

Visual Diary: The Self-discovery for Future Designer in Design Learning

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Abstract. Designers are starting to play a different role. Besides design, moreover involved in managing work that requires integration across disciplines. Innovation in design learning needs to emphasize a learning model that stimulates student's ability to construct knowledge and experiences independently and to recognize their potential. The purpose of this study is to find the characteristics of a design learning model that develops student's potential according to their interests through a visual diary combine with an actual problem. This study used a qualitative approach by collecting samples of practical subjects in visual communication design program study, with research subjects : (1) course activity; (2) lecturers; (3) students. The data collection technique includes an interview and focus group discussion. The result shows that learning which involves self-discovery through the visual diary design process provides the opportunity to develop student's potential, such as passion discovered, thinking skills, and carry out the design process

Keywords: visual, diary, design, learning, self-discovery

1 Introduction

Designer are starting to play a different role. New situations and contexts can generate innovative challenges as new opportunities. Besides design, moreover involved in managing work that requires integration across disciplines. This study examines the diary method as a presentation of learning material to train student subjectivity to see from various points of view, especially from the point of view of individuals who bring out characteristics and authenticity in seeing things. The diary is a self-report instrument used to examine ongoing experiences, offers the opportunity to investigate social, psychological, and physiological, everyday situations [1], a diary can be a way as self-training to accommodate point of view and choices as new forces or new perspectives. In the learning process, the diversity of the presentation of learning materials provides alternatives opportunities for a high degree of adaptation [2]. In this study, visual diaries are used as a learning method to explore ideas, thoughts, expressed in the recorded notes.

Innovation in design learning needs to emphasize a learning model that stimulates student's ability to construct knowledge and experiences independently and to recognize their potential. Practicing practical design skills to prepare graduate designers to being able adapt to the growing design industry [3], by emphasizing learning that develops student's potential based on their interest and talent through real problem and field dynamics. The visual diary aims to integrate

variety of individual knowledge into a comprehensive visual communication media. The diary method is used to collect data by remembering, writing, speaking, thinking clearly and using diary as storage equipment, enabling natural data collection, namely information collected 'in the moment' and in a 'real environment' such as at home or outdoors, rather than just in a research laboratory [4]. Diary studies offer insight into everyday life and may take place over time. Students can show their thoughts and experiences in their own words.

The purpose of this study is to find the characteristics of a design learning model that develops student's potential according to their interests through a visual diary combine with an actual problem, encourage students to use lateral thinking or higher order thinking skills. Deepen their knowledge and understanding in order to enhance and expand their creative practice, the self discovery process in design capabilities.

2 Visual Diary and Self Discovery

Diaries are designed to capture the small experiences in everyday life that occupy most of our work time and majority of our conscious attention [5]. The benefit of the diary method is that it allows the examination of events and experiences created in a natural and spontaneous context, providing complementary information that can be obtained with more traditional designs [6]. As design process visual diary becomes a record of the journey of planning, development, and exploration of ideas before making a final decision on the design concept and strategy to be created and presented.

Interestingly, one of the finding in an article 'Rethinking Visual Journaling In The Creative Process: Exploring Pedagogic Implication' [7] that analysed the relationship between creative practice and visual journaling, found that the usage of visual journal did not reflect on the creative work. However, the visual journal can be a tool for capturing plan, record sources of interest, and develop a plan. Another research article from [8], where exploring the visual journal as an artifact of qualitative thought for research, reflection and analytic processes share a list of recommendations to start the visual journaling process. In summary, the suggestions such as: (1)the usage of visual journal as documenting process; (2)creativity in techniques and medium usage in the visual journal; (3)engaging question for new understanding purpose; (4)allowing new question to emerge; (5)visual journal can lead toward new vantage points; (6)create experience of thinking rather than finishing the journal and perfection; (7)set a commit time to visual journaling explorations; (8)always take the journal with us.

In general, self-discovery is the stage where someone tries to find their true existence. In this study, the scope of self-discovery is how students find a theme that is their passion and interest. Passion give opportunity to explore purpose, personal values or specific qualities that are important and meaningful. These values can help describe the desired life as well as expected behavior. This self-discovery may not be uncommon, how to value self-knowledge as a path to empowerment, however, this form of empowerment has an important function during the crisis [9] especially in the face of uncertainty, discover their own characteristics to recognize their potential. Preparing designers in creating jobs that do not yet exist, to develop undiscovered technology, to solve problems that cannot be anticipated [10]. The integration of the visual diary

method as a media of self-discovery process can be one of the stimulation and experiments of future designer role, having the ability to formulate various information around them, analyze, make new method [3] of doing research and exploration. Experiments provides opportunities for students to learn more, not by being told what will happen, but by being left to make their own findings, discoveries, and conclusions [11], this method has the opportunity to find new ways to create a work.

3 Method

This study used a qualitative approach, to explore and understand the meaning that comes from social or humans problems individually or in groups of people [12] by collecting samples of practical subjects in visual communication design program study, with research subjects : (1) course activity; (2) lecturers; (3) students. The data collection technique includes interviews and focus group discussion, most common methods of data collection in qualitative research [13]. The research was conducted in second-year class of a visual communication design school, with 40 students with team teaching of four teacher.

Data were collected using respondents in the classroom where the teaching and learning process took place, thus descriptive research was considered appropriate [14]. In the course activity, students were asked to conduct research on various themes, thoughts, feelings, guesses, imaginations and put them in a visual diary. During the process, lecturers and students interacting the learning through coaching and discussion. After the course activity, interview was conducted with 10 students regarding their experience by carrying out this course activity. Structured interview was used in this method, each respondent was asked by the same question. Focus group discussions were conducted with lecturers to generate on collective views and meaning. Data analysis was carried out by organizing, describing the data, presenting and making conclusions.

4 Result and Discussion

This method is applied by incorporating research and design thinking into learning activities. Train students to tell stories, stories, passions in visual form, this approach is expected to bring comfort and pleasure in exploration and trigger imagination in the creative thinking process. Students were asked to conduct research on various things related to their interests through certain theme selected, with thoughts, feelings, guesses, imaginations and putting them in a visual diary. The theme will be used to create work in a design project. Students are given the freedom to choose a theme according to their interest. Starting from hobbies, passion or even the opposdite, what they don't like, self-anxiety and fear. Students may input all the plans, thoughts and ideas, both in visual and text. They are the repository of experiment from inspiration, imagination, and graphic experimental. As a personal record of visual thinking and reveal aspects of their creative process.

Students used two techniques in visualization, digital and manual technique. Using digital technique, students combining the visual findings, colour, typography arrangement, using the computer software.



Fig. 1. Visual diary with digital technique

Through the digital technique, students explained that this activity allow them to explore further, more curiosity, and finally find a new way and methods. Most of the students feel happy, open-minded, and inovative. The work process also makes them feel excited and fun.

However, some of the students found unpleasant emotions, such as:

1. Fear of whether the method is right or wrong.
2. A sense of doubt whether the result meet the lecturer's expectation.
3. Curiosity of wondering where to start.
4. Feeling anxious to try something new and getting out of the comfort zone.

The second is using the manual technique, students conduct visual research and the results were combined using cut and paste, collage, and paper. The result from the manual technique showed that initially students felt confuse and take a long time to find ideas and inspiration for their design. After starting the manual drawing, the new inspiration also emerged, brings the process more challenging, exciting, and fun. However, it also takes a longer time to finish the drawing because were carry out in manual technique. Some of the students admit that the design result obtained ultimately better than they expected. Students were feeling nostalgia like working on a scrapbook without any creative limitation.



Fig. 2. Visual diary with manual technique

Both visual diary design in manual or digital technique provides positive and negative feelings and experiences to students. As the result of an interview with one of the students CH, said 'I become know a lot of things, find a new way of exploration that I didn't think of before. At first, I was curious yet afraid to make mistakes, I keep questioning myself whether this decision is okay or not'. Similar with a student name RS told us 'I can create new thing in this visual diary, learn various exploration methods. I was a little surprised when being told to make it into further exploration and there was a sense of thrill when trying a new method'.

The lecturer revealed that at the beginning of making a visual diary, it was necessary to encourage students' courage to see things from the point of view of their subjectivity. Most of the students feel confused, there is anxiety about doing the wrong thing because exploring self-interest through visual research is an unusual thing. However, after several meetings, students began to be able to bring out various points of view of everything that was within them. In the discussion, the lecturer directed students to conduct research using association and self-personification using visual thinking. One of the activities that the lecturer needs to multiply is to use the strategy of asking questions as a trigger for a variety of possibilities, to what extent students try to explore the design process, develop ideas, and capture added values. According to the lecturer, the questioning strategy has an important role to stimulate students' thinking. Questions can be in the form of knowledge, up to things that arouse students' curiosity, and lead to determining answers.

This visual diary becomes their life and work documents, which can develop from any page the student wants, as a process that can be repeated continuously. The feeling of anxiety in conducting experiments encourages analytical practice and new methods of exploration [3]. This activity can be seen as a project progress or reflective practice. Curiosity and wondering where to start give students the chance to make their own findings, discoveries [11] new feelings and experiences. Practicing research and the design process is a comprehensive discipline involving critical, creative, and innovative thinking, design skills, cultural values, and information technology. How the system thinking process is carried out to combine experience, information, and knowledge and find inspiration for creative concepts. This method seeks to

renew conventional teaching modes to formulate innovative learning methods based on creativity and logic so that students find and identify for themselves the best way to create creative concepts that come from observations of the environment and everyday life.

The research found that passion and interest can be the capital used to offer endurance while producing subjectivity that makes students more resilient to the design exploration process. Through the visual diary, students research by collecting various sample data using a different approach by designing and implementing the diary method. The more in-depth and extensive research and planning in a visual diary, students feel even happier because they can explore and find their passion to develop a design project theme that needs to be made. Nowadays instructing students to pursue creativity in the visual design process has become a goal for instructors [15]. Learning which involves self-discovery through the visual diary design process provides the opportunity to develop student's potential, such as passion discovered, thinking skills, and carry out the design process.

Design learning is particularly crucial for the personal development, possesses an influence on the way students create value for their individual potential. The visual diary method is not oriented to technical or design skills, but to the ability to identify possibilities and develop new solutions from individual point of view. Students not only design according to instructions but can express and develop various alternative solutions from various perspectives, stimulate students' knowledge and life experiences. Based on the findings, this study showed that most students agreed with the use of a visual diary as a medium in finding an interesting theme for students and become a passion of theirs.

5 Conclusions

From the findings, it can be concluded that by integrating research with creativity, students were able to report and create meaning with a detailed understanding of a research theme through their visual diary. This method helps students in carrying out activities that allow them to explore their own practical skills to generate creative thinking in the design process. Students research with a creative expression by utilizing the visual elements through techniques and media to describe the result of the data and their new findings. Lecturers can develop strategies for asking questions in the process of exploring passion and interest. Provide a wider variety of questions related to self-subjectivity, context, and practical activities that can help students overcome anxiety problems in exploring themselves through research and visual thinking. The finding shows that the visual diary has the potential to be used as a learning medium in the design learning process. The self-discovery process, when used in teaching and learning provides an opportunity to develop students' practical skills needed and can maximize student participation and skill acquisition, thereby maximizing their design learning outcomes.

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