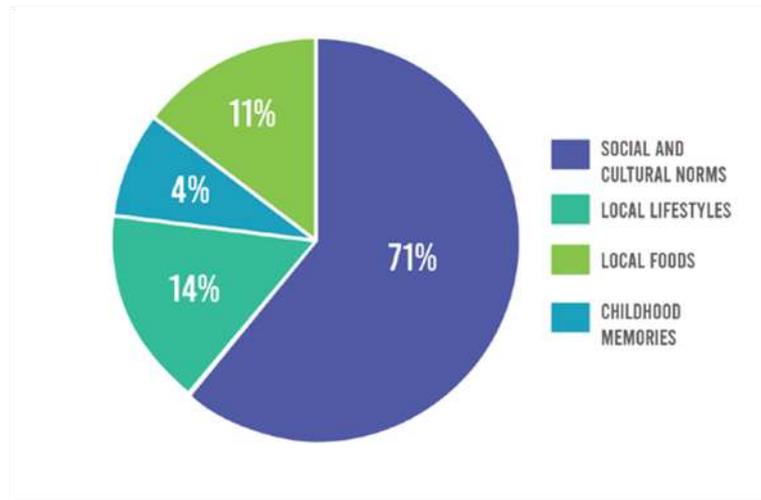


Figure 9: Visual expression characteristics that reinforce perception and behaviours of the public toward national unity and integration design

The second research question has raised are how does a visual expression on food packaging design can reinforce perception and behaviors of the public toward national unity and integration harmony in design. Majority of the respondents (71%) stated that they prefer social and cultural norms characteristics elements implement into design. However, (14%) respondents will prefer local lifestyles characteristics elements In the other hand, (11%) of the respondents choose local foods characteristics elements, while (4%) choose childhood memories characteristics elements for the design implementation.

Conclusion

The relationship between culture and graphic design is abundantly visible, so much that it is politely ignored by us. In this paper two pillars of this century have been examined to help understand the use of visual rhetoric design trends and strengthen them at the foundation. Though culture design has been a subject of study for more than a century, cultural design expression has gained momentum very recently and it is significant to understand how visual rhetoric associated with promoting clarity and usability. Thus, it can help to continue aspiration in moving forward to improve racial integration in Malaysia through packaging design. Packaging is able to play an important role in promoting unity among nation. It has the capabilities to educate the public on promoting the understanding and the acceptance of other ethnic culture in Malaysia. For instance, it can develop its cultural value, and creatively integrate the best cultural meaning packaging design in future. Therefore, this paper is an academic contribution to the field of visual rhetoric which intended to understand how cultural expression can embrace Malaysians culture in packaging design.

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