## A Study of Comfort Elements Combine with Local Mascot The Case of Yunlin Townships

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#### **Abstract**

Yunlin County, which located in south-west of Taiwan, west of the Taiwan Strait and consists of twenty townships. Due to its plain ground and fertile soil environment advantages which suits for agriculture, it has been being the main supplier of rice and vegetables, which had made a great contribution to Taiwan. Although there is an official mascot "KIMONCHAN" representing Yunlin County, there is no mascot for township individually. The mascot should contain affinity which let people feel close. harmless and being kind. The purpose of this study is looking for a method to combine those elements and to improve those to create a new harmless mascot for the townships. At the beginning of the research, the researchers will use Secondary Qualitative Study for the collection of mascot design. And analysis the color, and comfort elements, and combine the two data collection. After the completion of the data collection, researchers use focus groups to conduct interviews on design background students to get those who have Basic Aesthetics and Design Sensitivity for the mascot's opinion and the image of Yunlin local towns. The contents of the interview after the integration of the mascot in accordance with the results of the prototype design, prototype design is complete, the use of prototype for the comfort of the in-depth interview. As the research time and human, financial and other factors, all the township can't be the mascot design, therefore the study will output 1-3 township comfort mascot as a result.

Keywords: Comfort, Mascot Design, Yunlin County



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#### Introduction

## 1-1 Research Background

Animation in Japan has been becoming a flourish industry after World War II (GAO, 2015). It expands the character consumer market element of character creation, character merchandising, merchandising right, character authorization, etc. by the character which has been gradually mature. It becomes a new developing animation industry - character economy (3wyu.com, 2017). Character Economy orientates in two directions, distinction and resonates (Chen, 2015). Customers would be resonated through the interaction with the character, and build up the emotional connection.

Taiwan social structure changed, aging population, low birth rate, economic depression, high expenditure and the coldness of the society give the bread winner suffer from too much pressure that they have no way to vent. These factors produce a great amount of needs of comfort products (Lan, 2006). Comfort element is a kind of design with comfort and self-satisfaction function, which helps emotional resilience or recalling memories in deep. It is better to say this is the design people emotion and attribution rather than the goods (Chen, 2011). Comfort element character is being popular is because the consumption of comfort products helps people feel happy, relaxed. Consumers will get psychological satisfaction and companion (Yao, 2014). According to study, cartoon character is not only effect kids or youth. Once emotional connected, benefits generated. So that comfort element character is being popular as the life pressure is being increased (Li, 2014).

#### 1-2 Research Motive

Apart from spiritual sustenance in comfort element character, workers would choose some activities to relieve. According to survey form 1111 Job Bank "Ways of workers to relieve pressure", travel is the best way of top three which chosen by the masses. 97% interviewees agree travel helps to relieve pressure. Survey in "Taiwanese travel behavior 2015" by Taiwan Tourism Bureau, enjoy the nature landscape is the major activities when people go travel. Yunlin Township is regarding peasants as core, using a long time to positioning on "Agriculture Capital". No matter how Yunlin own rich agricultural resources and pure natural environment, according to Taiwan Tourism Bureau "Survey of Tourists in Taiwan consumption and activity trend, 104th Year of ROC calendar", Yunlin was ranked in 19th out of 22 Townships of all the attraction travel sights (Taiwan Tourism Bureau, 2013).

"Kawaii" which is a Japanese word means cute has been manipulated as a tool in marketing. Lots of the cultural icons and products are using big eyes and small mouth as a selling point. Product advertising would also combine with cute mascot as an element. Selling cute is a common marketing strategy, motivate customer to pay (Barrett, 2011). Japanese mascot's trend is rising up in Taiwan. Kawaii culture create many mascots, the original intention of the creation is to excite Japan tourism. Mascot with bright and vivacious characteristic would increase people's desire for go to that place. Besides, mascots with high popularity can bring new incomes for the district and supporting community activities development (Wang, 2015). "Kumamon" which is the mascot of Kumamoto ken Township in Japan as an example, he brings 90million TWD incomes by the merchandise (Chen & Gu, 2013). Ikuo Kabashima,

the governor of Kumamoto Ken Township said the mission of "Kumamon" is not to being famous, is to promote the place successfully. In 2011, the visitors form Kansai to Kumamoto ken has increased to 4.9 hundred thousand. And "Kumamon" also brings economic benefits amounted to 1244 million yen (Kabashima, 2014). The company supported financially by the mascot to attract the attention of consumers is not a new thing. Tatung company has launched "Tatung baby" as the company's mascot since 1969 (Jhang, 2016), it still being a well-known mascot in Taiwan. Judging from this the mascot can bring positive benefits in the publicity and facilitate tourism development.

## 1-3 Research Purpose

In order to promote the local characteristics of Yunlin County, stand out the reputation of agricultural capital, and solve the problem that publics are lacking of understanding of Yunlin County. Character and local products will be intergraded for the design, and head for field research, capture the landscape for color analysis. Combine the mascot and the local characteristics would impress visitors, mascots with cute outlook would help for promoting. This survey will pick the most impressive place of the visitors to execute first. The basic requirements of mascot are being kind and feel close to people, comfort is to let people feel harmless and warm. Find out the common elements between mascot and comfort and combine, strengthen the kindness of mascot. Let the visitors can be healed during the journey.

- 1. Analysis the key elements of designing a comfort properties mascot
- 2. Analysis the local catachrestic of Yunlin County
- 3. Draft the Yunlin County comfort properties mascot design

## 1-4 Limitations of the Study

Although Yunlin County has the official township mascot "Kimonchan", there is no mascot represent the villages or towns. Yunlin County got rich agricultural products but still lack of distinction, caused the tourism industry is weak due to the promotion is not enough. Yunlin County mascot which can utilize its potential and the towns are nearby as an advantage. Therefore this study chooses Yunlin County as a theme to design the mascot with local characteristic and local products. Due to the limited of time and manpower, this study cannot help all the villages and towns of Yunlin County to execute the design. It will pick 1-3 trail places of the most impressive place of the visitors to execute first, to see the feasibilities of the design method.



Picture1: Yunlin County's official mascot" Kimonchan"

## 1-5 Conceptual Framework



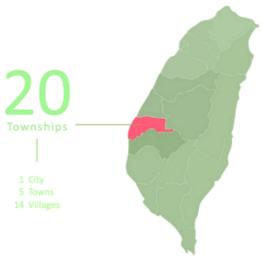
Picture2: Conceptual Framework

This study insert comfort element into local mascot design, to study the common characteristic between comfort and mascot. Explore how those elements can be combined, and strengthening the comfort characteristic of the mascot, let it function in promotion and publicity, additionally to comforting people. It can help to bring the tourism efficiency and to be comfort. Create a functional with local characteristic mascot through combining three main keys comfort elements, mascot and local. Let the mascot not only in use to promotion or publicity.

Role design performed in virtual concept, it display form of color, shape, and stimulate sense. Intrinsic value is main point for the role design (Gong, 2007). Color and shape is the first image to viewer, they can affect impression for viewer. So this research will focus on color and shape.

#### **Literature Review**

## 2-1 Yunlin County's Data



Picture3: About Yunlin County

Yunlin County, which located in south-west of Taiwan, north of Chianan Plain, west side of Taiwan Strait. It combined with one city, five towns, fourteen villages, total twenty towns and villages. Except Douliu city, Gukeng Township and Linnei Township are relatively in high elevation which located nearby the mountain, rest of the towns and villages are plain (Yunlin County Government). It has a great natural environment, fertile soil and water which suits for agricultural development. Every villages and towns produce their specific agricultural products. Yunlin County is also be the main provider of rice and vegetables in Taiwan, the tenant land is around 81 thousand hectare which account for 62% of the county (Huang, 2005). Yunlin County account 13.57% of agricultural industry, 14.96% of livestock farming in Taiwan, which has a great distribution for the industry (Liu, 2007). Although Yunlin County got rich agricultural products and natural environment, the tourism industry is weak.

Township	Local Specialty	Township	Local Specialty Potato · Dairy cow	
Douliu	Wendangrapefruit · Orange	Dounan		
Xiluo	Xiluo rice · Vegetable	Tuku	White asparagus	
Gukeng	Orange \( \) Dapi \( \) Mustard		Mustard	
Linnei	Loofah	Erlun	Melon · Rice	
Mailiau	Watermelon · Pork pig Dongshi		Asparagus	
Taixi	Quahog · Oyster Yuanchang Peanu		Peanut	
Kouhu	Peanut · Eel	Shuilin	Tomato	
Huwei	wei Garlic · Honey Lunbei Bitter gou		Bitter gourd · Dairy cow	
Beigang	Peanut	Baozhong	Watermelon	
Cihtog	Carambola	Sihu	Watermelon · Oyster	

Picture 4: Yunlin Townships Local Specialty Figure (Huang, 2005)



Picture5: Yunlin County Local Specialty Map 1 (Huang, 2005)



Picture6: Yunlin County Local Specialty Map 2(Yi, 2011)



Picrure7: Yunlin County Local Specialty Unified Map (this study sort out)

According to documents and chart's data, Yunlin County has a great supply of agricultural productions. The photo shown above is combining with documents" data. Towns and villages are divided in different color. This study will follow the specific agricultural products shown on the map above to finish the design.

## 2-2 Comfort Element Analysis

"癒す"is a Japanese verb means comfort, which has a clearly objective and planned. Therefore, once the products could satisfy comfort and comfort requirements, no matter in hearing, smell or vision ways should call them "Comfort series". In fact, there is no word in Chinese can really define this word (Lan, 2006). So this study will use the word "comfort" for the description.

Many companies in Japan design cute toys specifically. With different generation and background, hottest toys would have different definition. Design the characteristic for the characters, or to express the people mind at the moment is a powerful medicine to

heal their spirit for Japanese (Su, 2015). Comfort series character is being popular due to the pressure of the society is getting bigger. Consumers can be satisfied and comforted by comfort products. Comfort properties would personalize product, and let consumer empathic emotion to it (Jhang, 2016).

In order to meet the objectives of comfort and comfort, comfort properties products usually would in pink, pure, childish and simple (Li, 2014). Besides Pei-Yi Lin has also defined the vision of comfort: It should be comforting and smelting people's heart in positive support in mental from the vision. Comfort in drawing or characteristic should be clean, exquisite, fresh and bright with soft color tone (Lin, 2016). Hence comfort properties can brings positive emotions, Che-Chia Hsu has listed out the positive image of comfort properties toys in four aspects, shown in table below (Hsu, 2010).

Figure 1: positive image of comfort properties toys in 4 aspects (Che-Chia Hsu, 2010)

1 1801 0 1 Postuli V mings of Comment properties to join 1 topotos (end emiliation, 2010)		
Gentle	Use animal, sprout, baby and soft color tone that let people feel easily	
and affable	to close to.	
Innovative	People would feel good even though the outlook and interaction are unexpected.	
Leisurely	rely With static or no exaggeration movement, relax people and stand by their side.	
Natural Capture the sound or animal shape form the nature, simulate like standing there.		

Integrate the information of study, to heal, comfort characteristic, clean and simple image, bright and gentle should be the basis. Cute, simple, childish, rounded appearance with soft color tone would comfort people's vision, and bring positive emotion affection. Baby animal, sprout and baby are used to express affable characteristic. "Supernormal Stimuli" by Deirdre Barrett has mentioned "neoteny", which means primaries trait reserved till mutual. People will get attracted when the mature creature shows the primaries trait (Barrett, 2010). Therefore "primaries" characteristic make people think is adorable and the elements mentioned above will be the key point of the design.

## 2-3 Mascot Design Elements Analysis

"ゆるキャラ" is short term of "ゆるいマスコットキャラクター" in Japanese word means mascot character. Forepart of the word "ゆるい" is an adjective which describe hope people would love them and be relaxed at first sight(Su, 2015). "ゆる キャラ" translated by Mr. Jun Miura from English to Japanese word. He said it was translated for a local autonomous organization's event that to activate a village. The event PR named the products mascot — "ゆるキャラ", especially refer to costume. Mr. Jun Miurano has listed out three conditions of "ゆるキャラ".

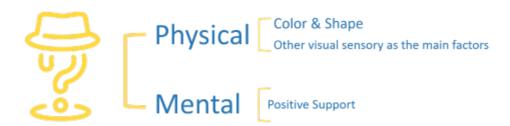
- 1. Can let people strongly felt love from hometown
- 2. Behavior, manner, movement is being unique and intangible
- 3. Enamored and leisurely and carefree

The word of mascot is representing characteristics and properties, so it should not be complicated. As long as to wisely use the image and keywords, and to be done after unified image with logical concept. Shape is easily imagined in brain. Therefore shape is a key of mascot (PUKUMUKU, 2013). Simple design can increase more memory points. Role design should able to show the character's personalities and characteristics, it can be an exaggerated or deformation design. Character identification is depending on modeling characteristic. On The other hand, mixing with different elements in the design can strengthening memory points of the role, but the body must be an animal that can deepen everyone's impression said the director of Japan local mascot association Shinsatsu Arakawa (Wang, 2015, quoted from the interview content).

The key to design mascot is the setting of mental and physical of the role. Role design performed in virtual concept, it display form of color, shape, and stimulate sense. Intrinsic value is main point for the role design, color applications will also affect the image and model of the story (Gong, 2007). We see seven colors composed in rainbow, they each have different wavelength and usage. Colors vibration will stimulate human body and heart, also deeply connection with sensory consciousness (CR & LF Institute, 2008). Using different color and form can bring viewers feeling completely different.

To explore the suitable modeling with role's personality, study shows it trend to rounded body shape of the role with cute, simple, lively, positive, politeness, filial piety and shy personality. Those are likely be inclined to lovely, lively, optimistic and rounded body would be advantage (Hong · Lin, 2016). Cute modeling generally has the following characteristics: fat, plump cheeks, big head, high forehead, short jaw, big eyes, and short limbs, tend to be baby (Yang, 2002). The entire characteristics mentioned above are just the same with "neoteny". In order to express affectionate elements, the comfort characteristics and mascot design are in inseparable relationship with "neoteny". The appearance and character will become cuter after "neoteny".

## 2-4 Conclusion



Picture7: According to Hong Pei Lins, 2008 (this study sort out)

The key to design mascot is the setting of mental and physical of the role. External appearance is designed with color, shape, and other visual sensory as the main factors. According the character to design the appearance with simple and high reorganization as a basis, mix with multiple elements especially animals which can deepen impression for everyone.

To strengthen the role of the lovely degree is same as comfort properties. Extend with "neoteny", rounded face and body, high forehead, short chin, as well as large eyes,

and short limbs, with clumsy action. Strengthen these characteristics of babies to being enamored. Usually would use baby animal, sprout and baby in clean, soft color tone to express affable characteristic. And to let everyone feel relax and to close to. The following study will continue with local products with the above design elements for the draft production.

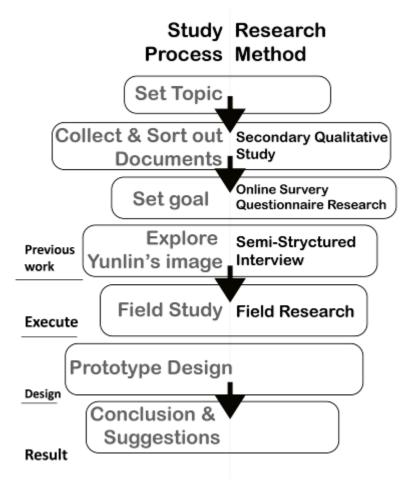
	Shape	Color
Physical	Cute · Children's interesting · Unexpected · Exaggerated or Deformation · Simple · Clean · Meticulous · Plump · Plump Cheeks · Big Head · High Forehead · Short Jaw · Big Eyes · Short Limbs, Tend to be baby. Capture the plants and animals shape form the nature: Like Animal, Sprout, Baby. Mix with multiple elements especially animals which can deepen impression for everyone.	Soft · Bright · Brisk · Pink Series
Mental	Hometown Lover · Neoteny · Humanity · Kind · pure · Children's interesting · Cute · Naive Vibrant · Proactive · Polite · filial piety · Timid · Optimistic	
Behavior	leisurely and carefree • Neoteny • unexpected • Static or No exaggeration's action • Behavior, manner, movement is being unique and intangible	
Emotion Resonance	Comfort · Comfortable · Relax · Pleasant · Melting · companion · Enamored · empathic emotion , positive support in mental from the vision.	

Picture8: Comfort Elements & Mascot Design Elements Table (this study sort out)

## Methodology

## **3-1 Study Process**

This study divided in four stages, previous work, execute, design and result. In the analysis stage will use secondary research method to collect and sort out documents in a short period. Defining stage will use focus group method because the interview would involve mascot image, color and comfort properties. Therefore focus group targets will specific to those students with design background for the interview. After collating the content of the interview would result the keywords for the design, then conceive and integrate with logical concept to create a prototype design.



Picture9: Study Process

#### 3-2 Research Tool

## 1. Secondary Data Analysis

Secondary data analysis is to collect data from existing literature and second-hand data, low cost and rapid is the advantages of the method 1 (Yang, 2005). Since the time of this study is limited, it is necessary to collect data of Yunlin Township attractions, mascot appearance and color, and comfort characteristics in a short period of time. Coupled with the following collation of the literature, the study will use secondary data analysis method which saves time and cost, and helps to obtain useful information in the shortest time.

## 2. Semi-structured Interview

Semi-structured Interview can be quantitative or qualitative. Researcher will draft the guide before the interview, it will basis on open-end question, guided interview, no limit of words and the order of questions, but it has to be related. Therefore, the questions and discussion will be flexible. (Lin & Yan & Chen, 2005)

## 3. Online Survey Questionnaire

The greatest strength of using the online survey is low cost but with high efficiency, data transfer instantly. Therefore, this study will use the online questionnaire to investigate public awareness of Yunlin Township and the highest visiting rate of the township and the reason.

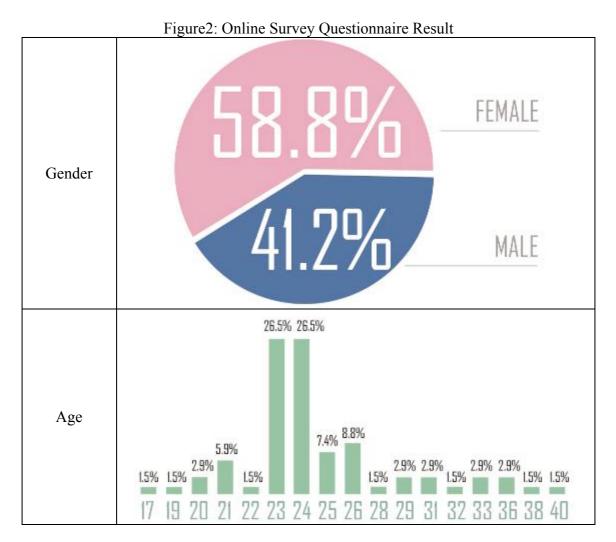
#### 4. Field Research

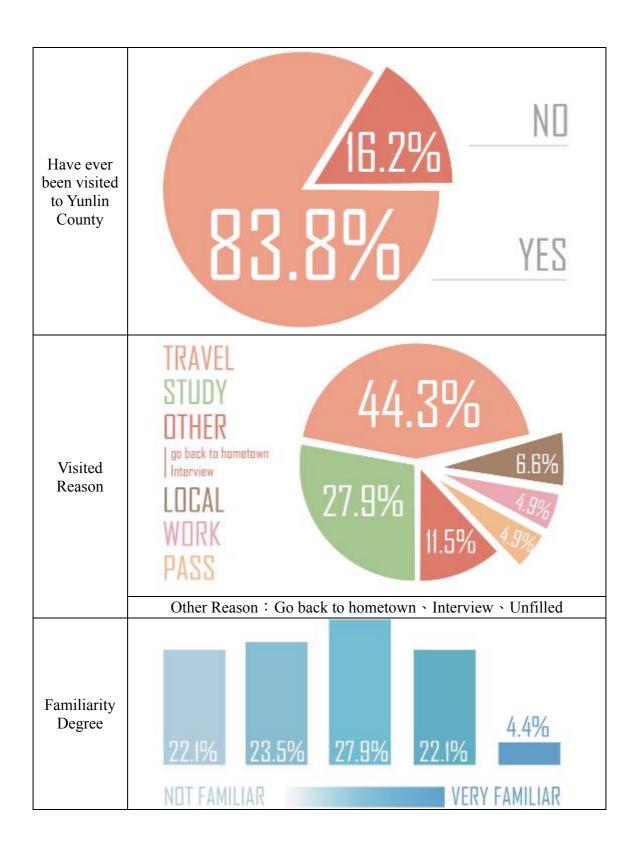
Field Research is a methodology base on Cultural anthropology and archaeology. Record the field data in person can strengthen the study. Field Research is a necessary sub process (Li, 2009). So this study will use field research and record the field by photographs and color analysis for reference.

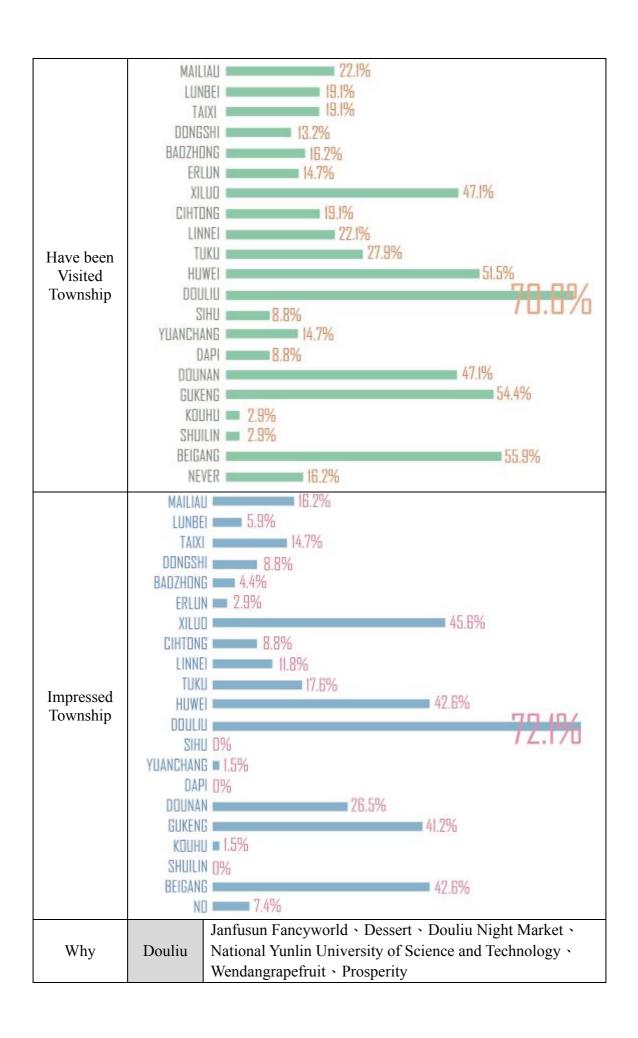
#### Results

## 4-1 Online Survey Questionnaire Result

This questionnaire is mainly used for pretest, to result public's level of awareness of Yunlin County. Questionnaire divided in three parts. The first part is baseline data. Second stage is awareness of Yunlin County, and whether they have visited Yunlin County. The last part is the townships that visitors will go and the most impressive place of Yunlin County when they arrived.







Huwei	Huwei Sugar Refinery National Formosa University Jianguo Village
Gukeng	Coffee
Mailiao	Liuqing Industrial Zone
Dounan	Fried Steamed Bread
Xiluo	Xiluo Bridge · Soy sauce · Xiluo Old Street
Tuku	Fried chicken
Beigang	Mazu Temples · Religion Festival

68 questionnaires has been collected. According to the results of the questionnaire, the visit rate of Yunlin County is high, and the mainly reasons is for travel. Only 3 people answered knows Yunlin County "very well", this shows most of the people do not know Yunlin County so much. The top three impressive townships are Douliu city, Xiluo Township, Beigang Township and Huwei Township which got the same vote. The study will choose three places for the prototype.

## **4-2 Semi-structured Interview Result**

Five interviewees, aged at 22-25. The purpose of the interview is to explore the overall image of Yunlin Township to foreigners. Result their first impression and feelings through their observation.

Question	Answer	
Yunlin overall image	Fantasy · Have Neofelis nebulosa · Backward · Air pollution · Agriculture Capital · Fruits and vegetables · Last Generation's Hometown · Warm · Night Market	
Yunlin Features Townships	Doullu - Huwei - Xiluo - Gukeng	
Township Color Image and First Im	pression	
Douliu Color Symbolism	liu Color Symbolism Blue · Light Blue · Green · Soil Color	
Douliu First Impression	Wendangrapefruit · National Yunlin University of Science and Technology · Douliu Railway Rear Station · School' s Mango Tree	
In impression 's Douliu Specialty	Wendangrapefruit · National Yunlin University of Science and Technology	
Huwei Color Symbolism	Orange · Yellow · Gray	
Huwei First Impression	Tiger · Huwei Sugar Refinery · Huwei Bridge · Towel Factory · Huwei High Speed Rail	
In impression's Huwei Specialty	Palm Puppets · Sugar Refinery's Wheat Ice · Towel · Meat ball	
Xiluo Color Symbolism	Grass Green · Red	
Xiluo First Impression	Xiluo Bridge - Field	
In impression's Xiluo Specialty	Rice - Soy sauce	
Gukeng Color Symbolism	Brown	
Gukeng First Impression	Huashan	
In impression 's Gukeng Specialty	Coffee	
Friendly · Comfort Image		
Color	Macaron Color · Blue Scheme · Orange · Red · Green	
Image	Cat · Kumamon · Soft Doll · Capybara · Bed · Slime	
Shape	Circle - Curve - Arc shape - Oval - Triangle	

Picture 10: Semi-structured Interview Result

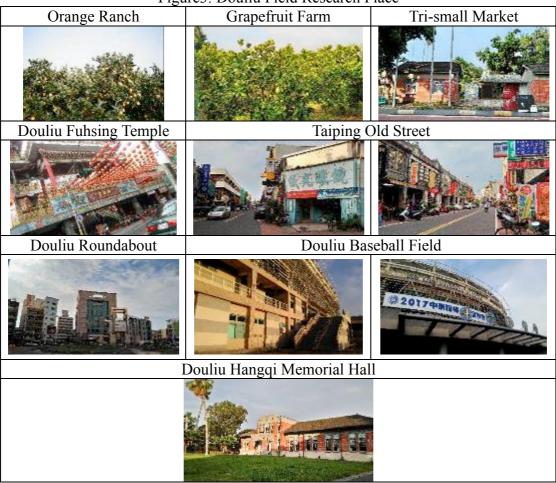
According to Semi-structured Interview result most of the outsiders are unfamiliar with Yunlin County. Compare the result with the previous literature review, they still got some linking parts. This study will integrate all the overlap elements as the keys of prototype design

#### 4-3 Field Research Result

The field research locations are refer to the recommendations of Yunlin government website. Refers to the recommended attractions on Yunlin County government website, 1-3 attractions will be selected, 5-10 photos will be taken for color analysis. With consider of the convenience and quickness, online tool "Pictaculos" will be used for color capture coordination by removing the black, white and repeated color. Consider the comfort characteristics creation, soft and visually comfortable color from the capture will be selected as the mascot design's reference color. The following is the field research location of the study:

## 4-3-1Field Research Place

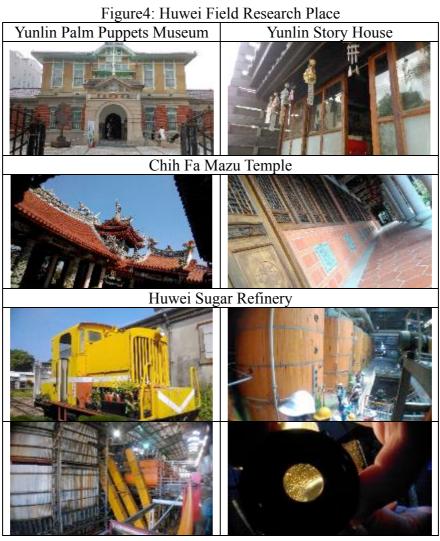
Figure3: Douliu Field Research Place



Fgure4: Xiluo Field Research Place







# 4-3-1 Color Analysis Result

Figure5: Douliu Color Analysis Result



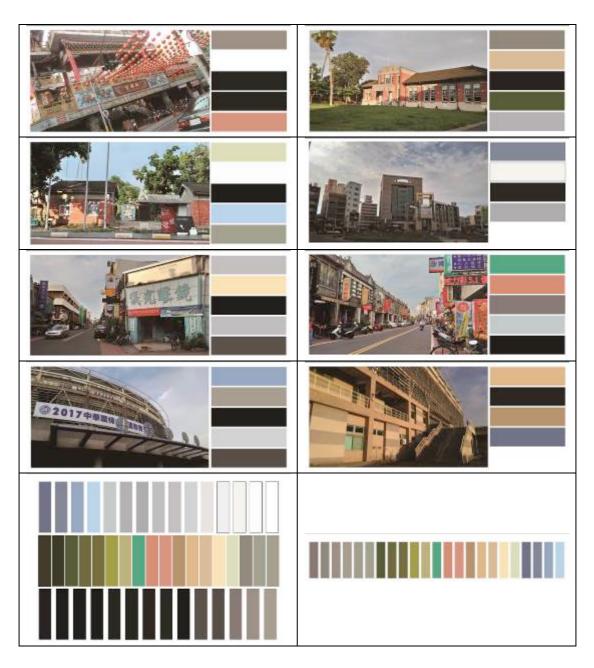
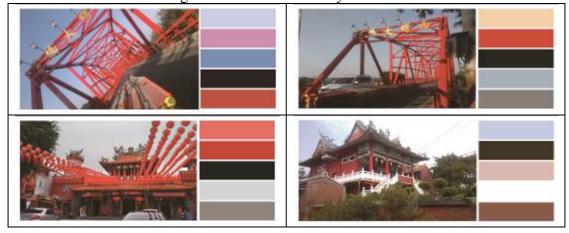


Figure6: Xiluo Color Analysis Result



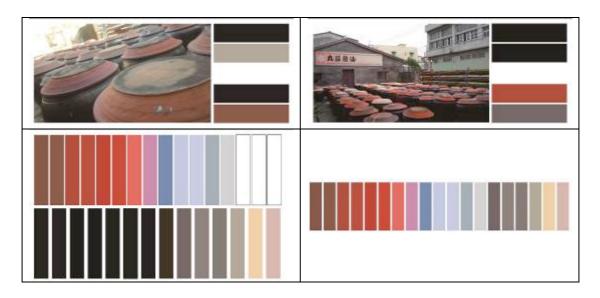


Figure7: Huwei Color Analysis Result

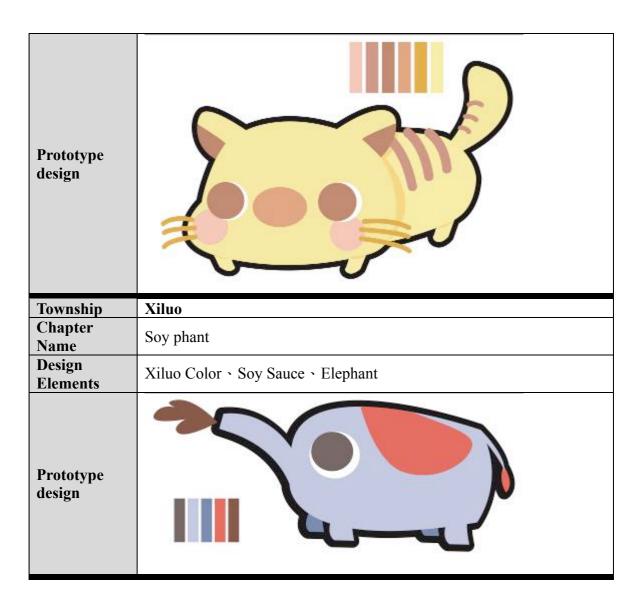




## 4-4 Design Result

Figure8: Mascot Properties

Figure8: Mascot Properties		
Township	Douliu	
Chapter Name	Wun dan dan	
Design Elements	Douliu Color \ Wendangrapefruit \ Dinosaur \ Oval \ Triangle	
Prototype design		
Township	Huwei	
Chapter Name	Sugar Tiger	
Design Elements	Huwei Color · Tiger	



## **Conclusion and Suggestions**

This research through Secondary Qualitative Study and Semi-structured Interview, obtain comfort townships mascot's design elements, through the design elements make design prototype .In Online Survey Questionnaire. There is a different between people been to Yunlin county and their impression of Yunlin county. Even 7.4 %'s people have no impression of all townships in Yunlin County. Because townships Features are not Highlighted, makes visitors have no impression, even though they visited the township. Researcher make a table of comfort elements and mascot design, result are all positive things. Cute mascot can improve publicity and fix tourism's problem in marketing, also raise everyone's image of Yunlin county .Next research will focus on comfort mascot's evaluate, Correct it, and use this way to design comfort mascot for other townships.

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