

Implementation of Sabu Raijua Culture as Branding Reinforcement in Office Building Interiors

Dyah Ayu Sekarningrum^{1*} and Bambang Kartono Kurniawan¹

¹Interior Design Department, School of Design, Bina Nusantara University, Malang, East Java, Indonesia

Abstract. The existence of cultures in East Nusa Tenggara is a resource with great opportunities for design exploration. Sabu Raijua has various types of culture ranging from dances, traditional houses, and woven fabrics with traditional motifs. The image and characteristics of an office building are formed through a branding process. The purpose of this paper is to examine how the implementation of Sabu Raijua's local culture in the interior becomes a branding reinforcement for office buildings. The research uses a qualitative descriptive method with a Design Thinking approach with data collection through field survey and literature study. The aim for this research is to indicate how interior element strengthen the characteristic, furthermore it reinforcing the brand. The result also shows that local wisdom are being preserved and celebrated as it should.

1. Introduction

In terms of geographical boundaries, East Nusa Tenggara is bordered by the Sape Strait and the Indonesian Ocean to the west, the Ombai Strait and the East Timor Territory to the east, and adjacent to the Flores Sea to the north, and to the south by the Indonesian Ocean. The Regional Government Work Unit officials stated that the people of East Nusa Tenggara are scattered in various ethnic groups living on various islands. At the same time, the East Nusa Tenggara region also has a variety of cultural riches in the form of language, art, traditions, and customs [1].

A brand contributes to create and maintain product competitiveness. The brand will be associated with an image or special character that is able to give certain associations to consumers [2]. A brand is not just a term, sign, symbol, or name. More than that, a brand is a 'promise' that is consistently given to consumers. This 'promise' is what makes the brand better known to the wider community than other brands) [2]. The success of forming a brand image can be seen through the impression of the target audience. The impression of the audience must be in line with the main purpose of the image created. Over time, a brand needs to carry out an image strengthening (branding reinforcement) that can maintain the identity or character of the brand.

The office has an important role for the running of a company system, besides that the office is also useful as a place to fulfill consumer needs [3]. Besides having a function as a place to work, an office also stands as a symbol of the company's brand. A brand identity is not only limited to an office or company logo, but also a service system and work environment in the office. Therefore, the existence of Brand Identity has a

harmonious relationship with interior design [4]. Office interior design is one of the cornerstones in forming the image of a company [5].

2. Objectives

This research main objective is to form an implementation of Sabu Raijua local culture into interior design elements as a means of strengthening the branding of an office building. This research can be used as a reference and an illustration of how an office building interior design can be emphasized through branding by elevating the identity of the local wisdom of the East Nusa Tenggara. At the same time, the local wisdom indirectly preserved and gets a rejuvenation process to be able to adapt to the modern era.

3. Methods

The method used in this research is qualitative descriptive with a Design Thinking analysis method approach with the stages of Emphatize, Define, Ideate, and Prototyping. Data collection in this study was taken by field observations, primary data collection through literature studies from previous research. The first process of Empathize is the stage of the process to understand the problem to be solved. The role of empathy in Design Thinking helps researchers prioritize seeing new perspectives and put aside personal assumptions. In the Define stage, the researcher unpacks and makes a detailed description of the results at the Empathize stage that are obtained. The Ideate stage is a process where researchers build design ideas as alternative solutions to the problem being tested. The number of ideas formed can be as many

* Corresponding author: dyah.sekarningrum@binus.ac.id

as possible, which are then narrowed down to a smaller number, this process is also known as "idea burning". The last stage is Prototyping where the final design idea is transformed into something tangible.

4. Results and Discussion

Kupang City as the Capital of East Nusa Tenggara Province is one of the areas that is experiencing very rapid development. The increasing demand by the population has implications for changes in land use, one of which is the use of office buildings. [6] in their research stated that within eight years (2010-2018) the city of Kupang experienced a change in land use as buildings and settlements by 12,00 ha to 120,45 ha or in a percentage increase of 903.75%.

Office is a designation for a place that has a function as a business or company that is run regularly. According to the Big Indonesian Dictionary, an office is a hall (building, house or room) where one does a job or also called a place to work. Akhimien [7] stated that office is an architectural and design prodigy; whether the workspace is extremely small scale or formed in a massive building.

This study conducted observations in one of the office buildings of the Widya Mandira University Rectorate Office in Kupang, East Nusa Tenggara. The results of field observations show that the interior of the office building from the elements of walls, floors, ceilings and furniture has not implement any local wisdom. Seen from the results of the field visit, the interior design of the office still does not have an identity that becomes a trade-mark or its own characteristic yet. As stated in Kotradyová [8] study, is important to maintain and bring local wisdom design of building, interiors and product is a part of socio-cultural well-being and social sustainability in the era of globalization.



Fig.1. Lobby and student administration area
(Source: Personal doc.)

Researcher has limited research topic to examine Sabu Rajjua ethnic group in East Nusa Tenggara. Sabu has traditional house called Ammu Hawu, or which means Sabu house literally. The philosophy that underlies the construction of this traditional house is the parable of a living creature that is stretched out with the head position in the West and the tail in the East position. Based on the name of the region, the head is Mehara in the west, Haba and Liae are the middle part (chest and abdomen) while Dimu which is in the east is a tail [9]. Kini et al. [10,11] mention in their study that the traditional house of Sabu Rajjua has a characteristic in the form of a boat that is upside down on the roof.

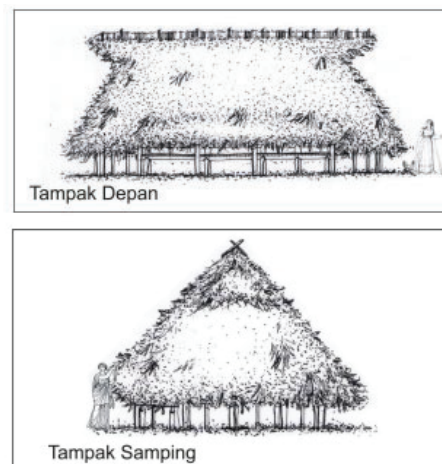


Fig.2. Sabu traditional house
(Source: Kapilawi et al. 2019)

Geneiveve [12] in her study stated that the motifs on the sabu woven fabric is an identification medium related to the origin and lineage (hubu) of its users. Basically, the sabu woven fabric motif is taken from the names of two major groups in the Sabu community, namely Hubi Ae (Big Palm Flowers) and Hubi Iki (Keci Palm Flowers). Sabu woven fabric motifs have certain characteristics based on the wearer. The main pattern on women's woven fabrics for the Hubi Ae group is the geometric shape of three diamonds with light color accents, while for the Hubi Iki group it has wave stripes with a darker color. In the cloth used by men, the Hubi Iki group has a split letupat motif which is closed on the side and is round in shape, and the Hubi Ae group has a characteristic motif with an oval diamond shape and has split branches outward [12].

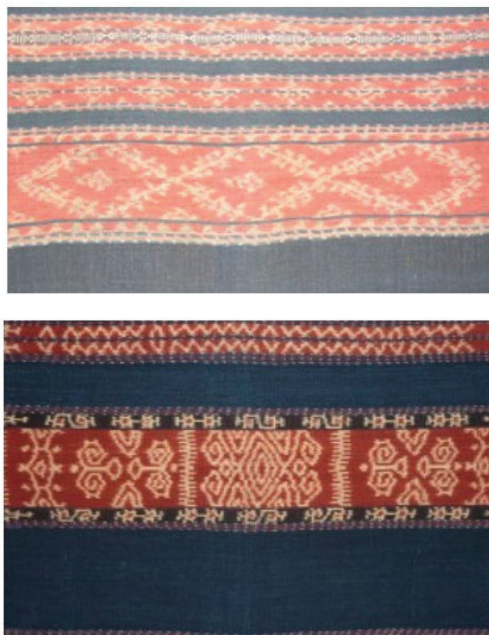


Fig.3. The basic motive for the Hubi Ae (women) group and the basic motive for the Hubi Iki (women) group.
 (Source: <https://genevieduggan.com/kain-adati-sabu-bunga-palm-dari-sabu/sarung-adat-perempuan>)



Fig.4. The basic motive for the Hubi Iki (male) group and the basic motive for the Hubi Ae (male) group.
 (Source: <https://genevieduggan.com/savu-ceremonial-textiles/mens-selimut>)

In making woven fabrics, the Sabu people use a lot of surrounding plants as the basic ingredients for natural dyes. The white color is taken from processed cotton, the

red color is taken from the roots of the noni tree, while the dark blue color is produced from indigo leaves [13].

Rijo and Souto [14] stated that culture has a function to differentiate itself from other in a form of human interpretation of shared symbol and meaning hence it become their cultural identity.

This research has implemented the local wisdom of Sabu Raijua's traditional house (Ammu Hawu) combined with traditional woven fabrics motif Hubi Iki. Sitorus [15] stated that transformation is an object change with a creative process through the transfer of an existing form to produce a new form. Transformation method used in the making of the interior element design. The design process was conducted using four out of five Design Thinking approach (Empathize, Define, Ideate, and Prototyping).

Empathize

The author highlights and observes the existence of the local culture of the province of East Nusa Tenggara which is abundant and has great potential to be preserved and developed in the field of interior design. An existence and great potential if it is not balanced with innovation and real implementation, the local culture of the East Nusa Tenggara community itself will not be able to develop and be known by more circles. At the same time, the development of a brand or brand is increasingly widespread, this is in line with the increase in competitiveness between brands. A reinforcement of brand image needs to be done by agencies to maintain a presence so that brand users do not turn away. Strengthening the brand image of a brand can be done through visual strategies such as proper interior design in the related office building.

Define

Continuing the empathize stage, researcher defines solutions to related concerns. The author needs to determine the boundaries and specifications on which East Nusa Tenggara culture will be the main subject. At this point the Sabu Raijua culture in the form of Traditional Houses and Woven Fabrics was chosen to be studied more deeply in its implementation potential, and how it can be a method for strengthening the agency's image through interior design of office buildings.

Ideate

At this stage, the researcher entered the stage of making several alternative ideas with the main objects of culture being the Traditional House and Sabu Raijua Woven Fabrics. After collecting alternative design implementations, the author enters the stage of selecting the main idea which will then be finalized as an element of interior design.

Prototyping

The idea generated from the ideate stage then the researcher realizes the idea into a concrete design. This design is a key tile by combining the basic formation of a traditional house and the motif of Sabu Raijua woven fabric.

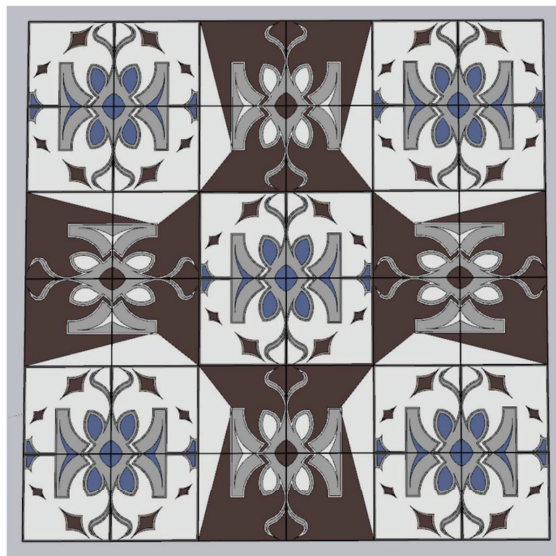


Fig.5. Ammu Hawu tile
 (Source: Personal doc.)



Fig.6. Ammu Hawu tile implementation in interior design
 (Source: Personal doc.)

The pattern on the Ammu Hawu tile takes the form of a parallelogram from the front view of the Sabu Raijua traditional house which has a philosophy and shape resembling a boat. This key tile also implements the Hubi Iki woven fabric motif which has the characteristic of a closed rhombus with a round shape. This key tile can be applied as a floor element in an office building interior design. Hence, a brand reinforcement can be achieved through strengthening of brand character with local wisdom aspect.

Utami and Utami [16] stated that brand identity is a complete set of unique brand associations composed of brand strategy. The identity of a brand will help

strengthen the relationship between the brand and users involving functional benefits, emotional benefits or self-expression. Utami and Utami [16] also mentions that the perception of brand users or consumers of the brand image is based on several visual aspects including symbols, logos and names that are easily remembered by consumers. Utami and Utami [16] stated that the visual aspect that forms a "story" is an important factor in the development of an interior concept. In the aspect of Interior design, a brand image can be implemented on the floor, wall, and ceiling elements. The use of specific color and shape elements can form an image and give an impression to space users.

5. Conclusion

This study explains the magnitude existence of culture in East Nusa Tenggara, and how an interior design characteristic impact the brand reinforcement. This research indicate that the existence of the local culture of East Nusa Tenggara is as equal as the potential for exploration and implementation. The more unique the characteristics manifested in the interior of its office building, the higher identity value presented. This research aim to signify how interior element strengthen the characteristic, hence it reinforcing the brand. Further research is needed to explore and maximize the implementation of local wisdom in East Nusa Tenggara as interior aspect to create a strong characteristic that can be used as strategy of brand reinforcement.

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