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ELEMENTS FOR CHILDREN

By

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A Study to Determine the Colours of Landscape Design Elements for Children ⁱ

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ABSTRACT

Colours is the most important element to provide a visual and psychological information and to generate reactions from viewer. To this end, architect or designer can provoke various responses and so become the controller of what that viewer perceives. It is a need for us to study and to know colour very well as we involve in this profession.

The purpose of this study is; to study and determine the use of colours in landscape design elements for children. Colour in landscape design element is varied from softscape to hardscape material. Colour forms a basic core in design element for children, as colour and children are related with each other. Colours may influence not only on adult but also to children; children response to balanced, nurturing environment, just as adult do, with sense of peace and well-being. As in nature, which tends to mix many different colours together, so each distinct, but none is out of place, the best approach is to create a field of colours within which almost any combination of children, adult, toys and furniture can function in pleasant harmony.

For this research, four methodology are applied which is based on literature review, case study, data collections and data analysis. The collection of data is by using experimental method, interviews, observation and photograph review. IIUM Kindergarten and Playschool was chosen as the case study for this topic. The result of from this research is view from three main categories which are; design aspect, conducive environment and children psychology.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

“Colour affects our life

Colour is physical... we see it

Colour communicates... we receive information from the language of colour.

Colour is emotional... it evokes our feelings.”

-Bride M. Whelan, Color Harmony, 1997

Idea can be communicated through colour, without the use of either written or verbal language, and emotional response to individual colours alone or in combination is often predictable. For instance, a prestigious law firm sends a message of confidence to potential clients by using rich, deep colours in its office and on its letterhead. Conversely, a dentist’s waiting area in bright red or orange to sends a stressful message to patients, rather than the calm feeling the dentist wishes to convey (Ibid).

Colours evoke specific emotional responses. For example, red can be powerful, exciting, passionate, and daring. Within each colour innumerable values or tints, and shades generate an even wider range of response. Red goes from the palest romantic pink to a sophisticated deep burgundy. Creating powerful colour combinations from numerous hues, tints and shades is the ultimate objective of working with colour.

To develop an accurate response to the language of colour, it is first necessary to understand the harmony of colour. This means knowing what colours to use and in what

order and proportion to create a desired mood, to communicate an idea or to gain a reaction. According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, colour is visible qualities that object have, produced by the way they reflect light. It also means substances used to give colour to something.

1.1 RESEARCH BACKGROUND

This research intended to find out the use of colours in landscape design element for children space in the selected case study. This research will focus on children in kindergarten and pre-schooler age. The importance of colours in helping children development and the children's response to it will be discussed as a basic guideline and guiding principle in this research.

This research will also look into the issue and problem arise in this topic which is associate with the children spaces as well as relating them the main argument weather the use of colours in that spaces is appropriate with children's needs. This research is will identify the type of colours used in children spaces.

This research intended to find out the problems, which resulted to the use of inappropriate colours that match the children's need. The criteria of evaluations and recommendations will be prepared based on a literature review that states the design elements and colours to make up successful children spaces. Some evaluation and

comparison will be made based on the selected case study as the basic foundation of investigation.

1.2 AIMS

The aims of this study is to determine the colours of landscape design element for children and to look into the importance of colours in children's early education.

1.3 OBJECTIVES

- To study how colour effects childrens emotion and reaction (how colour create different moods).
- To study on how the colours are used as medium in developing children education.
- To suggest the appropriate use of colours in landscape design for children

1.4 ISSUES AND PROBLEM STATEMENT

Children are developmentally different in size and ability, but they always in agreement when it comes to play. Often we see that children play things and their surrounding environment is full of colours. Colour and children is one complete world. One cannot deny the importance of colour in children's life.

From the early observation and surveillance, there are some issues arise in this topic. First, colour have certain effect on children as children only choose a certain type of colours to be associated with, whether for their necessities or play things. Certain colours even affect children emotion and reaction. How colours influence these children is need to be determined. Secondly, it is universally accepted that colour is important in children's life but do the designers realise that what kind of colours are suitable to use in landscape design element for children?

1.5 METHODOLOGY

In this research, the first matter must be taken into consideration is to define and specify the subjects of the study. Referring to the topic of study; "A Study to determine the Colour of Landscape Design Element for Children", the main subject that must be studied is the most likely colours to be used in designing landscape elements for children.

According to Van Dalen and quoted by Asiah Abdul Rahim, various methods can be used. Van Dalen followed a multi-method approach that is using all three methods to gain data that are; questionnaire, interview and observation. The main argument for this was that as no single method is perfect, it might be better to use a wider range of imperfect instruments to overcome the inherent weakness in each. Furthermore, Van Dalen suggested that if a hypothesis could 'survive the onslaught from various methods' then it is likely to have greater support. Used of a multi- method approach is supported by

other studies to enhance the credibility of findings. For instances, photography may be combined with observation, and a questionnaire may be followed by a focus interviews (Asiah Abdul Rahim, 2001, p. 151) It is also important to know and identify the selection of samples or the target people that will give impact to the study.

There are certain methods that can be used in order to complete the study such as using literature review, case study, data collection and data analysis.

1.5.1 Literature Review

Theory plays an important role in social work research, as it does in social work practice. In both practice and research, theory helps us to make sense out of diverse observations and see patterns in them. It helps to direct our inquiry into those areas that show useful patterns and explanations. It also helps to distinguish between chance occurrences and observations. Theories also help researchers develop useful implication from their findings for practice and policy. Without the use of theory, our understanding of why this is so, and what to do about it, would be limited (Allen Rubin, Earl Babbie; *Research Methods for Social Work*, 1997).

In this research one of the methods used is literature review as a basic support for the researcher while conducting the research. This literature review can be found from other documented sources such as books, magazines, journals, articles and etc. The source is randomly selected but must be relevant with the topic.

1.5.2 Case Study

The case study will be conducted in IIUM Educare Kindergarten. The main criteria that is to be studied here is the decoration and space of the Kindergarten, the children behaviour and response toward the experimental conduct and the importance of colour in helping their learning process. Base on the analysis of the study, a landscape specifically for children will be proposed to be built at Taman Tasik Perdana.

1.5.3 Data Collections

1.5.3.1 Experiment

Experiment is needed as a method when dealing with children when it is out of their capability to answer questionnaire. The experiment method children were provided drawings and were asked to add colouring to their liking. Second experiment would be the children will have to choose a coloured paper from a box. The result of their preferable type of colour will be reflected based on their response to it.

1.5.3.2 Interviews

Interview is one of the methods used to get information from primary sources. People and person that are familiar with the topic studied will be the target group such as the kindergarten teachers and its administrator.

1.5.3.3 Observation

Observation is a method to observe the character that relates with the research topic. It is important to gain the knowledge about the site study.

1.5.3.4 Photograph

Taking photographs is also an important method in order to visualize the condition of the site and the criteria can be seen clearly and be analyzed.

1.5.4 Data Analysis

All data collected would be analyzed, and all the statistical information is processed through spreadsheet to produce graphical analysis. This information is gained through experiments. The graphical information is produced from the case study area. From observation and interview, the data would be analyzed through data collections, literature and pictorial review of the site.

1.6 CONCLUSION

The significance of this research is, to identify colours that is preferable by children and how its influence onto children. The result of this research will determine the appropriate colours to be used in landscape design element.

CHAPTER 2

COLOUR AND CHILDREN



2.0 INTRODUCTION

From a historical perspective, the development of colour theory as educational course in analysis of colour and form in nature began in 1919 when Wassily Kandinsky, the renowned Russian abstract artist and teacher, was appointed to the Faculty of Design in Bauhaus School of Design, Weimer, Germany. This school became famous throughout the world for revolutionizing the teaching of architecture, industrial arts, painting, and sculpture. The collaborative efforts of the faculty made this school unique in its teachings. Faculty members also include artist Paul Klee, artist and colour theorist Johannes Itten, and the Bauhaus founder, architect Walter Gropius. This group of colleagues often discussed the importance of nature study in terms of the seasonal systems of colour change. They agreed that the infinite asymmetrical and symmetrical colour relationships apparent in nature offered an orderly system for the study of colour and design. The enormous spiritual inspiration also gained from nature created a counterpart to the new way of teaching.

Theory plays an important role in social work research, as it does in social work practice. In both practice and research, theory helps us to make sense out of diverse observations and see patterns in them (Allen Rubin, Earl Babbie; *Research Methods for Social Work*, 1997). In this research one of the methods used is literature review as a basic support for the researcher while conducting the research. This literature review can be found from other documented sources such as books, magazines, journals, articles and etc. The source is randomly selected but relevant with the topic.

2.1 THEORY OF COLOUR

The great physicist and mathematician Sir Isaac Newton (1642-1727) was a pioneer in studying light under laboratory conditions to provide a logical framework for understanding of colour.

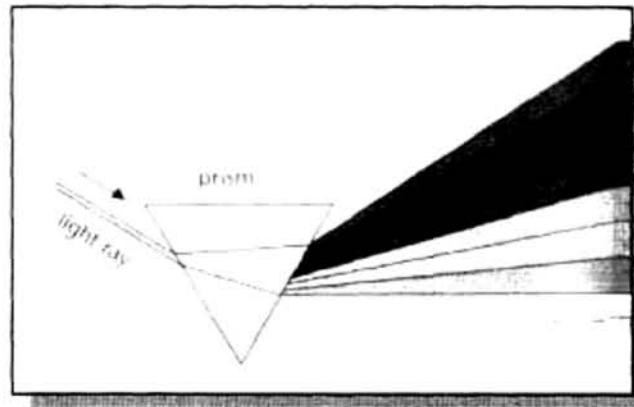


Figure 2.0: The visible spectrum of how we see colours. Of the seven light waves, violet has the shortest wavelength and red the longest.

His early research discovers that sunlight is composed of all the colours in spectrum. Using ray of sunlight, directed through a prism, Newton observed that the ray of light was bent, or refracted, and the result was an array of projected colours, each with a different range of wave length, in the following order, red, orange, yellow, green, blue, indigo, and violet. This array, the constituent of light, is known as the visible spectrum (Anderson Feisner, Colour, 2000).

2.1.0 How We See Colour

The human eye visually interprets light rays electromagnet energy by an interaction of the optic nerves with the brain. There are cones and rods in the retina of the eye that help distinguish dark and light, as well as colour brilliance. The seven colours of spectrum are produced by light waves of varied length that reflect off tangible animate and inanimate objects. Thus, these objects are not actually of a fixed physical colour. Instead, they project colour because of light is reflected from their surfaces (Marberry/ Zagon; *The Power of Colour*, 1995).

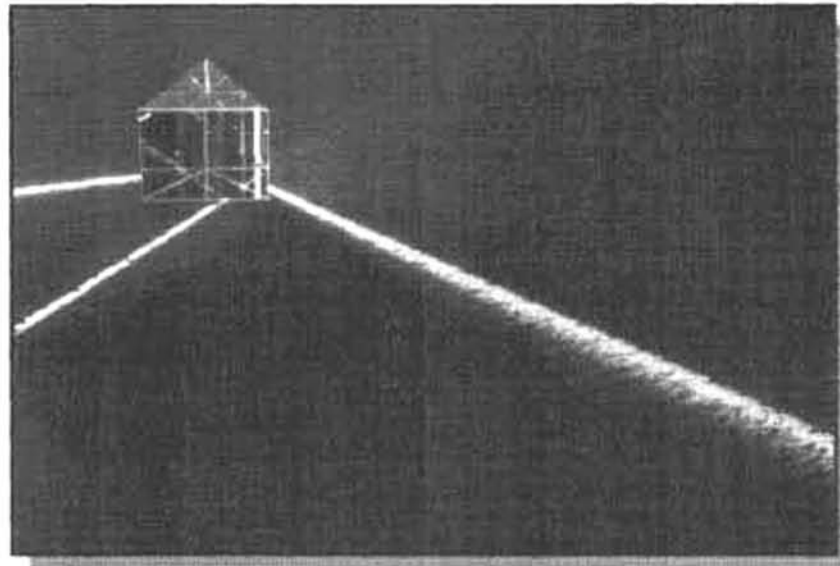


Figure 2.1 The spectrum generated by light refracted through a prism