COMPLETION REPORT

Study on The Practice and Impact of Yuru-chara design as communication media between local government and the public in Japan

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This research was performed to understand the concept and design formulation behind Yuru-chara in Japan, and also to study its impact as a public communication tool. The result from this research was tested to be adopted in Indonesia. The research was conducted through field observation, focus group discussion, expert interview, and visual analysis.

The field observation were done in Tokyo, Chiba, Kyoto, and Osaka, from November 14th 2018 to November 21st 2018. During the observation in Tokyo and Chiba, several places were visited, those were Police Museum in Ginza, Tokyo Central Post office in Marunouchi, Sanrio Puroland in Tama, Funassyiland in Funabashi, and several merchandising stores. Three Yuru-chara was studied, those are; "Pippo-kun", "Posukuma", and "Funassyi". For comparison, Yuru-chara used for entertainment purpose were observed in Sanrio Puroland.

In Kyoto Seika University, interview with Professor Mitsuru Sugaya, an expert of Manga and Character Design was done. His lecture on Yuru-chara and Local Heroes gave a better understanding on the Yuru-chara design practice in Japan. The observation was also conducted in The 2018 Yuru-chara Grandprix at Hanazono, Osaka where data of 30 distinguished Yuru-chara were gathered. The final observation was done in Nara to studied the "Sento-kun" and "Shikamaru" Yuru-chara.

There are several points concluded from the observation. The Yuru-chara design idea come from a word play, combining two words that represent the city or place. It often resulting a bizarre word combination which make the idea unique. The word 'Yuru' is the keyword for the design manner. This word, that could be translated as soft, gentle, or friendly, is represented in the structure, proportion, color, material, and movement of the character. As general rules, the proportion should not be more than 3 heads tall. In some cases, voice is use to enrich the character interaction. Yuru-chara interact with audience in physical world to build engagement to the character. For this purpose, its design must be able to be made into a costume. Therefore in the design, human structure and movement must be considered without violating the 'Yuru' manner.

Regarding the interaction, Yuru-chara only appear in special occasion that are particularly designed to interact with the public. The frequency of the appearances affect their popularity. Based on the data, many Yuru-chara fail to maintain these interaction, often they lost their fans after two or three years. Although, Yuru-chara is an effective

communication tool, it is a problem to maintain its popularity. In some cases it is treated as a brand which require a high cost.

Design formulation obtained from this research has been tested in Bandung city. The result show that particularly in Bandung, Yuru-chara design is suitable for young generation. They find the design is bizarre but attractive. Older people tend to feel that the design is not made for them. Thus, in case of Indonesia ,Yuru-chara is effective in particular segment. The result may differ if the test conducted in other places. Future research can be done to find an approach for accommodating the cultural differences in Yuru-chara design.

Publication of the Results of Research Project:

Verbal Presentation　(Date, Venue, Name of Conference, Title of Presentation, Presenter, etc.)

Thesis　(Name of Journal and its Date, Title and Author of Thesis, etc.)

1. Jurnal Sosioteknologi, Vol. 19, 2019.
   Title: Public Perception and Effectiveness of Yuru-chara as The Element of City Branding Communication in Indonesia.
   Authors: Fadillah, Banung Grahita, Riama M. Sihombing, Triyadi Guntur, and Dianing Ratri,

2. International Journal of Asia Digital Art and Design Association, Vol. 21, 2020.
   Title: Understanding Yuru-chara as Cultural Phenomena through Visual Analysis and Creation Process.
   Authors: Triyadi Guntur, Banung Grahita, Riama M. Sihombing, Fadillah, and Dianing Ratri,

Book　(Publisher and Date of the Book, Title and Author of the Book, etc.)