

Article

A Study of Style Design in the Design of Local Specialty Products

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Abstract: The increasing importance of local specialty products in the marketplace, as a means of differentiation, reflects the consumer's pursuit of cultural uniqueness and connection. Against this backdrop, there is a marked interest among consumers in products that encapsulate cultural and regional distinctiveness. This study is focused on exploring the role and influence of style design within the context of local specialty product design. The integration of style design with local cultural characteristics presents both a challenge and a crucial success factor for designers of these products. Factor analysis is employed to identify key style elements in the design of local specialty products. These elements, combined with visual elements and symbols characteristic of the region, create a unique design style. Additionally, the study utilizes regression analysis via the Kano model to evaluate consumer acceptance and preferences for these integrated design attributes. The findings indicate that through strategic visual translation and precise design of elements, local specialty products can effectively manifest their distinctiveness, thereby appealing to consumers. These results provide clear guidance and strategic recommendations for product designers and manufacturers, aiming to ensure that local specialty products gain a preferential position in the market.

Keywords: Local Specialty Products, Design Attributes, Style Elements, Kano Regression Analysis

1. Introduction

In an era where globalization and market homogenization are prevalent, local specialty products are emerging as a significant force in the marketplace, distinguishing themselves through their distinct cultural essence and innovative designs. These products, serving as symbols of regional cultural identity, are not just mere representations; they play a crucial role in fostering local economic development and propagating cultural heritage. In the face of stiff market competition, understanding consumer preferences in terms of design and its influence on their buying behavior becomes paramount. This study, therefore, embarks on an extensive exploration of consumer preferences pertaining to the quality attributes and stylistic elements of local specialty product design and assesses their impact on consumer satisfaction and purchasing intentions.

This research highlights the critical need to comprehend consumer preferences to achieve successful product design. It does so by delving into the dynamics between consumer behavior theories and product design principles. Building on this theoretical framework, the study addresses fundamental questions: Which quality attributes and stylistic elements are most favored by consumers in local specialty product designs? Moreover, how do these attributes and elements influence consumer satisfaction and their propensity to purchase? The aim is to provide detailed and accurate answers to these questions through rigorous quantitative analysis, contributing empirical evidence to support the design and marketing strategies of local specialty products.

The study's approach involves a multi-dimensional analysis, considering various factors like cultural resonance, aesthetic appeal, functionality, and emotional connectivity in product design. It posits that local specialty products, by embodying unique regional characteristics and cultural narratives, can create a deeper emotional bond with consumers, thereby enhancing their appeal. Additionally, the research investigates how the incorporation of local materials, traditional craftsmanship, and culturally significant motifs in product design can enhance consumer perception of authenticity and value, potentially influencing their purchasing decisions.

In essence, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the nuances of consumer preferences in the context of local specialty products. It underscores the importance of integrating cultural authenticity with modern design sensibilities to craft products that resonate with consumers, both emotionally and aesthetically. The insights gained from this study are expected to guide designers and manufacturers in developing products that not only celebrate regional heritage but also meet the evolving expectations of contemporary consumers, thereby ensuring the products' success in a globally competitive market.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Studies on Packaging Design Elements

In examining packaging design elements for local specialty products, the critical role of packaging in communicating local culture and enhancing brand identity should not be underestimated. Packaging design is not only the initial impression of a product but also a key channel for cultural transmission and brand communication. The increasing emphasis of modern consumers on the visual appeal and cultural significance of products has led to a trend in packaging designs that incorporate elements of local culture. A prime example is the packaging design of Wuhan Salty Soda. This innovative approach, which integrates graphic elements representing Wuhan's local culture, not only increased the brand's market appeal but also its competitiveness. Such designs, which merge traditional and contemporary styles, have effectively facilitated the dissemination of Wuhan's cultural identity, creating a distinctive market position for the product (Zhao, 2020). The use of local visual elements in packaging design is essential in developing product features and brand image. These elements deeply echo the local history and cultural characteristics, serving as a crucial source of inspiration for product design. By harnessing local features, this design strategy significantly boosts the market appeal and cultural value of the products (Li, 2023).

This study focuses on preserving local uniqueness and elevating the cultural creative industry. Employing qualitative evaluation and quantitative multivariate analysis, it delves into consumers' perceptions and emotional needs regarding the packaging of local specialty gifts. The study identifies key characteristics of local specialty packaging, including recognizability, appeal, clarity in conveying information, uniqueness, representativeness of packaging shape/form, and a high degree of connection between totems/patterns and local features. Furthermore, the study reveals that consumers with various leisure attitudes exhibit different preferences when purchasing local specialty souvenirs. These insights are invaluable for future local specialty packaging design (Huang and Chen, 2023).

Xu Wei-Ting and Yao Cun-Xiong's research examines the use of creative elements in the packaging design of Taiwanese beer, aiming to captivate consumer attention and foster purchase intentions through creativity. This research emphasizes the significance of inventive design in augmenting product allure and market competitiveness, aligning closely with the theme of enhancing the attractiveness of local specialty products (Xu and Yao, 2021).

Liu Yu-Xian's study investigates the influence of visual design and types of packaging on consumers' perceived value. It finds that diverse product and packaging designs can attract consumer attention and stimulate shopping interest. Moreover, the design and type of packaging are pivotal in shaping consumers' perceived value, highlighting the importance of packaging in marketing strategies and consumer decision-making processes (Liu, 2018).

2.2. Kano Model

In the era of economic globalization and increasing cultural diversity, there is a growing focus on the preservation and innovative design of regional cultural heritages. One of the significant research topics in the design of local specialty products involves integrating regional styles with modern design principles. This paper reviews the Kano model-related studies, offering a theoretical framework for designing local specialty products. Initially proposed by Noriaki Kano and colleagues in 1984, the Kano model is grounded in Frederick Herzberg's two-factor theory. It classifies product/service attributes into five categories: basic, one-dimensional, attractive, indifferent, and reverse. Basic attributes fulfill fundamental customer needs, one-dimensional attributes have a linear effect on customer satisfaction, and attractive attributes significantly boost customer satisfaction (Fig. 1). The Kano model's applications span needs assessment, product design, manufacturing, and service quality enhancement. With customer demands becoming increasingly diverse, the Kano model aids businesses in discerning the impact of various attributes on customer satisfaction, thereby optimizing resource allocation and product design (Chen, 2008).

In the context of tourism service quality, research on the Kano model reveals that basic, one-dimensional, and attractive attributes together affect traveler satisfaction. Essential needs such as safety and hygiene, accurate services, and reasonable pricing are basic attributes. Convenient transportation and excellent facilities are one-dimensional attributes, while delightful cuisine and beautiful scenery are considered attractive attributes. Addressing these diverse needs can lead to continuous improvements in tourism service quality (Shahin, 2004).

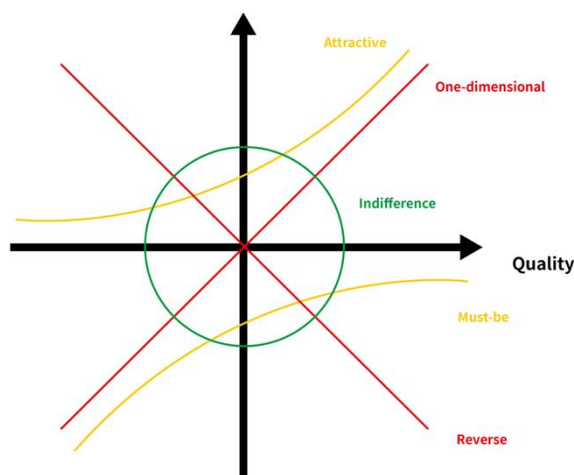


Figure 1. Kano model of customer satisfaction.

Utilizing the Kano model in product and service design enables prioritization of customer needs, concentrating resources on attributes that significantly influence customer satisfaction. Coupled with methodologies like Quality Function Deployment, the Kano model also acts as a strategic framework for competitive strategy and resource optimization in businesses (Matzler and Hinterhuber, 1998). Compared to other analytical tools, the Kano model offers a more comprehensive identification of various customer needs, supporting businesses in developing customer-centric strategies (Mikulić and Prebežac, 2011). This study intends to utilize Kano model theory in guiding the design of local specialty products. By analyzing the impact of different design attributes on customer satisfaction, it aims to identify priority areas for stylistic and innovative design. The findings are anticipated to provide valuable insights for designing strategies that preserve and innovate local cultural specialties.

3. Research Methodology

This study is designed to assess consumers' perceived importance of style design in the quality attributes of local specialty products and the impact of these attributes on their satisfaction. Specifically, it focuses on various quality attributes, including the appeal of packaging design, clarity of provenance information, incorporation of local feature elements, easily understood local style elements, amalgamation of local cultural characteristics, elicitation of emotional connections, presentation of local symbolic elements, forms and styles reflecting local uniqueness, utilization of materials signifying local traditions or features, craftsmanship exhibiting local traditions or features, use of local cultural or natural elements in texts, symbols, or patterns, and color schemes that echo the local culture or atmosphere. The study will employ SPSS version 17 for data analysis. Aiming for representativeness, it will analyze 210 valid questionnaires.

The research will conduct Kano regression analysis, initially applying the Kano model to analyze the satisfaction data related to the quality attributes. This will be followed by a regression analysis to ascertain the impact types of quality attributes, including categories such as attractive, one-dimensional, must-be, indifferent, and reverse. Factor analysis will then be utilized to discern correlations and groupings among the quality attributes. This analysis aims to organize these attributes to understand their interrelations across various dimensions. Finally, the outcomes of the factor analysis will be scrutinized to identify which quality attributes might be grouped under similar factors or dimensions.

4. Research Findings

4.1 Analysis of Kano Regression Results

Based on the Kano regression analysis, this study delves into the importance and level of satisfaction associated with quality attributes in the design of local specialty products (Table 1).

Initially, the regression analysis results for various quality attributes are examined. These results shed light on the degree of influence and the nature of each attribute's impact on consumer satisfaction. For instance, attributes such as "appealing packaging design" and "clear indication of origin" have a significant positive effect on consumer satisfaction, underscoring the importance of focusing on packaging and origin information in product design. These attributes are likely classified as 'attractive' since their presence substantially increases satisfaction.

In the context of local specialty product design, attributes like "easily understandable local style elements" and "integration of local cultural features" significantly contribute to enhancing consumer satisfaction. This trend underscores the growing consumer appetite for products that not only serve a functional purpose but also resonate with local style and cultural distinctiveness. These attributes are likely to be classified as 'attractive' in the Kano model framework, as they not only meet but exceed consumer expectations, thereby elevating the overall satisfaction levels. The presence of such elements in product design serves as a unique selling proposition, differentiating the product in a crowded market and appealing to consumers seeking authenticity and cultural connection.

On the other hand, certain attributes such as "text, symbols, or patterns reflecting local culture" and "color schemes that mirror local culture or ambiance," though culturally significant, exhibit a less pronounced effect on boosting consumer satisfaction. This suggests that these attributes might be categorized as 'indifferent' in the Kano model. Their impact on consumer satisfaction, while present, is not as potent or direct compared to the 'attractive' attributes. This could be attributed to a variety of factors, including possible over-familiarity with these elements among consumers or their perception as basic expectations rather than additional enhancements.

This differentiation in the impact of various design elements underscores the complexity of consumer preferences in the realm of local specialty products. It suggests that while consumers appreciate and expect the reflection of local culture in product design, there is a hierarchy in how different elements contribute to their satisfaction. This insight is crucial for designers and manufacturers, indicating that while the incorporation of local cultural elements is important, the manner and intensity of their integration can significantly influence consumer perception and satisfaction. Understanding this nuanced interplay of cultural elements in design can aid in creating products that not only embody local identity but also align closely with consumer preferences, thereby enhancing the potential for market success.

In conclusion, the results from the Kano regression analysis provide invaluable insights into the different impacts and characteristics of quality attributes in local specialty product design. These findings enhance our understanding of consumer preferences for local specialty products and highlight the necessity to emphasize these quality attributes in product design. This relevance extends to your research theme, as it accentuates the significance of incorporating cultural and locality-based elements in local specialty product design. Consequently, brands and designers can utilize these results to tailor their strategies, better catering to market needs, offering products with distinctive local features, and improving consumer satisfaction. This approach is instrumental in advancing the development of local specialty products and establishing a competitive advantage in the market.

Table 1. Quality Classification Based on Kano Regression Analysis.

Quality Attributes	$\beta 1$	sig.	$\beta 2$	sig.	R2	Type
1. Eye-catching Packaging Design	-0.390	0.000	0.432	0.000	0.552	O
2. Clearly Indicating the Place of Origin	-0.347	0.000	0.343	0.000	0.345	O
3. Incorporating Local Unique Elements	-0.212	0.002	0.384	0.000	0.278	O
4. Locally-Inspired Style Elements Easily Understood	-0.402	0.000	0.274	0.000	0.339	O
5. Combining Local Cultural Characteristics	-0.332	0.000	0.632	0.000	0.351	O
6. Eliciting Emotional Connection to the Place	-0.289	0.000	0.295	0.000	0.247	O
7. Featuring Local Symbolic Elements	-0.374	0.000	0.226	0.000	0.271	O
8. Capturing Local Characteristics in Design	-0.363	0.000	0.298	0.000	0.330	O
9. Incorporating Traditional or Local Materials	-0.356	0.000	0.301	0.000	0.330	O
10. Showcasing Local Craftsmanship	-0.316	0.000	0.323	0.000	0.288	O
11. Incorporating Local Cultural Elements	-0.264	0.000	0.358	0.000	0.283	O
12. Reflecting Local Culture through Colors	-0.299	0.000	0.259	0.000	0.234	O

4.2 Results of Factor Analysis

The factor analysis results (as depicted in Table 2) allow for an in-depth exploration of consumer preferences regarding the quality attributes in the design of local specialty products. These attributes reflect different facets of product design and hold varying degrees of importance for consumers, offering essential guidance for both designers and manufacturers.

The attribute "attractiveness of packaging design" demonstrates the highest factor loading, scoring 0.971. This score indicates a strong consumer focus on the visual appeal of product packaging. Consequently, in the design process of local specialty products, it is imperative for designers to emphasize creativity and attraction in packaging design, aiming to capture consumer attention and stimulate their interest.

The attributes "easily understandable local style elements" and "clear indication of origin information" exhibit high factor loadings of 0.825 and 0.782, respectively. This suggests that consumers value the clarity in presenting local styles and origin information on the products. Designers, therefore, should strategically incorporate local characteristic elements into their designs while ensuring that origin information is prominently and clearly displayed.

Furthermore, attributes such as "integration of local characteristic elements" and "capturing local traits in form and style" also possess high factor loadings. This implies that consumers consider it important for product design to reflect local uniqueness and characteristics, possibly including cultural elements, traditional materials, craftsmanship, and symbolic colors of local culture.

However, some attributes like "evocation of emotional connections" and "color combinations reflecting local culture or atmosphere" have lower factor loadings, indicating a comparatively lower focus from consumers on these aspects. Despite this, these attributes still maintain a level of significance and could potentially impact consumer purchase decisions under certain circumstances.

Table 2 provides valuable insights for designers, enhancing their understanding of consumer needs and preferences. The findings underscore the importance of focusing on key aspects such as packaging attractiveness, clarity in indicating origin, and the integration of local characteristic elements in local specialty product design. Additionally, this analysis offers strategic guidance for designers to ensure their products are competitive in the market and align with consumer expectations.

Table 2. Factor Analysis.

Quality Item	Factor Loading
1. Eye-catching Packaging Design	0.971
4. Locally-Inspired Style Elements Easily Understood	0.825
2. Indicating the Place of Origin	0.782
5. Combining Local Cultural Characteristics	0.780
8. Capturing Local Characteristics in Design	0.779
3. Incorporating Local Unique Elements	0.768
9. Incorporating Traditional or Local Materials	0.764
11. Incorporating Local Cultural Elements	0.756
7. Featuring Local Symbolic Elements	0.754
10. Showcasing Local Craftsmanship	0.749
12. Reflecting Local Culture through Colors	0.749
6. Eliciting Emotional Connection to the Place	0.742

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The aim of this study is to thoroughly explore consumer preferences for qualitative and quantitative attributes as well as stylistic elements in the design of local specialty products, and to understand how these factors impact customer satisfaction and purchasing decisions. The main conclusions of the research are as follows: The Kano regression analysis brings to light the variances in consumer preferences for different quality attributes within the design of local specialty products. Attributes such as the appeal of packaging design and the clarity of origin information are deemed critical, having a direct correlation with consumer satisfaction. This suggests that designers should focus keenly on these key attributes during the design process to align with consumer needs. Factor analysis identifies primary style elements in design, including visual elements and symbols that reflect regional characteristics. Not only do these elements showcase cultural uniqueness, but they also resonate emotionally with consumers. Integrating these elements thoughtfully in the design process can significantly enhance the attractiveness of the product and thereby, increase the likelihood of consumer purchases.

The study emphasizes the importance of quality attributes and style elements in design, providing valuable guidance and strategic suggestions for designers and manufacturers. By selecting and applying these attributes and elements effectively, designers can create more attractive and distinctive local specialty products, strengthening their competitiveness in the market. This research offers significant academic and practical insights into the field of local specialty product design, establishing a robust foundation for further research and application. Understanding consumer needs and preferences in-depth aids designers and manufacturers in better meeting market demands and fosters the growth and promotion of local specialty products.

Future research could explore differences in consumer preferences for the design of local specialty products across diverse regions and cultural backgrounds, and how local cultural characteristics can be more effectively incorporated into the design. Additionally, examining various marketing strategies and channels for the promotion and sale of local specialty products can contribute to further progress and development in this sector.

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Conflicts of Interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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