

Culture variables and their impact on furniture design process in globalization era

Introduction:

It's known that human is a product of his environment, his thoughts and desires are formed according to cultural trends related to his society, which come to be different pursuant to changes of natural and environmental factors, and its immense connecting with concepts of creed, customs, and traditions.

Although, the designer always tries to keep his thoughts released to reach creative solutions keep him distinguished, but always become imprisoned due to the cultural trends of his society which their impact appears in his works. This work need to be analyzed and interpreted to understanding positivism or negativism of the mentioned impact, especially under progress occurred to the world and made it as small village under globalization era.

That conflict between the meaning of globalization and the concept of "design identity" and it's applications as a creative activity coming from specific society and specific culture needs to be clarified and a careful study.

Thereof, the importance of this research is to study and analysis this relationship, and tray to put an integrated imagination to connect cultural concepts as variables and its influence on design under comprehensiveness and generality of globalization.

State of the art (Literature review):

There are a lot of researches, studies and books talking about the concept of globalization, where many opinions and different interpretations about the importance and extent of their impact on communities and societies.

Kofi Annan (former UN secretary-general) said, the earth will become, under globalization, as a small ship, in which the whole responsible for the part, the part responsible for establish the whole, the weak becomes more powerful by the strong, and the strong provides the weak with protection.

The only thing which does not differ by one is that the modern concept of globalization appeared at the first time in the United States of America, especially after the end of the Cold War era, and the economic transformations that have taken place in all the world. See Stiglitz (2002)

And through follow-up of many of these studies I can say that there are two main opposing opinions: The first one talking about the importance of globalization, which it will be led forces to save the poor economically and socially countries. See Bhagwati, (2004). But the second opinion says that it is a new tool of the occupation of poor countries and controls their resources and turns them into economic and social aftershocks. Accordingly, appears many trends like anti-globalization which refuses globalization and resists its ideas. Because they believe that its goals represented in wipe the civilized and social structure of people out and destroy people heritage, national identity, and self culture.

As well as the earlier studies, there are a lot of directions says that everyone is a product of his environment, culture, and when this person working as a creative, he must reflect his identity and his culture on his creation and on his products and the characteristics emanating the impact of culture must affect more or less so as not to become a pattern all the innovations.

This view contrasts when applied with the concept of globalization, from this point comes the importance of this research. Where the researcher will trying to resolve this controversy by studying the definitions of (Culture, identity, design process and globalization) and will analyzing a variety of designs of furniture that belonged to countries with a different cultures and attitudes in order to reach a clear result is given a specific limits to the designer to be able to work with the global trends without losing his identity and his character so as not to become all the designs in all the world as a repeated carbon copies.

Objectives of the research:

This research aims to studying three main points:

1. Analysis the mutual relationship between the cultural variable and Furniture design process which becomes different from place to another due to each society, its resource, needs, and ideology.

(The researcher will study this relation in Egypt, USA, Germany and China). And how do they relate to globalization?

2. Clarifying the relation between concept of globalization and the individual culture of which helps designer and directs him through design process (Especially in furniture design).
3. Access to a complete evaluation and a clear indication of the effect of globalization on the designer identity, so as he will enable to access to his designs in line with global trends without losing their identity, which will be changing from a society to another.

Hypotheses of the research:

This research based on a few main hypotheses which will be proven through the study, the most important ones represent in the following:

1. Society culture is formed though many inputs, the most importance ones are nature, ecological systems, religious and ideological trend, and it is affected by customs, traditions, and popular customs. Besides it is also affected by economic and political variables.
2. Products design is affected by changing of people cultural content (designer identity) which give each design own distinct character connected with society culture and trend. And product design itself contributes to the change.
3. Globalization had a great effect on all design and innovation works, which led to combining of many thoughts, trends, and needs, but it's necessary to show the designer self express which is differed according to each society, its culture and trend.

Methodology of the research:

The research based (in its general structure) on two main methods, first one represented in the *descriptive analytical method* which depends on reviewing and studying concept of culture (now and in the past), determining the most important input and resource to inspect to which scope it will affect on design, though that design models are analyzed by the researcher which belong to various cultures (Four countries) to know in which scope it's affected by natural and societal variables to reach a clear concept of how the cultural environment effect in the creation of the designer.

After that the researcher will examine the concept of globalization and analyzing its directions and its trends to clarify the extent of positive or negative effects on designer identity. Following that using the *experimental method* where researcher invests the results of analyzing to put a general frame through which the design can be positively completed keep up with the varied cultural trends without breaking globalization principal.

Work plan of the research (The approach):

Structure of the research represented in three main parts (During the study every part will be divided to a few of chapters) as following:

The first main part: where the researcher studying culture essence (now and in the past), to understand the most important resources, and knowing range of its changing and affect on economic and political factors which reflected positively or negatively on designers innovations.

The second main part: where the researcher analyzing the relation between the design as creative and innovative process and people cultural customs, where more than one culture trend are chosen and analysis some of their designers works to reach quantitative and descriptive signs and indicators through which results of the study can be generalized.

(The analytical study can be completed through comparison between Egyptian culture model & innovations of its designers, especially it's flowed up from civilized and cumulative store "In Furniture Design", German culture & design as an European distinct model, American culture & design in the capacity of liberal society has multi thoughts and trends, in addition to it consider relative modern in comparing with previous ones. And finally studying the design and culture in China because it considered as a very successful economic model. It is growing rapidly, bypassing much of border).

The third main part: where the researcher studying the concept of globalization and its effect on the designer self culture, which reflected on the design.

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