



DESIGN AND DEVELOPMENT THE JIAN SHUI PURPLE POTTERY FOR GENERATIONS
Y: A CASE STUDY OF YUN TAO CERAMICS STUDIO



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2024

การออกแบบและพัฒนาเครื่องปั้นดินเผาสีม่วงเจี้ยนส่วยสำหรับ คนเจนเนอเรชั่นวาย: กรณีศึกษา
เครื่องปั้นดินเผาหุนเถา



การค้นคว้าอิสระนี้เป็นส่วนหนึ่งของการศึกษาตามหลักสูตร
ศิลปศาสตรมหาบัณฑิต สาขาวิชาการออกแบบเพื่อธุรกิจ
วิทยาลัยนวัตกรรมการสื่อสารสังคม มหาวิทยาลัยศรีนครินทรวิโรฒ
ปีการศึกษา 2567
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An Independent Study Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of MASTER OF ARTS
(Master of Arts (Design for Business))
College of Social Communication Innovation, Srinakharinwirot University
2024
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BY
ZHAO ZIGE

HAS BEEN APPROVED BY THE GRADUATE SCHOOL IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT
OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE MASTER OF ARTS
IN MASTER OF ARTS (DESIGN FOR BUSINESS) AT SRINAKHARINWIROT UNIVERSITY

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Author	ZHAO ZIGE
Degree	MASTER OF ARTS
Academic Year	2024
Thesis Advisor	Dr. Pilan Poonyaprapha

This study is aimed at exploring how traditional Jian Shui purple pottery can be innovatively designed to meet the aesthetic, cultural, and functional preferences of Generation Y consumers in Yunnan Province. The research applies a user-centered design (UCD) approach combined with the New Craft Design Theory to guide the design process. Two primary research objectives guide this study: (1) to identify the ceramic design needs and consumption habits of Generation Y, and (2) to develop new design solutions for Jian Shui purple pottery. Through a mixed-methods approach including survey questionnaires, and expert interviews, this study identified five key design dimensions: functionality, cultural symbolism, personalization, sustainability, and modern aesthetics. These were validated by empirical data from 102 Generation Y respondents and feedback from three ceramic design experts. Based on the findings, three design prototypes were created, and one final design was refined through iterative feedback and expert evaluation. In conclusion, the study finds that Generation Y consumers value design that combines minimalism and practicality with emotional resonance, local cultural identity, and ecological awareness. The project contributes to the ongoing transformation of traditional crafts by offering a design strategy that balances tradition with innovation, thus providing a viable pathway for the revitalization of Jian Shui purple pottery in contemporary markets.

Keyword :

Jian Shui purple pottery, Generation Y, Design and Development, Yun Tao Ceramics Studio

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to Dr. Pilan Poonyaprapha, my academic advisor at the College of Social Communication Innovation, Srinakharinwirot University, for his unwavering support, insightful feedback, and patient guidance throughout the entire process of this research. His academic rigor and creative perspective have been instrumental in shaping the direction and depth of this study.

This research would not have been possible without the contributions of the ceramic artists Mr. Li Weizhong, Mr. Ma Xingyun, and Ms. Zeng Dandan, whose professional expertise greatly enriched the design development and evaluation process. I am also sincerely thankful to all survey participants for their valuable input, as well as to my family and friends for their continuous encouragement and emotional support during this academic journey.

ZHAO ZIGE

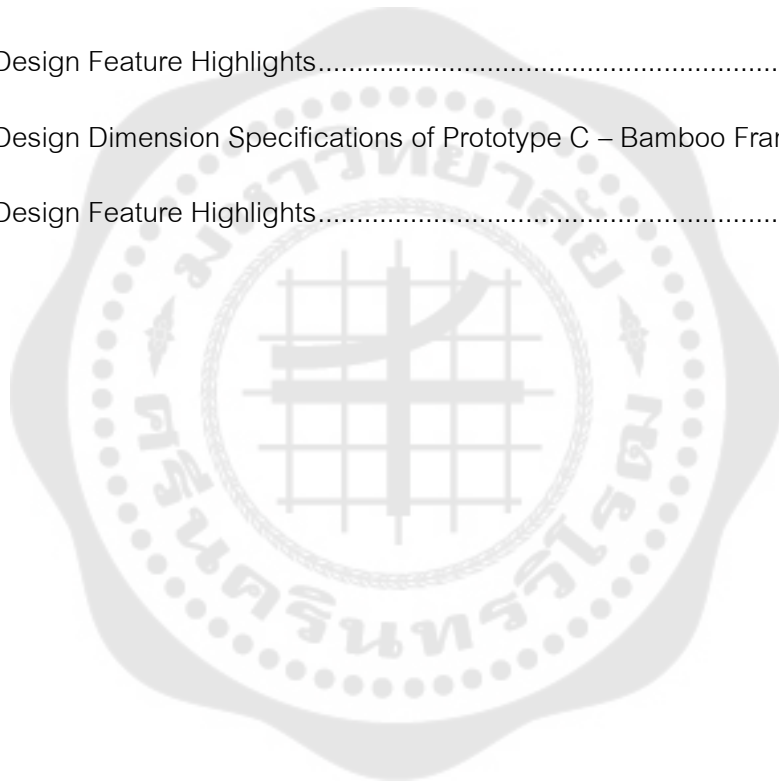
TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
ABSTRACT	D
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.....	E
TABLE OF CONTENTS.....	F
LIST OF TABLES.....	H
LIST OF FIGURES	I
CHAPTER 1 INTRODUCTION	1
Research Background	1
Research Objectives.....	6
Scope of the study:	6
Keywords: Jian Shui purple pottery, Generation Y, Design and Development, Yun Tao Ceramics Studio	7
Benefits of the study:	7
Research Framework	8
CHAPTER 2 LITERATURE REVIEW.....	9
1. Generation Y Consumption Habits.....	9
2. Cultural Identity of the Chinese Generation Y	11
3. Trends in Modern Ceramic Design	12
4. History and Craftsmanship of Jian Shui Purple Pottery	14
5. User-Centered Design Theory (UCD)	16
6. New Craft Design Theory	18
7. Research Articles	20

CHAPTER 3 RESEARCH METHODS.....	23
Step 1: Identifying Design Needs of Generation Y.....	24
Step 2: Constructing the Design Framework.....	25
Step 3: Creating Three Design Prototypes	25
Step 4: Expert Feedback and Prototype Selection	26
Step 5: Finalize and Refine the Design.....	26
CHAPTER 4 DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH RESULTS	28
Step 1: To analyze the needs and preferences of Generation Y for Jian Shui purple pottery.....	28
Step 2: To Construct a Data-Driven Design Framework for Jian Shui Purple Pottery Targeting Generation Y	49
Step 3: To create 3 prototypes.	52
Step 4: Expert Feedback and Evaluation	67
Step 5. Finalize and Refine the Design.....	70
CHAPTER 5 CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.....	78
5.1 Conclusions.....	78
5.2 Discussion	80
5.3 Research Contributions	82
5.4 Recommendations for Future Research	83
REFERENCES.....	84
APPENDIX	88
VITA	96

LIST OF TABLES

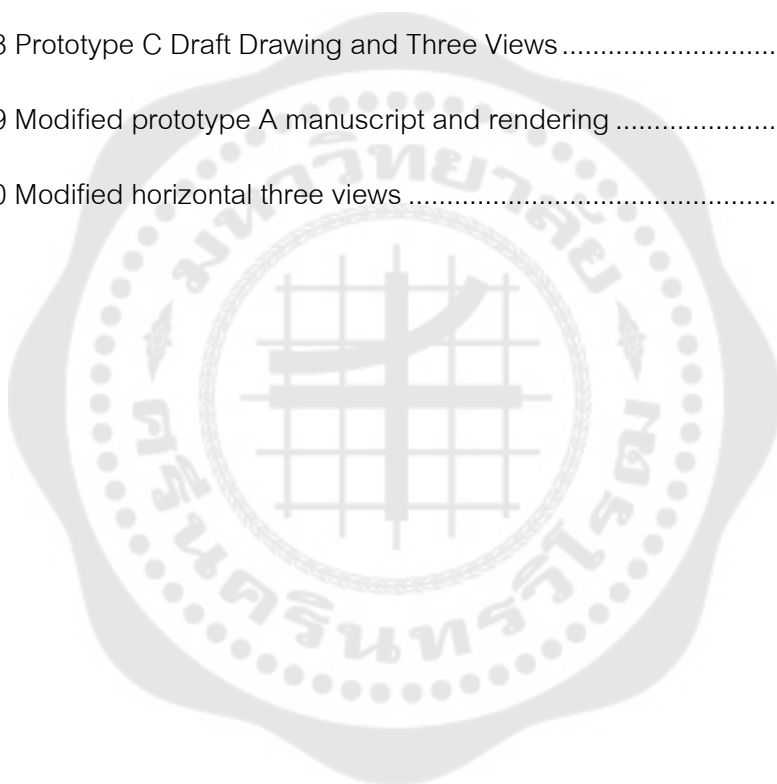
	Page
Table 1 Design Dimension Specifications of Prototype A – Mountain and Flow Teapot .	55
Table 2 Design Feature Highlights.....	58
Table 3 Design Dimension Specifications of Prototype B – Segmented Landscape Vase	60
Table 4 Design Feature Highlights.....	62
Table 5 Design Dimension Specifications of Prototype C – Bamboo Frame Planter.....	64
Table 6 Design Feature Highlights.....	66



LIST OF FIGURES

	Page
Figure 1 Lifestyle and aesthetic orientation of Generation Y consumers.	2
Figure 2 Traditional carving and polishing techniques in Jian Shui purple pottery.	5
Figure 3 Age Distribution of Generation Y	33
Figure 4 Gender Distribution of the respondents	33
Figure 5 Occupation Distribution	34
Figure 6 Interviewer Income Level	34
Figure 7 Familiarity with Jian Shui Pottery	35
Figure 8 Frequency of Ceramic Purchases	36
Figure 9 Factors to consider when purchasing ceramic products	36
Figure 10 Attitude towards customized ceramic products.....	37
Figure 11 Preferred Purchases Channels	38
Figure 12 Attitude towards traditional cultural elements	38
Figure 13 Preferred style of ceramic products	39
Figure 14 Attitude toward personalized/customized ceramics	39
Figure 15 Attitude towards modern design	40
Figure 16 Attitude toward modernization and innovation of traditional crafts	41
Figure 17 Attitude of integrating traditional craftsmanship and modern design.....	41
Figure 18 Environmental friendly materials	42
Figure 19 Product practicality concerns	43
Figure 20 Functionality vs. Aesthetics.....	43
Figure 21 Kawagarbo Snow Mountain	54

Figure 22 Dian Lake	54
Figure 23 Prototype A Draft Drawing	56
Figure 24 Prototype A Three Views.....	57
Figure 25 Yuan Yang Rice Terraces	59
Figure 26 Prototype B Draft Drawing and Three Views	61
Figure 27 Editor Pattern Material.....	63
Figure 28 Prototype C Draft Drawing and Three Views	65
Figure 29 Modified prototype A manuscript and rendering	76
Figure 30 Modified horizontal three views	76



CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Research Background

As an important representative of Chinese ceramic art, Jian Shui purple pottery has a long history and unique craft tradition. Jian Shui purple pottery originated in the Yuan Dynasty and has a history of more than 700 years. It is named because it is produced in Jian Shui, Yunnan. It is made of high-quality purple clay and made through exquisite handcrafts. Its characteristics are dignified shape, calm color, and delicate texture (Zhou & Yuchun, 2024). The production process of Jian Shui purple pottery is complicated and delicate, mainly including mud selection, blank making, carving, polishing, and firing. Among them, the unique inlay process and knife carving decoration are the most famous. The carving technique of purple pottery is meticulous and often takes landscapes, flowers and birds, and poems as themes, which fully reflects the profound connotation of Chinese traditional culture (Zhou & Yuchun, 2024). During the firing process, Jian Shui purple pottery is famous for its unglazed polishing process. Through multiple manual polishing, the surface of the pottery is as smooth as a mirror and radiant. Due to the complex process and the high level of craftsmanship required, Jian Shui purple pottery is known as the "Jade in Pottery," and its artistic value and collection value are highly respected. Today, Jian Shui purple pottery is not only an important carrier of Chinese traditional culture, but also gradually becomes an important resource for the innovation and development of contemporary ceramic art. In the context of contemporary design, how to retain the essence of Jian Shui purple pottery's traditional craftsmanship while incorporating modern design concepts has become the focus of ceramic artists and designers.

The production process of Jian Shui purple pottery is complex and delicate, mainly including the collection and processing of mud materials, the molding of the blank, carving and decoration, glazing and firing. The following are some traditional crafts and decorative techniques in the production of Jian Shui purple pottery:

1. Carving and filling craft

2. Painting craft
3. Mud material preparation
4. Firing process

Generation Y, also known as Millennials, refers to individuals born between 1980 and 1999. As digital natives, they grew up during the rapid expansion of the internet, smartphones, and global media, which has profoundly shaped their consumption behaviors, values, and aesthetic preferences. Unlike previous generations that prioritized durability or affordability, Generation Y consumers place greater emphasis on emotional resonance, cultural symbolism, and lifestyle alignment in their product choices.



Figure 1 Lifestyle and aesthetic orientation of Generation Y consumers.

Source From: <https://www.sisinternational.com/publications/emergence-generation-y/>

In terms of design preferences, Generation Y favors minimalist forms, intuitive usability, and personalized features. They are drawn to products that allow them to

express their identity, support sustainability, and engage with cultural narratives. Research shows that this generation often evaluates the value of a product not only based on physical quality but also on its symbolic meaning and brand storytelling (Yinghan, 2019). Moreover, their purchasing decisions are highly influenced by peer recommendations and online platforms such as Instagram, Pinterest, and TikTok, which often serve as design trendsetters.

Culturally, this generation exhibits a renewed interest in heritage crafts—but with a twist. They are not looking to replicate tradition; rather, they are interested in seeing how traditional craftsmanship can be reimagined through modern design language. This shift presents both a challenge and an opportunity for artisans and designers working with traditional forms like Jian Shui purple pottery. To effectively connect with Generation Y, ceramic products must balance historical authenticity with innovation, offering functionality, aesthetics, and emotional connection all at once.

In 2022, Jian Shui County steadily promoted the construction of the infrastructure project of Jian Shui Purple Pottery National Cultural Industry Demonstration Park, implemented the upgrading and renovation project of Jian Shui Purple Pottery Creative Park, and 4 purple pottery enterprises were selected as provincial intangible cultural heritage workshops. A purple pottery e-commerce entrepreneurship incubation base and ecommerce product selection center were built, and the purple pottery ecommerce sales exceeded 100 million yuan. At the end of the year, there were 2,536 purple pottery production and sales enterprises and self-employed individuals in the county, and the total output value of the purple pottery industry exceeded 5 billion yuan. (Honghe local government, 2022)

The Yun Tao Ceramics Studio is in the Guandu Ancient Town of Kunming City and was founded by Yunnan ceramic artist Ma Xingyun. The main mission of the studio is to inherit and promote the rich ethnic and folk ceramic culture of Yunnan. It not only displays well-known ceramic works from all over Yunnan, such as Jian Shui purple pottery also collects more than 800 ceramic artworks. These works were carefully

created by many local Yunnan ceramic masters, reflecting the unique charm of Yunnan ceramic culture.

Although Jian Shui purple pottery occupies an important position in ceramic art with its profound cultural heritage and exquisite craftsmanship, with the changes of the times, especially in the market facing Generation Y, traditional Jian Shui purple pottery products have gradually shown a trend that is inconsistent with the aesthetic tastes of contemporary young people. Generation Y consumers pay more attention to the personalization, innovation, and fit of products with their own cultural identity. However, the existing Jian Shui purple pottery products of the "Yun Tao" ceramic studio mainly continue the traditional design style and craftsmanship. According to an interview with Mr. Ma Xingyun, the head of the Yun Tao Ceramic Studio, "There are almost no Generation Y consumers coming to choose products, and the primary customers in the store are mainly middle-aged tea lovers, with an average age of 40 to 50 years old" (Personal Interview, 2024). Although the pottery retains the artistic characteristics with a long history, it is difficult to effectively stimulate the interest and purchase desire of the new generation of consumers. This disconnection phenomenon not only limits the development potential of Jian Shui purple pottery in the young market but also affects the inheritance and innovation of this traditional craft to a certain extent. Therefore, exploring how to adjust the design of Jian Shui purple pottery to better meet the aesthetic needs of Generation Y has become an important topic in current research and practice.



Figure 2 Traditional carving and polishing techniques in Jian Shui purple pottery.

Source From: https://www.sohu.com/a/608561304_121614154

According to the types of Jian Shui purple pottery collections, they can be roughly divided into the following categories:

1. Tea sets: including teapots, teacups, tea cans, etc.
2. Appreciation vessels: including vases, scrolls, gourd bottles, etc.
3. Craft ornaments: including ceramic sculptures, ceramic plate paintings, etc.
4. Limited edition artworks: such as the "Eight Scenic Spots of Guandu" series gourd bottles, the "Heart Sutra" root art pot, etc.

The main significance of this study is to explore the inheritance and innovation of Jian Shui purple pottery, a traditional craft, in contemporary design, especially for the unique needs and preferences of the Y generation consumer group. As the main consumer group in the current market, the Y generation shows a high degree of attention to cultural heritage and personalized design. Through an in-depth study of the trends and characteristics of the ceramic art of the Y generation in Yunnan Province, this paper aims to understand the aesthetic orientation and consumption demand of this group for ceramic art, and then provide a theoretical basis and practical guidance for

the design and development of Jian Shui purple pottery. In addition, this study is also committed to designing and developing Jian Shui purple pottery works that meet the aesthetic and functional needs of the Y generation, combining modern design concepts with traditional crafts to create innovative ceramic products that not only reflect the cultural connotation of Jian Shui purple pottery, but also attract young consumer groups. Through this study, we hope to provide new perspectives and strategies for the development of Jian Shui purple pottery in the contemporary market, thereby promoting the modernization transformation of this traditional craft and ensuring its continued inheritance and development in the context of the new era.

Research Objectives

1. To identify the ceramic design trends and consumption behaviors of Generation Y in Yunnan Province.
2. To design and develop the Jian Shui purple pottery for Generation Y.

Scope of the study:

This study focuses on Generation Y consumers in Yunnan Province, aged between 25 and 40, who have an interest in tea culture or are ceramic collectors. The research explores their design preferences and expectations toward Jian Shui purple pottery. In addition to targeting this demographic, the scope of study also aligns with the following themes introduced in the literature review (Chapter 2):

- Generation Y Consumption Habits
- Cultural Identity of the Chinese Generation Y
- Trends in Modern Ceramic Design
- History and Craftsmanship of Jian Shui Purple Pottery
- User-Centered Design Theory (UCD)
- New Craft Design Theory

This multi-dimensional approach ensures that the research reflects both theoretical depth and practical relevance in designing traditional ceramics for modern users.

Keywords: Jian Shui purple pottery, Generation Y, Design and Development, Yun Tao Ceramics Studio

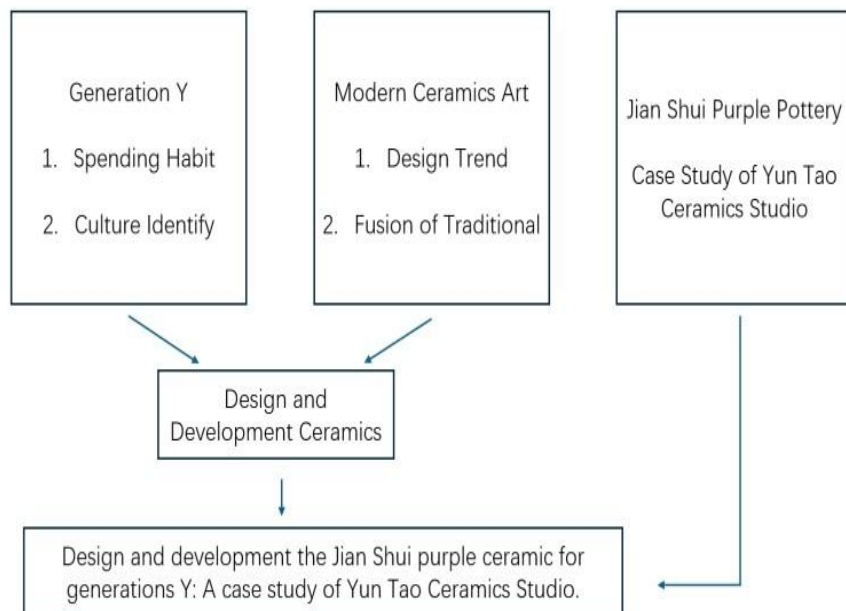
Benefits of the study:

By deeply analyzing the consumption characteristics and aesthetic needs of Generation Y, this study will help understand the unique preferences of this generation of young consumers for ceramic art and provide targeted design directions for ceramic designers and craftsmen.

The research will explore the possibility of integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern design concepts, promote the innovative development of Jian Shui purple pottery, and make it better adapt to the needs of the contemporary market. This will not only help enhance the market competitiveness of the "Yun Tao" ceramic studio, but also provide a reference for the sustainable development of the entire Jian Shui purple pottery industry, ensuring that this traditional craft will be revitalized among the new generation of consumers.

The results of this study will provide reference for the modernization transformation of other traditional handicrafts and provide valuable cases and theoretical support for how to achieve the integration of cultural heritage and innovation in the context of globalization.

Research Framework



CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter includes the theory, the concept, and the research papers that relate to “Design and Development the Jian Shui Purple Ceramic for Generations Y” as follows:

1. Generation Y Consumption Habits
2. Cultural Identity of the Chinese Generation Y
3. Trends in Modern Ceramic Design
4. History and Craftsmanship of Jian Shui Purple Pottery
5. User-Centered Design Theory
 - 5.1 Donald Norman’s Cognitive Load and Intuitive Design
 - 5.2 Jesse James Garrett’s five-factor user experience model
6. New Craft Design Theory
7. Research Articles

1. Generation Y Consumption Habits

Generation Y (Millennials) refers to the generation born from the early 1980s to the late 1990s. As the main group in the current consumer market, its consumption habits are significantly different from those of previous generations. According to research by (Sethuraman et al., 2023), the consumption behavior of Generation Y is profoundly affected by globalization and digital technology. This generation grew up in an era of information explosion, and the Internet and digital platforms have become the main ways for them to obtain information and make consumption decisions. They tend to obtain reviews of products and services through social media and interact with other consumers on these platforms, thus forming a consumption style centered on socialization and interaction (Duralia, 2024). This digital consumption behavior not only accelerates the dissemination of information but also makes communication between brands and consumers more direct and immediate.

In addition, the consumption behavior of Generation Y also shows strong personalized needs. Twenge et al., pointed out that Generation Y pays more attention to

individual expression and selfidentity, especially in the fields of art and design (Twenge et al., 2008). They tend to choose products that can reflect personal values and unique styles. This generation pursues personalized and customized goods and hopes that products can reflect their personal identity and lifestyle (Parment, 2012). Therefore, when designing and promoting products, brands must pay more attention to product differentiation and personalization to satisfy this generation's pursuit of uniqueness.

At the same time, Generation Y also attaches great importance to the social responsibility and cultural significance of brands. Research by Schroeder shows that Generation Y consumers not only pay attention to the quality and functionality of products but also hope that brands can convey social responsibility, environmental protection concepts, and cultural connotations (Schroeder et al., 2015). This means that Generation Y is more likely to be attracted to brands that reflect sustainable development, social responsibility and cultural identity in their design and manufacturing processes.

Another study also showed that Generation Y pays more attention to experience and social interaction during the consumption process. Ordun pointed out that the consumption behavior of Generation Y is not only to obtain material products, but they also value the experience and emotional satisfaction brought by the consumption process (Ordun, 2015). For example, consumption forms such as travel, cultural experiences, and artistic activities are very popular among this generation (Jeff Fromm & Garton, 2013). This experience-oriented consumption habit prompts brands to not only provide high-quality products but also create an emotionally resonant consumption experience.

In summary, the previous concepts and studies describe that the consumption habits of Generation Y are characterized by digitalization, personalization, socialization and experience. They obtain information through the Internet and social media, pay more attention to individual expression and brand social responsibility, and tend to obtain emotional satisfaction through consumption experience. This series of behavior patterns provides new directions for brands in designing and promoting products,

especially in the field of combining traditional handicrafts with modern design. How to meet the needs of Generation Y for personality, culture and experience has become the key to the success of enterprises.

2. Cultural Identity of the Chinese Generation Y

The cultural identity of Generation Y in China is closely related to the globalized and multicultural background in which they live. Research shows that Generation Y's pursuit of cultural identity shows more diversified and complex characteristics. Chen pointed out that Generation Y was influenced by different cultures during their growth, primarily through the global dissemination of the Internet and social media. Their cultural identity is no longer limited to a single local culture but shows openness and acceptance of global culture(Chen & Zhang, 2010). This cultural diversity enables them to express their personal identity in various ways and find a sense of identity from multiple cultures.

In addition, Generation Y shows a strong interest in the revival of traditional culture. According to Zukin, although Generation Y is influenced by modernization and globalization, their pursuit and respect for traditional culture have not decreased. Instead, they are more inclined to reinterpret traditional culture through modern methods(Zukin, 2010). This trend is particularly reflected in the field of art and design. Generation Y hopes to express themselves by integrating modern design and traditional cultural elements. Zukin further pointed out that when choosing cultural products, Generation Y often pays attention to how these products inherit the essence of traditional culture and present new ideas through the language of modern design(Zukin, 2010). This cultural revival trend of Generation Y not only reflects their emphasis on cultural heritage but also reflects their exploration of self-identity in contemporary society.

At the same time, Generation Y's recognition of cultural identity also shows a strong demand for personalization. Gonzalez-Fuentes pointed out that in the context of globalization, Generation Y seeks to express its unique cultural identity through

consumption behavior and cultural products(Gonzalez-Fuentes, 2019). They not only hope to reflect their cultural identity through consumption but also hope to find a unique way of expressing their personality in the diversity of global culture. Cultural products such as artworks, handicrafts, and design works have become an important medium through which Generation Y can express their cultural identity. Especially when personalized and customized products are becoming increasingly popular, brands need to provide products that can combine traditional culture with modern design to meet the needs of this generation of consumers.

As studied by various researchers, the cultural identity of Generation Y is diverse, personalized, and concerned about the revival of traditional culture. In the context of globalization, they express their cultural identity through modern design, artistic products, and consumer behavior. They not only pursue the inheritance and innovation of traditional culture but also attach importance to the brand's performance in social responsibility and sustainable development. For brands, how to combine traditional culture with modern design will be the key to attracting Generation Y consumers.

3. Trends in Modern Ceramic Design

The development trend of modern ceramic design shows the integration of traditional craftsmanship and modern design concepts and promotes the transformation of ceramics as an art medium and functional object. In recent years, with the diversification of global design concepts, ceramic design has not only changed in form and function but also shown more diversity and innovation in cultural expression.

First, minimalism and functional design have gradually become one of the mainstream trends. According to Leman, modern ceramic design is increasingly moving towards minimalism(Leman, 2022). Designers use simple lines and simplified shapes to make ceramic works present the aesthetics of contemporary art while retaining traditional craftsmanship. This design trend not only reflects the pursuit of a simple lifestyle in modern society but also reflects consumers' demand for a combination of

practicality and aesthetics(Sennett, 2008). Minimalist ceramic works often highlight the essence of the work and the natural beauty of the material through simple shapes, single colors and design techniques without unnecessary decoration.

Secondly, cultural expression and personalized design have become important features of the development of modern ceramics. According to Richerson & Lee, modern ceramic design pays more and more attention to expression through personalization and cultural symbols(Richerson & Lee, 2018). Designers often combine local culture, personal experience, and modern art to tell unique cultural stories through ceramics. This trend of cultural expression in ceramic design can effectively attract consumers who value cultural identity and personalized expression.

Finally, cross-cultural integration also plays an important role in modern ceramic design. According to Nichetti et al., global design language promotes the integration of different cultural elements in ceramic design. Many designers create ceramic works with global cultural characteristics by combining traditional craftsmanship with modern technology(Nichetti et al., 2019). This cross-cultural design method not only makes ceramic works more competitive in the international market but also makes it an important medium for cultural exchange.

The review of trends of modern ceramic design provides an important reference for the innovation of Jian Shui purple pottery. Under the trend of minimalism and functional design, Jian Shui purple pottery can retain its exquisite carving craftsmanship by simplifying the shape and decoration, while being more in line with the pursuit of simple aesthetics by modern consumers. In addition, Jian Shui purple pottery can learn from the concept of cultural expression and personalized design, reinterpret its traditional cultural connotation by incorporating modern design elements, and attract Generation Y consumers who focus on individual expression and cultural identity. The trend of cross-cultural integration also provides a direction for Jian Shui purple pottery to open the international market, and by combining other cultural symbols and design elements, it can have stronger international competitiveness.

4. History and Craftsmanship of Jian Shui Purple Pottery

Jian Shui Purple Pottery, rooted in the rich historical and cultural heritage of Yunnan province, has a history dating back over 700 years to the Yuan dynasty(Wenjia, 2024). As one of China's renowned ceramic traditions, Jian Shui pottery has evolved through various historical phases, blending artistry with practical craftsmanship to develop its distinct identity in the world of ceramics.

Jian Shui purple pottery has a long history and is an important part of Yunnan ceramics. During the Nanzhao period, a relatively developed pottery industry had already been established. By the time of the Dali Kingdom, mature celadon ceramics could be produced. Starting from the Qing Dynasty, Jian Shui began to produce high-temperature unglazed fine pottery. It gained market popularity through a unique blend of calligraphy and painting art styles, and its market value became quite high(Xingyun & Zige, 2024).

The material used in Jian Shui Purple Pottery is a unique type of clay found only in the region, known for its rich, iron-heavy content. This natural composition gives the pottery its characteristic deep purple-black color, setting it apart from other ceramic traditions in China. The artisans meticulously prepare the clay, refining it through multiple processes to ensure its plasticity and smoothness for the sculpting phase(Xingyun & Zige, 2024).

One of the most defining features of Jian Shui Purple Pottery is its engraving and polishing techniques. Unlike other types of pottery that rely on glaze for finishing, Jian Shui pottery is known for its "no-glaze polish" process, where artisans painstakingly polish the surface of the pottery by hand, creating a mirror-like shine. This technique, combined with detailed engraving work, gives each piece a unique blend of smoothness and intricate design. Common decorative motifs include traditional Chinese landscapes, bamboo, flowers, and calligraphy, all of which reflect the deep cultural roots and artistic sensibilities of the region(Xingyun & Zige, 2024).

Furthermore, the carving techniques used in Jian Shui pottery are often multi-layered and can be filled with colored clay to highlight the detailed patterns. The

process of adding layers of different clay colors adds a distinct visual depth to the pottery, making the designs more vivid and lifelike. The skill required to achieve this level of intricacy is a testament to the dedication and expertise of Jian Shui artisans, whose craftsmanship has been passed down through generations(Xingyun & Zige, 2024).

The firing process also plays a crucial role in the creation of Jian Shui pottery. It involves a high-temperature firing method in kilns that allows the natural iron content in the clay to interact with the heat, resulting in the deep purples and blacks that define Jian Shui Purple Pottery's aesthetic. Precise control of temperature and firing duration is essential to achieving the desired effect, making this stage one of the most challenging aspects of production.

Over time, Jian Shui Purple Pottery has transcended its utilitarian origins to become a symbol of artistic mastery and cultural heritage. In recent years, artisans have started experimenting with more modern designs while retaining the traditional craftsmanship techniques, allowing this ancient art form to remain relevant in contemporary times(Xingyun & Zige, 2024).

In conclusion, Jian Shui Purple Pottery represents a harmonious blend of tradition and innovation, with its deep historical roots and sophisticated craftsmanship techniques. From its origins as a daily-use item to its modern-day status as an art form, Jian Shui pottery has adapted through the centuries while maintaining its core identity. The unique no-glaze polish, intricate carving techniques, and high-temperature firing process define its exceptional aesthetic and durability. As modern design influences continue to shape the future of Jian Shui Purple Pottery, it remains a vibrant representation of Chinese cultural heritage and artisanal skill. By integrating both traditional craftsmanship and contemporary aesthetics, Jian Shui pottery is poised to capture the interest of both domestic and international markets, ensuring its longevity as a cherished art form.

5. User-Centered Design Theory (UCD)

As a form of ceramic art with a long history, Jian Shui purple pottery has a profound cultural heritage in its design and craftsmanship. However, in the face of the contemporary young generation, especially the Y generation consumers, innovation is still needed to meet their needs and aesthetic preferences. The User-Centered Design (UCD) theory emphasizes that design must be centered on user needs to ensure that every step of the design decision serves the end user. Therefore, through the theory of UCD, methods and guidance can be provided for the modern design of Jian Shui purple pottery. The design theory that forms the core of this study is User-Centered Design. UCD is a process that focuses on the users' needs at each stage of design and development. The concept of "intuitive design" proposed by Donald Norman (1986) emphasizes reducing the user's cognitive load by simplifying the design so that the product can convey its functions and cultural values more intuitively. According to Garrett (2010), UCD involves iterative design, where designers constantly refine the product based on feedback and insights from the target audience. This theory is particularly relevant when considering how to modernize Jian Shui purple pottery to better resonate with Generation Y, as their consumption patterns are largely driven by personalization, experience, and emotional connection with cultural products. These two theories can be explained in detail as follows:

5.1 Donald Norman's Cognitive Load and Intuitive Design

The UCD concept proposed by Donald Norman particularly emphasizes the importance of cognitive load and intuitive design in user experience. He believes that design should reduce the psychological burden of users when using products, so that users do not need to think extra when interacting with products (Norman, 1988). For example, the traditional decoration and functional design of Jian Shui purple pottery may be too complicated or deviate from the cognitive model of modern users. To allow young users to more intuitively understand the cultural value and use function of Jian Shui purple pottery, designers should simplify the visual and functional design of the

product and reduce complicated decoration to meet contemporary young people's preference for minimalism.

Norman's concept of "intuitive design" can be applied to the innovation of Jian Shui purple pottery. Design should allow users to naturally understand its function through the appearance and feel of the product itself(Norman, 1988). For example, the handle design of the purple pottery pot can be more ergonomic, and the carving pattern should avoid overly complicated design while retaining cultural elements to enhance the user's visual pleasure.

5.2 Jesse James Garrett's five-factor user experience model

The five-factor user experience model proposed by Jesse James Garrett provides a gradually deepening framework for design(Garrett, 2010), which is very suitable for design innovation of Jian Shui purple pottery. Through this framework, designers can gradually transition from the abstract strategic layer to the concrete surface layer to ensure that the product meets both business goals and user needs. Strategic layer: At the strategic level of Jian Shui purple pottery design, it is necessary to clarify the needs of the younger generation of users, such as personalization, cultural identity and modern aesthetics. They no longer only pursue the practicality of the product, but also pay more attention to whether the product can reflect their own cultural values and identity. Therefore, at the strategic level, the design goal of Jian Shui purple pottery should focus on the aesthetic needs of Generation Y and explore how to reinterpret traditional craftsmanship through modern design techniques.

Scope layer: In the scope layer, it should be clear which functions and design elements can meet the needs of users. For example, designers can consider innovating in pot shape, color, and pattern, while retaining the core cultural characteristics of Jian Shui purple pottery, such as the unique knife carving process and unglazed polishing technology.

Structure layer: This layer determines how users interact with the product, such as the grip of the teapot and the smoothness during use. Designers should

optimize the structure of the product to ensure that the product is not only aesthetically pleasing, but also provides good experience in daily use.

Frame layer: At the frame level, specific design elements such as the mouth, handle, spout and other details should match the user's daily usage habits to ensure that these design elements are both beautiful and practical.

Surface layer: The final surface layer involves the visual presentation of the product. Jian Shui purple pottery can make users visually resonate with the product through the modern design of color and pattern, while retaining traditional cultural symbols such as landscape painting or calligraphy.

By applying Norman's cognitive load and intuitive design and Garrett's five-factor user experience model, Jian Shui purple pottery's modern innovation can start from the user's perspective and simplify the design of the product to make it more in line with the needs and aesthetics of Generation Y. While ensuring the essence of traditional culture, Jian Shui purple pottery can meet the young generation's expectations for personalization, cultural expression and functionality through modern design techniques, thereby opening a broader market.

6. New Craft Design Theory

New process design theory is a design theory that combines traditional crafts with modern design needs in modern design, especially in the field of ceramic design. Different from traditional design concepts, new process design emphasizes how to give products new functions, aesthetics and market value through innovative design techniques based on inheriting classic crafts. New Craft Design Theory was not proposed by a single scholar, but a design concept that has gradually developed with the integration of modern design and traditional crafts(Zhou et al., 2022). It reflects a balance between modern design and traditional crafts, emphasizing innovation since respecting traditional crafts to meet the needs of modern consumers. Its ideas are derived from the combination of the Arts and Crafts Movement and the modern design movement. Especially since the mid-20th century, with the development of design

disciplines, more and more designers have begun to pay attention to how to combine modern aesthetics and functional requirements in the creation of handicrafts(Zhou et al., 2022).

The core of new craft design lies in the parallel of tradition and innovation, that is, based on retaining traditional craft skills and cultural connotations, modern design concepts, technologies and materials are integrated. Designers should not only inherit the essence of handicrafts, but also use innovative design methods to enhance their market competitiveness and practicality(Nimkulrat, 2012). In Jian Shui purple pottery design, traditional purple pottery making skills can be enhanced through new clay materials, modern firing technology and simplified form design, so that it has both cultural value and conforms to modern aesthetics.

The new craft design theory emphasizes that design should not only have aesthetic value but also have practical functionality. In the creative process, designers need to consider the practicality and artistry of the product at the same time to ensure that the product can not only meet the needs of use, but also visually attract consumers. While retaining exquisite carvings and traditional patterns, Jian Shui purple pottery tea sets, or tableware also need to consider practical factors such as easy cleaning and durability.

As consumers' demand for personalization increases, the new craft design theory encourages designers to provide customized options for products, allowing consumers to choose elements such as color, pattern, and shape according to their personal preferences(Peach, 2009). This design concept emphasizes the "consumer-led" creative process. Jian Shui purple pottery tea sets can provide different colors and pattern designs. Consumers can customize exclusive text or patterns to fully meet the modern people's pursuit of personalization.

New craft design also emphasizes the close connection between design and culture, especially the cultural expression and emotional resonance in handicrafts. Designers convey traditional culture through modern design language to enhance consumers' emotional identification and cultural belonging to the product. The traditional

cultural symbols of Jian Shui purple pottery (such as landscape painting, calligraphy, bamboo branches, etc.) can be presented through modern design methods, so that it has the depth of traditional culture and can resonate with contemporary consumers.

7. Research Articles

To understand the design and development of Jian Shui purple pottery for Generation Y, it is necessary to explore existing literature on ceramic trends and consumer behavior among younger generations, particularly in Yunnan Province. Previous studies suggest that Generation Y places great emphasis on functionality, cultural identity, and customization when selecting products. Additionally, scholars have highlighted the importance of balancing traditional craftsmanship and modern design principles to appeal to younger consumers. In the context of Jian Shui purple pottery, combining these insights with modular design theories and social functionalism provides a framework for creating products that not only align with modern aesthetics but also preserve cultural significance. Below is an introduction to related domestic and international literature:

Sun, Y. (2018) studied the impact of digital marketing on millennial consumer behavior. To understand how digital platforms influence purchase decisions. They found that millennials heavily rely on social media and online reviews to make purchasing decisions, showing a preference for personalized marketing.

Guo, L. (2015) investigated the relationship between traditional culture and modern design in China. To explore how traditional Chinese elements are integrated into contemporary designs. They found that successful designs balance cultural heritage with innovation, appealing to both domestic and international markets.

Liu, Q. (2017) analyzed consumer preferences in the Chinese ceramics industry. To determine what factors, influence consumer choices in ceramic products. They found that aesthetic appeal, cultural significance, and material quality were the top priorities for consumers.

Zhang, M. (2019) studied the transformation of traditional crafts in modern Chinese society. To understand how traditional Chinese craftsmanship is evolving in a

modern context. They found that modern designers are increasingly integrating traditional techniques into new, innovative designs that resonate with younger consumers.

Li, H. (2015) investigated consumer preferences for handcrafted products in China. To identify the key factors influencing the purchase of handcrafted goods. They found that authenticity, craftsmanship, and cultural heritage were the primary drivers behind consumer interest in handcrafted products.

Chen, F. (2016) researched the development of traditional Chinese pottery in modern markets. To examine how traditional pottery is adapting to contemporary design trends. They found that combining traditional techniques with modern aesthetics has been key to maintaining relevance in the modern market.

Tang, J. (2017) analyzed the influence of cultural revival on product innovation in China. To explore how the revival of traditional culture influences product design. They found that the renewed interest in cultural heritage has led to a wave of innovation, where traditional elements are incorporated into modern designs.

Huang, L. (2019) explored the relationship between consumer identity and product choice in China. To understand how cultural identity influences purchasing decisions. They found that consumers tend to choose products that reflect their cultural values and personal identity, particularly in art and craft sectors.

Johnson, K. (2016) examined the use of cultural symbols in global brand marketing. To evaluate how global brands incorporate local cultural symbols into their product lines. They found that local cultural symbols enhance brand authenticity and appeal to consumers who value cultural identity in their purchasing decisions.

Smith, A. (2015) analyzed the influence of social media on cultural product promotion. To assess how digital platforms impact the promotion and sales of cultural products. They found that social media is a powerful tool for promoting traditional crafts to a global audience, especially when tied to cultural narratives.

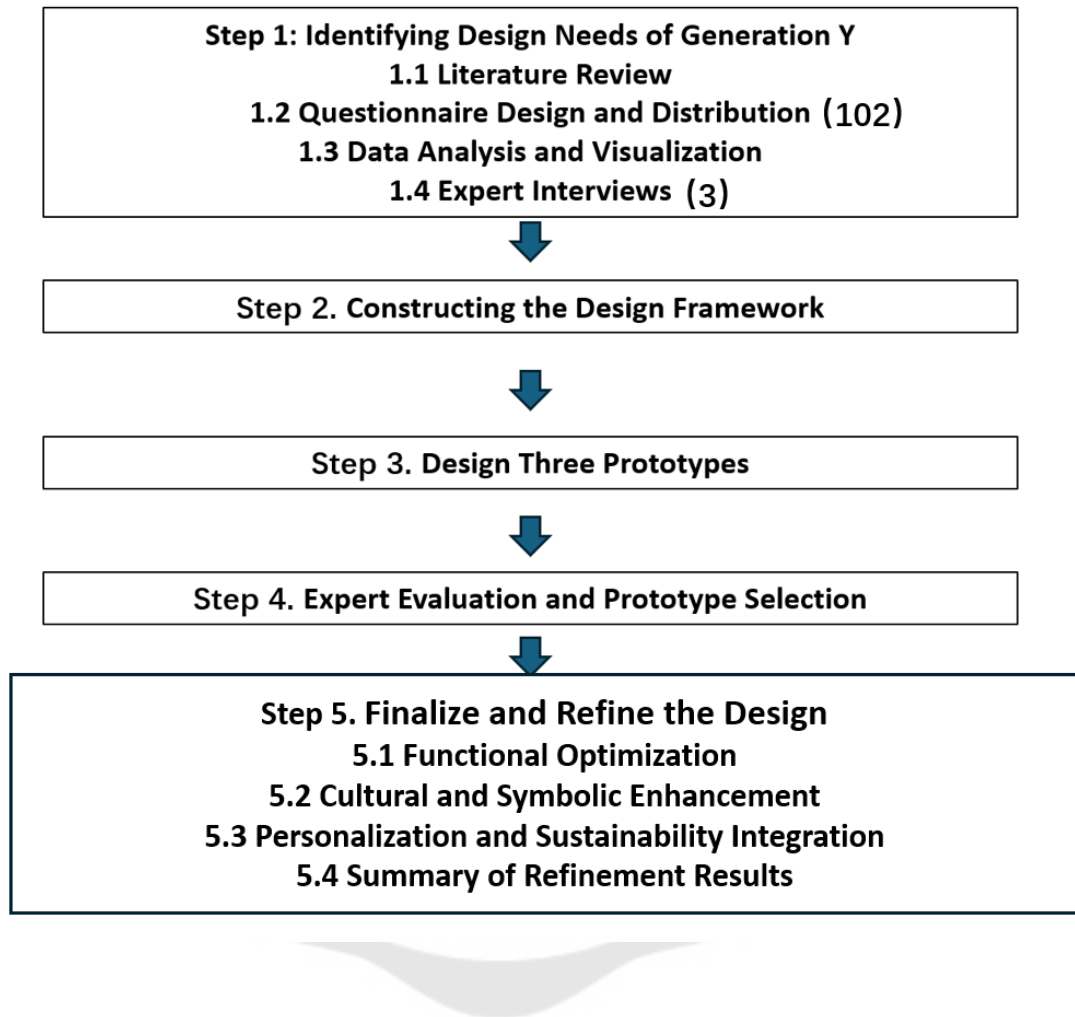
Jones, P. (2014) explored the impact of customization on consumer satisfaction in the ceramics industry. To investigate how personalization affects consumer

perceptions and satisfaction. They found that offering customization options significantly enhances consumer satisfaction, especially in products related to art and culture.



CHAPTER 3

RESEARCH METHODS



In this chapter, I will outline the research methodology used in this study, following a structured and logical approach to investigate the needs of Generation Y consumers in Yunnan Province and develop Jian Shui purple pottery designs that meet their preferences. This research adopts a user-centered design (UCD) approach and integrates the New Craft Design Theory to ensure that the final product aligns with modern aesthetic, functional, and sustainable requirements. The methodology consists of five key steps:

Step 1: Identifying Design Needs of Generation Y

This step aims to systematically investigate the design preferences, functional needs, and cultural expectations of Generation Y consumers. It includes four subcomponents:

- A literature-based analysis of generational design values.
- The construction and distribution of a structured questionnaire.
- Quantitative analysis of survey results.
- Expert interviews for triangulating insights.

1.1 Literature Review

Relevant academic and industry literature was analyzed to extract design needs in three key areas:

- Functionality
- Cultural Identity
- Sustainability

1.2 Questionnaire Design and Distribution

A structured questionnaire was created based on the literature findings and distributed to 102 participants aged 25–40. The questions covered:

- Consumer awareness of Jian Shui purple pottery
- Purchase behavior and design-making factors
- Preferred design styles (traditional vs. modern fusion)
- Interest in customized and sustainable products

1.3 Data Analysis and Visualization

Survey data were statistically summarized and presented through charts. Patterns in consumer preferences, such as style tendencies, cultural attachment, and material expectations, were extracted to inform design directions.

1.4 Expert Interviews

Three ceramic design professionals were interviewed to complement the survey data. Their insights clarified how traditional techniques and contemporary design principles could be integrated to attract younger consumers.

Step 2: Constructing the Design Framework

The results from Step 1 were synthesized into a five-dimensional design framework. The framework includes:

- Functionality
- Cultural Symbolism
- Personalization Potential
- Sustainable Design Considerations
- Modern Aesthetic Orientation

This framework served as a guideline for developing creative concepts that balance tradition with innovation.

Step 3: Creating Three Design Prototypes

Guided by the framework, three ceramic product prototypes were developed:

1. Prototype A: Modern Teapot with Personalized Design
 - a) Focus on usability, improved ergonomics, and ease of cleaning
 - b) Simplified form with modernized carving techniques
2. Prototype B: Geometric Vase with Modern Abstract Art Elements
 - a) Incorporates customizable engraving, pattern selection, and optional color variations
 - b) Allows consumers to add personal elements (e.g., name engraving, cultural symbols)
3. Prototype C: Customizable Ceramic Planter with Eco-friendly Features
 - a) Uses recycled clay and energy-efficient firing methods
 - b) Features minimalist aesthetics with a focus on eco-friendly production

Each prototype targets a different user preference, material focus, and cultural strategy.

Step 4: Expert Feedback and Prototype Selection

In this step, three prototypes were evaluated by professional ceramic artists through semi-structured interviews. The assessment was organized into three dimensions:

- Integration of traditional craftsmanship and modern design.
- Functional performance and usability.
- Clarity of cultural expression and symbolic narrative.

Each expert provided feedback individually, which was then synthesized and compared across all three designs. Based on this structured evaluation, one prototype was selected for further refinement.

Step 5: Finalize and Refine the Design

This step is based on the expert advice collected in the fourth step to further optimize the product design to ensure that the final product is competitive in the market and truly meets the needs of target users.

5.1 Functional Optimization

5.1.1 Handle and Grip Design

5.1.2 Spout Adjustment and Pouring Control

5.1.3 Base and Volume Optimization

5.2 Cultural and Symbolic Enhancement

5.2.1 Motif Abstraction and Visual Storytelling

5.2.2 Surface Texture and Material Integrity

5.3 Personalization and Sustainability Integration

5.3.1 Engraving and User Involvement

5.3.2 Sustainable Material Use

5.4 Summary of Refinement Results

This chapter detailed the step-by-step research methodology used to investigate and address the design needs of Generation Y for Jian Shui purple pottery. By combining quantitative and qualitative research, a structured design framework was established, leading to the development and refinement of innovative pottery prototypes.

Each of the above steps directly corresponds to a dedicated section in Chapter 4, ensuring consistency between methodological planning and design execution.



CHAPTER 4

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESEARCH RESULTS

In this chapter, I will analyze the research objectives using the structured methodology outlined in Chapter 3. The results from consumer surveys, expert interviews, prototype testing, and feedback analysis will be presented systematically to validate the proposed design framework for Jian Shui purple pottery.

Step 1: To analyze the needs and preferences of Generation Y for Jian Shui purple pottery.

1.1 Demands of Generation Y Consumers for Ceramic Products.

The expectations of Generation Y consumers toward ceramic products can be summarized into three major areas: functionality, cultural identity, and environmental consciousness. These insights are based on the literature reviewed in Chapter 2 and provide the theoretical foundation for this study.

1.1.1 Functionality

Generation Y places high value on intuitive usability, ergonomic design, and practicality. According to Donald Norman's concept of Cognitive Load and Intuitive Design(Norman, 1988), products should minimize the mental effort required to operate them by making their functions naturally understandable. This is especially relevant for daily-use ceramics like teapots, where comfort in grip, ease of pouring, and temperature insulation is crucial.

In addition, Twenge et al., emphasized that this generation prefers multi-functional products that enhance both utility and user experience(Twenge et al., 2008). For example, a teapot that is both aesthetically pleasing and easy to clean better aligns with Generation Y's lifestyle. This group is also influenced by the minimalist design trends in contemporary ceramics(Leman, 2022), favoring products with clean lines and simplified shapes that enhance both form and function.

1.1.2 Cultural Identity

Generation Y consumers seek products that allow them to express cultural awareness and personal identity. As discussed in Chapter 2, Zukin and Page pointed

out that Millennials often show a renewed interest in traditional culture when it is expressed through modern design language (Page, 2011; Zukin, 2010). They prefer products that blend heritage with contemporary relevance, such as ceramics that feature stylized or abstract cultural motifs rather than direct imitation of traditional patterns.

This generation values customization to assert identity and emotional connection. According to Parment, personalization enables consumers to connect with cultural objects on a symbolic level, reinforcing both individuality and community belonging (Parment, 2012). Therefore, allowing users to co-create or select patterns, colors, or inscriptions greatly increases product appeal.

1.1.3 Environmental Protection

Sustainability has become a core value for Generation Y, influencing their material preferences and purchase decisions. As highlighted by Schroeder, this generation expects brands to uphold ecological responsibility, favoring ceramics made from natural clays, non-toxic pigments, and energy-efficient production methods (Schroeder et al., 2015). Products that are durable and long-lasting are also more appealing, as they align with Generation Y's environmental ethics and reduce long-term waste.

The trend toward eco-conscious consumption, discussed by Fromm & Garton, shows that Millennials prefer products with environmental certifications or storytelling that emphasize sustainability (Jeff Fromm & Garton, 2013). In the case of Jian Shui purple pottery, integrating recycled materials and highlighting natural production methods can resonate with their values.

In summary, Generation Y consumers demand ceramic products that are highly functional, culturally expressive, and environmentally responsible. These expectations are strongly supported by academic literature and reflect broader shifts in consumer behavior that traditional ceramic studios must adapt to. Specifically, the emphasis on intuitive usability and minimalist design (Norman, 1988) guides the selection of ergonomic forms and simplified aesthetics in the prototype development phase. Insights

about the desire for cultural identity and symbolic personalization (Page, 2011; Zukin, 2010) provide the rationale for incorporating abstract motifs and customizable design elements into the product structure. Furthermore, the focus on sustainability (Schroeder et al., 2015) informs material sourcing, eco-friendly production techniques, and the storytelling framework used in product presentation.

These literature-derived insights serve as the theoretical foundation for the design framework proposed in Step 2 and directly inform the conceptual direction of the three product prototypes developed in Step 3. Additionally, they provide a lens through which expert interview feedback is analyzed in Step 4, ensuring that both theoretical knowledge and practical evaluation converge in the refinement of the final product in Step 5.

1.2 Questionnaire Design and Research Method

To empirically assess the preferences, values, and expectations of Generation Y consumers toward Jian Shui purple pottery, the researcher designed and conducted a structured online questionnaire survey. This instrument was developed based on the theoretical findings presented in Chapters 1 through 3, especially the reviewed literature on user-centered design, cultural identity, and modern ceramic trends.

1.2.1 Purpose of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire aimed to explore the behavioral patterns, purchase motivations, and design expectations of young consumers (aged 25–40) who are potential or current ceramic product buyers. It also intended to gather data on consumers' awareness of Jian Shui purple pottery, their environmental and cultural values, and their openness to design innovation and personalization. These insights were essential to support the data-driven design framework proposed in this study.

1.2.2 Structure of the Questionnaire

The questionnaire was composed of 20 closed-ended questions, divided into the following thematic sections:

a. Demographic Information

Including age, gender, occupation, and income level.

b. Awareness and Purchase Behavior

Assessing familiarity with Jian Shui purple pottery and purchase frequency of ceramic products.

c. Design Preferences

Exploring preferences regarding functionality, aesthetics, style, traditional versus modern design, and personalization.

d. Environmental Values

Investigating consumers' views on sustainability, eco-friendly materials, and their willingness to pay a premium for environmentally responsible products.

e. Attitudes Toward Cultural Fusion

Evaluating the level of acceptance of integrating modern design with traditional craftsmanship.

All items were formatted as multiple-choice or Likert-scale questions to ensure consistency and facilitate quantitative analysis.

1.2.3 Target Respondents and Sampling Criteria

The target population for this survey consisted of Generation Y consumers in Yunnan Province, defined as individuals born between 1980 and 1999 (aged approximately 25–40 at the time of the study). Additional inclusion criteria required that participants demonstrate either:

An interest in tea culture, traditional Chinese crafts, or ceramic art; or A background in design, art, or related creative fields.

A non-probability purposive sampling method was used to ensure that the sample reflected the research target group. The questionnaire was distributed via the Wenjuanxing online platform, allowing for efficient collection and digital analysis of responses.

1.2.4 Data Collection

A total of 102 valid responses were collected between April 1st and April 10th, 2025. The questionnaire system automatically filtered incomplete or invalid submissions. Basic data cleaning was conducted before analysis.

1.2.5 Role in Research

The survey results served as the primary quantitative data source for understanding Generation Y's design expectations for Jian Shui purple pottery. These results, presented in detail in Section 1.3, form a critical component of the design decision-making process and provide empirical support for the design framework that will be proposed in Chapter 4, Step 2.

In summary, the questionnaire design was directly informed by the theoretical framework reviewed in Chapter 2, particularly the literature on Generation Y's consumption habits, cultural identity, and preferences for user-centered, personalized, and sustainable design (Jeff Fromm & Garton, 2013; Norman, 1988; Twenge et al., 2008). Each section of the questionnaire was mapped to specific theoretical dimensions, ensuring that the data collected would not only validate previous academic insights but also provide context-specific evidence from Yunnan-based Generation Y consumers.

The results of this survey serve as a primary empirical foundation for Step 2, where the design framework will be constructed based on cross-analysis of theoretical and field data. Furthermore, the insights into consumer preferences regarding form, material, personalization, and cultural elements directly inform the conceptual logic and feature allocation of the product prototypes in Step 3. The questionnaire thus plays a pivotal role in translating abstract theoretical constructs into concrete, user-informed design criteria for Jian Shui purple pottery.

1.3 Questionnaire Survey Results

To deepen the understanding of Generation Y consumers' preferences toward Jian Shui purple pottery, this section analyzes the results of a structured questionnaire distributed to 102 respondents. The findings are organized into sub-sections corresponding to the key dimensions of consumer behavior, cultural perception, environmental concern, and aesthetic preferences. Where appropriate, visual charts are included to reinforce the interpretation of data.

1.3.1 Demographic Profile of Respondents

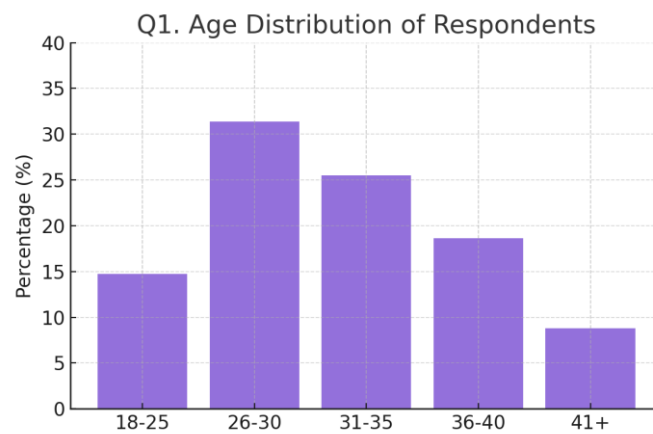


Figure 3 Age Distribution of Generation Y

Source From: Research

Most respondents were between the ages of 26 and 35, with 31.37% falling in the 26–30 range and 25.49% in the 31–35 range. These two groups alone accounted for more than half of all participants (56.86%), indicating that Jian Shui purple pottery primarily attracts young professionals in their prime consumption years.

Gender Distribution of Survey Respondents

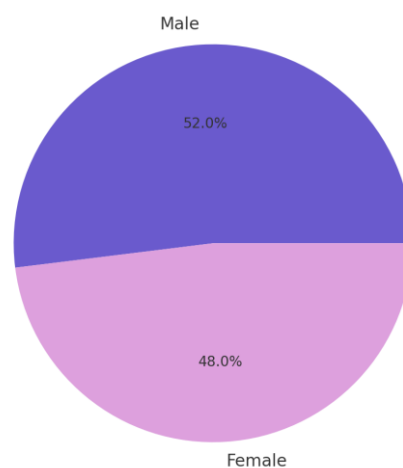


Figure 4 Gender Distribution of the respondents

Source From: Researcher

In terms of gender, the distribution was relatively balanced. Male respondents slightly outnumbered female respondents by 4 percentage points, with 52% male and 48% female.



Figure 5 Occupation Distribution

Source From: Research

Office workers accounted for the highest proportion and constituted the main interviewee group. The data showed that more than 40% of the respondents were office workers, significantly higher than other occupational types, indicating that this group was highly representative in the sample.



Figure 6 Interviewer Income Level

Source From: Research

The monthly income of the respondents is mainly concentrated in the range of 6,000-10,000 yuan, and nearly half of the respondents (48.04%) have an income at a medium to high level, which is significantly higher than the proportion of other income ranges, forming an obvious concentrated distribution feature. It also shows that the demand for ceramic products can only be generated based on meeting daily needs such as food and clothing.

1.3.2 Awareness and Experience with Jian Shui Pottery

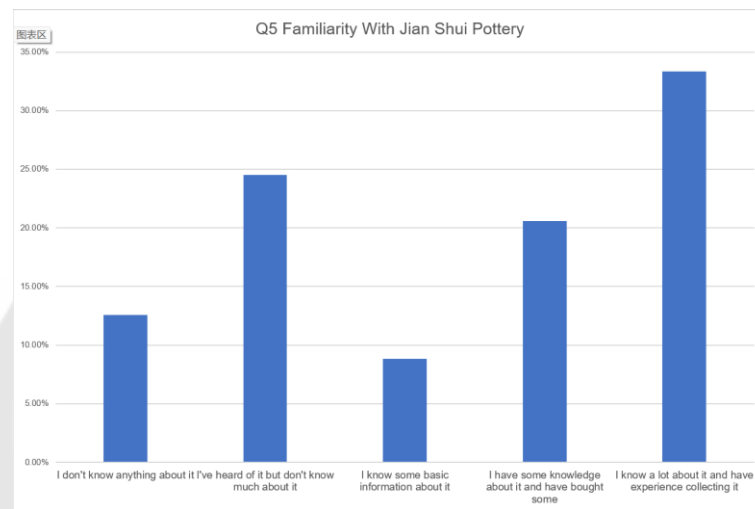


Figure 7 Familiarity with Jian Shui Pottery

Source From: Research

More than half of the respondents have a basic understanding or deeper exposure to Jian Shui purple pottery. Although 12.75% of the respondents have no knowledge of it at all, the two groups of "somewhat familiar and have bought it" and "very familiar and have collection experience" account for 53.92%, showing that this category has a significant advantage in terms of market awareness depth.

1.3.3 Purchasing Behavior

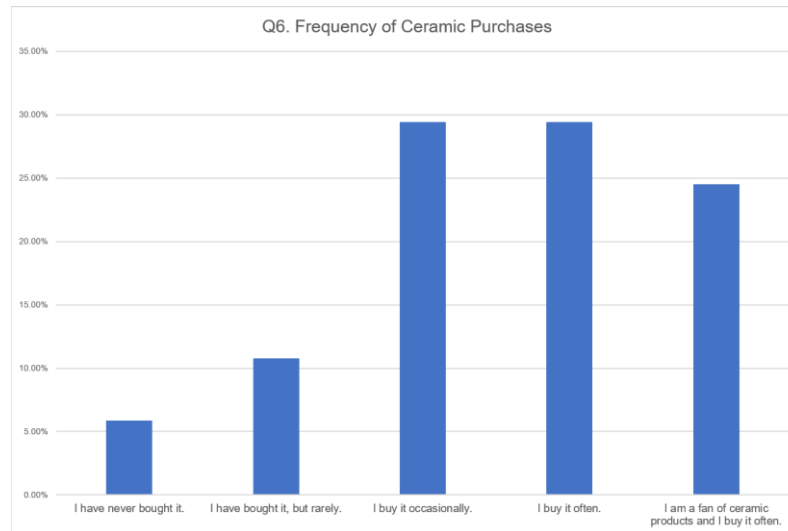


Figure 8 Frequency of Ceramic Purchases

Source From: Research

More than half of the respondents are active consumers of ceramic products users who frequently purchase ceramic products (including "frequent buyers" and "enthusiasts") account for 54.92% in total, indicating that the market has high user activity and consumption stickiness. This reflects that despite interest in ceramic products, for most individuals, it is still a secondary or symbolic consumption category.

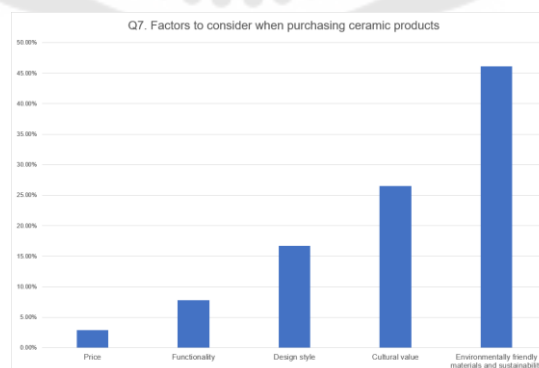


Figure 9 Factors to consider when purchasing ceramic products

Source From: Research

Environmentally friendly materials and sustainability are the top considerations for consumers when purchasing ceramic products. Nearly half of consumers (46.08%) consider environmental attributes as the core decision-making criteria, reflecting the strong focus of the contemporary consumer market on sustainable development. Cultural value is also one of the factors that consumers strongly consider, accounting for 26.47%. The second is design style factors, accounting for 16.67%.

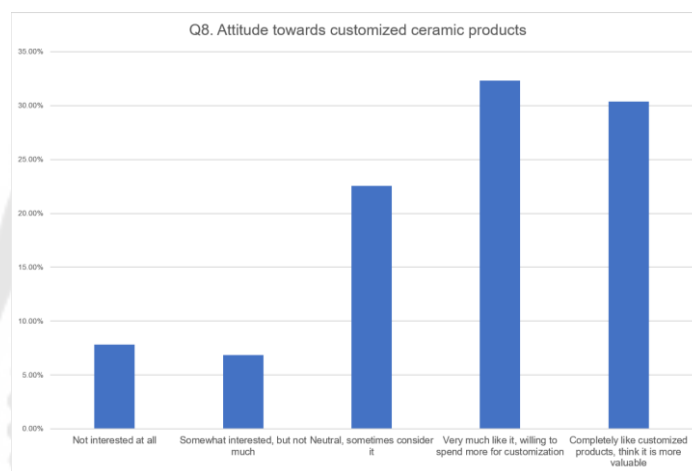


Figure 10 Attitude towards customized ceramic products

Source From: Research

More than 60% of the respondents have a positive attitude towards customized ceramic products. 32.35% of the respondents said they like them very much and are willing to spend more on customization, and 30.39% fully recognize the value of customized products. The combined proportion of the two reached 62.74%, indicating that most consumers have a high degree of acceptance of customized ceramic products.

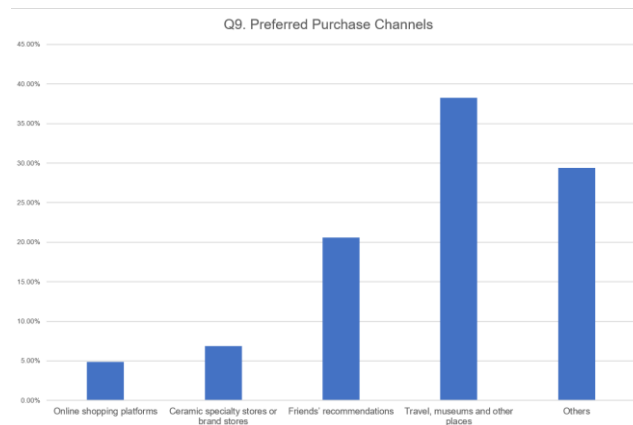


Figure 11 Preferred Purchases Channels

Source From: Research

In terms of purchasing channels, physical places such as travel and museums still dominate (38.24%), which is closely related to the cultural attributes and experiential consumption characteristics of ceramic products. Recommendations from friends also account for 20.59%, and creating a good brand reputation is also important. Online purchases account for only 4.9%.

1.3.4 Design Preferences

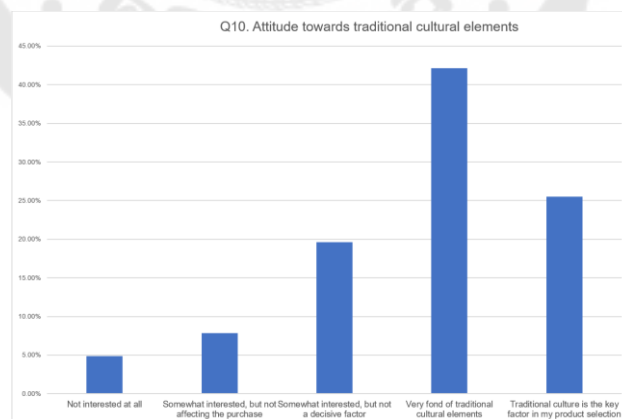


Figure 12 Attitude towards traditional cultural elements

Source From: Research

Most consumers hold a positive attitude towards traditional cultural elements, and nearly 70% regard them as important factors. A total of 67.65% of the respondents believe that traditional cultural elements are the key to purchasing ceramic products or they like them very much, reflecting the core position of cultural attributes in their consumption decisions.

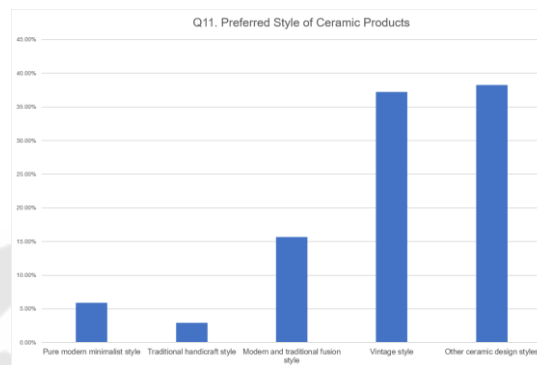


Figure 13 Preferred style of ceramic products

Source From: Research

Retro style and "other" options jointly dominate, accounting for more than 75% in total. Retro style accounts for 37.25%, and "other" accounts for 38.24%. The two together constitute the main preferences of the respondents, indicating that the market has a high demand for non-modern style designs. Modern style needs to be further expanded and promoted.

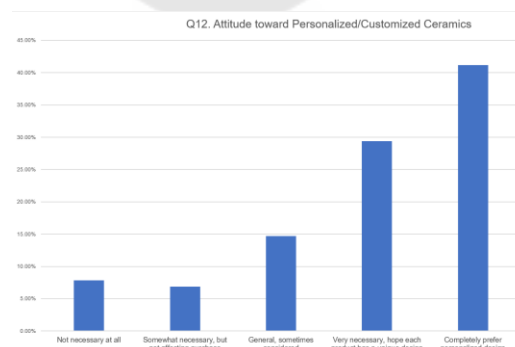


Figure 14 Attitude toward personalized/customized ceramics

Source From: Research

More than 70% of the respondents have a strong demand for personalized design, and the respondents who chose "completely prefer personalized design" and "very need it" accounted for a total of 70.59%, indicating that personalized design is one of the cores demands of consumers.

1.3.5 Cultural Value Perception

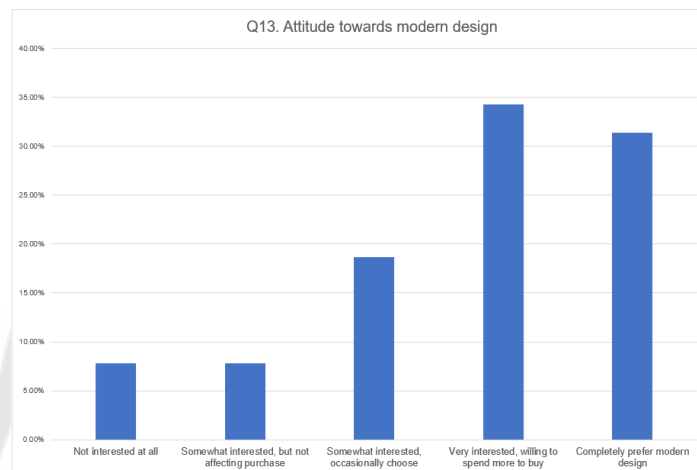


Figure 15 Attitude towards modern design

Source From: Research

More than 60% of consumers showed a significant preference for modern ceramic designs, and more than 65% of respondents chose "very much like" or "completely prefer modern design", indicating that modern ceramic designs have clear market appeal.

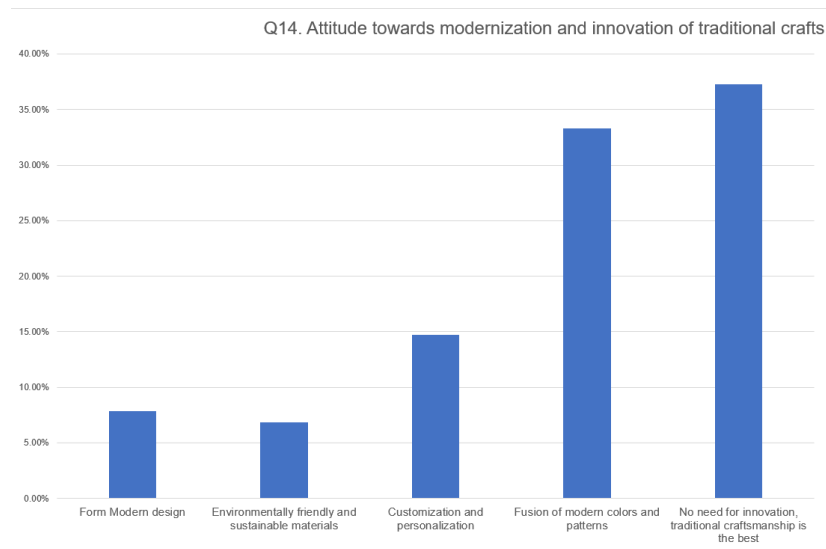


Figure 16 Attitude toward modernization and innovation of traditional crafts

Source From: Research

Most respondents believe that there is no need for innovation or that the integration of modern colors and patterns needs to be improved. The two together account for more than 70%, reflecting the coexistence of recognition of the preservation of traditional craftsmanship and the need for innovation in visual elements.

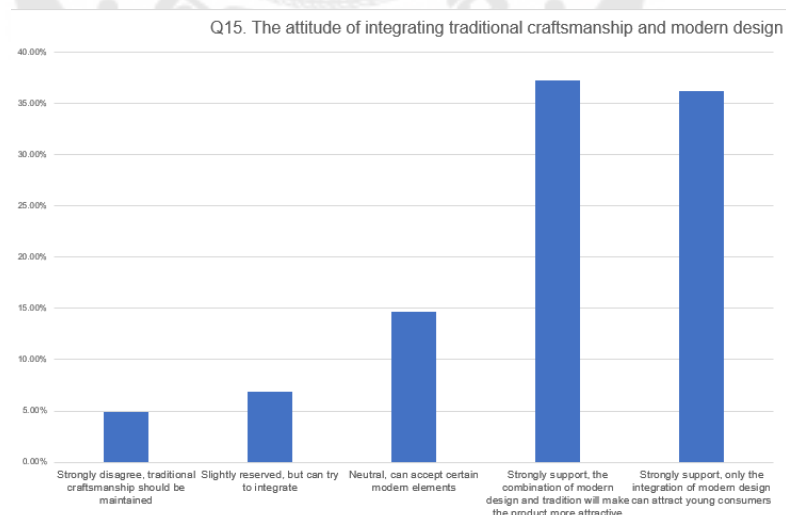


Figure 17 Attitude of integrating traditional craftsmanship and modern design

Source From: Research

Most respondents strongly support the integration of traditional craftsmanship and modern design. The two options of strong support accounted for 73.52% in total, of which 37.25% believed that the combination could enhance the attractiveness of the product, and 36.27% emphasized the necessity of attracting young groups, forming an overwhelming support trend.

1.3.6 Environmental Awareness and Sustainability Preferences

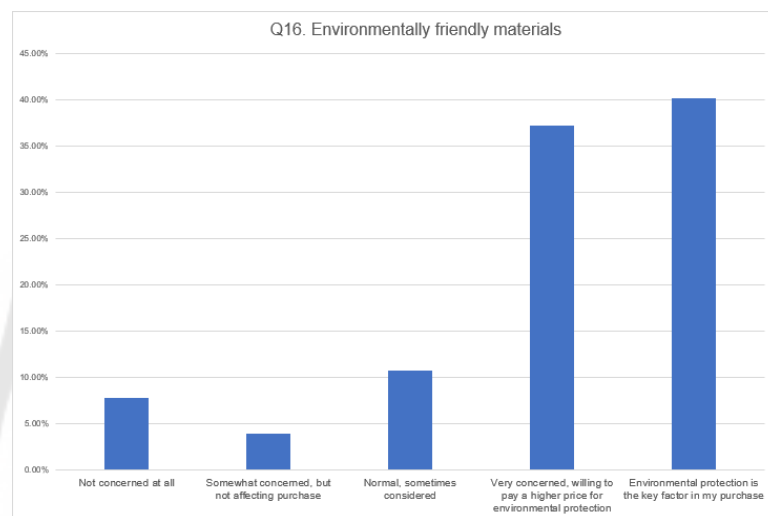


Figure 18 Environmental friendly materials

Source From: Research

More than 70% of consumers are highly concerned about the environmentally friendly materials of ceramic products. The two items of "very concerned" and "environmental protection is a key factor" account for 77.45% in total, indicating that consumers generally have environmental awareness and are willing to act. Among them, "environmental protection is a key factor" has become the highest proportion option with 40.2%, indicating that environmental protection attributes have transformed from added value to core competitiveness.

1.3.7 Functional and Emotional Needs

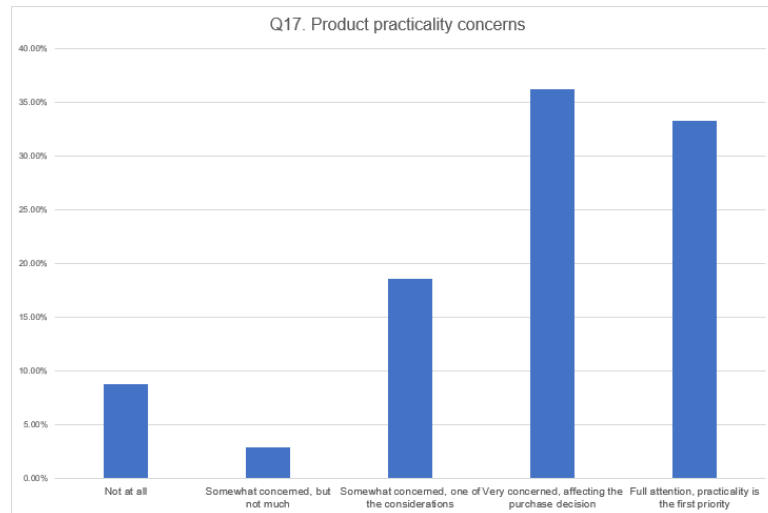


Figure 19 Product practicality concerns

Source From: Research

Most consumers attach great importance to practicality in ceramic product design. More than 69% of the respondents chose "very concerned, affecting purchase decisions" and "full attention, practicality is the first priority", indicating that practicality is the core design consideration.

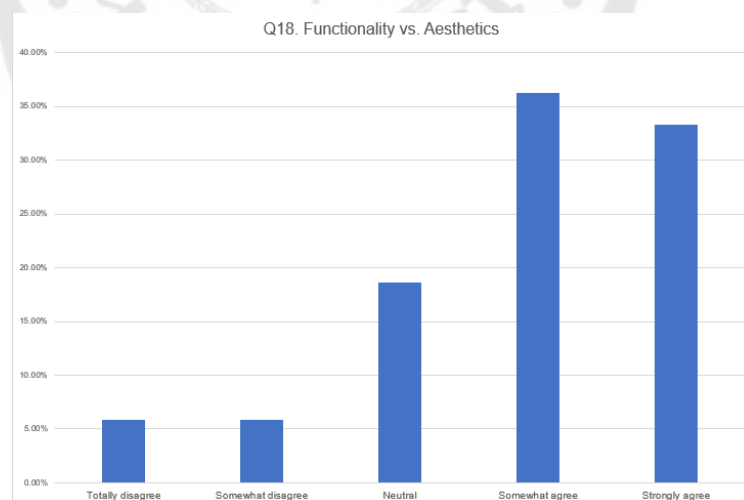


Figure 20 Functionality vs. Aesthetics

Source From: Research

Most respondents agree that the functionality of ceramic products is more important. Nearly 70% of respondents tend to agree that functionality is more important than aesthetics (36.27% somewhat agree, 33.33% strongly agree), while only 11.76% disagree, indicating that functionality dominates user needs.

Summary of Key Insights and Application

The questionnaire's results validate the theoretical expectations proposed in Chapter 2 and reinforce the assumptions made in Step 1.1. Functionality was confirmed as a dominant concern for Generation Y, with over 69% of respondents stating that practicality influences their purchase decisions—aligning closely with Norman's (1986) emphasis on intuitive design. Similarly, the high preference for personalized ceramics (over 70%) supports the findings of Contreras (2012) and Parment (2013) regarding Generation Y's strong desire for identity-based consumption.

Moreover, the overwhelming support for integrating traditional craftsmanship with modern aesthetics (73.52%) directly reflects the dual value system described by Zukin (2010) and Williams (2014), who argue that younger consumers seek cultural continuity expressed in contemporary language. Environmental concerns also ranked among the highest priorities, confirming Schroeder's (2017) and Ismail's (2016) assertions that sustainability is not optional but integral to Millennial purchasing decisions.

These insights form the empirical basis for the design framework developed in Step 2. Each dimension—functionality, cultural symbolism, personalization, sustainability, and aesthetic preference—is rooted in both literature and field data, ensuring the framework's relevance to real-world consumer expectations. The data also guide the strategic direction of prototype development in Step 3 by highlighting specific design preferences, such as ergonomic form, customizable patterns, and minimalist visual language.

1.4 Analysis of Experts Interview Feedback

To enrich the analysis of Generation Y consumer preferences and deepen the understanding of design adaptation strategies, we interviewed three experts who are deeply involved in the field of Jian Shui purple pottery:

Li Weizhong, a senior craftsman of Yunnan Province and a member of the Kunming Branch of the Yunnan Artists Association;

Ma Xingyun, a national senior arts and crafts artist, a ceramic craftsman of Yunnan Province, and a visiting professor at the School of Art of Yunnan Nationalities University;

Zeng Dandan, an independent ceramic artist known for her personalized designs and avant-garde interpretations.

Each interview was structured around ten key questions concerning traditional craftsmanship, the fusion of tradition and innovation, personalization, environmental sustainability, and market development. Their responses were analyzed and synthesized into eight core themes.

1.4.1 Traditional Craftsmanship and Essential Elements

All three experts emphasized the irreplaceable value of Jian Shui purple pottery's traditional craftsmanship. They collectively pointed to three indispensable elements:

- a. The Use of Local Five-Color Clay: As highlighted by Li Weizhong, the unique mineral composition of Jian Shui's native soil (red, yellow, green, white, and purple clays) provides the essential texture, color, and plasticity for purple pottery. Removing this element would fundamentally undermine the identity of Jian Shui ceramics.
- b. Hand-Carved and Inlay Decoration Techniques: The experts agreed that traditional hand engraving combined with color inlay (Incised decoration with colored clay inlay) forms the aesthetic soul of the pottery. Zeng Dandan emphasized the ability of these methods to emulate the brushwork of Chinese ink painting on ceramic surfaces.

- c. Wood-Fired Kiln Process and Unglazed Polishing: Ma Xingyun emphasized that these two features contribute to both the tactile and visual uniqueness of Jian Shui pottery. The result is a soft, jade-like sheen and a natural ash glaze effect that modern technology cannot replicate.

1.4.2 Integration of Modern Design Elements

While firmly rooted in traditional craftsmanship, all experts advocated for integrating modern aesthetics to meet current market needs. However, each provided different directions based on their design orientation:

Li Weizhong emphasized structural innovation, proposing the simplification of complex historical forms into sleeker, minimalist lines while retaining spiritual continuity.

Ma Xingyun highlighted the use of abstract and geometric forms derived from modern architecture and visual art, especially the adaptation of motif patterns using modular compositions.

Zeng Dandan stressed individual design autonomy and emphasized that modern design is a way of thinking rather than merely an aesthetic tool.

All experts agreed that new forms should not erase heritage, but reinterpret it. Decorative reduction, geometric abstraction, and the blending of contrasting materials like wood or glass were considered effective methods.

1.4.3 Aesthetics vs. Functionality

The experts unanimously affirmed that the relationship between functionality and beauty should be symbiotic rather than hierarchical.

Functionality ensures ergonomic comfort, durability, and usability, particularly important in everyday wares like teapots and cups.

Aesthetic Value elevates the ceramic product beyond utilitarianism into a cultural artifact.

Li Weizhong referenced Song Dynasty ceramics to support the notion that usability and elegance can co-exist. Ma Xingyun added that consumers are unlikely to

continue using even the most beautiful object if it lacks ergonomic integrity. Zeng Dandan, from a more emotional standpoint, argued that emotional resonance arises only when a product fits both form and function.

1.4.4 Demand for Personalization and Customization

Generation Y was widely recognized by the experts as a consumer group that prioritizes identity, participation, and symbolic value.

Customization as Creative Engagement: Li Weizhong viewed customization as a vehicle for cultural co-creation, suggesting that allowing users to choose motifs or inscriptions can bridge personal memory with historical craftsmanship.

Modular Personalization: Ma Xingyun advocated for scalable customization models—for instance, limited edition base forms with user-selected finishes, texts, or textures.

Aesthetic Rebellion and Diversity: Zeng Dandan observed that younger consumers are no longer limited to conventional flower-and-bird motifs but increasingly gravitate toward conceptual, playful, or even subversive designs.

1.4.5 Environmental Consciousness and Sustainable Design

While environmental protection was not originally a core value in traditional pottery, all experts acknowledged its growing importance in today's market.

Li Weizhong proposed reuse of material scraps, water recycling systems, and updated kiln technologies to reduce emissions.

Ma Xingyun emphasized life-cycle design, including material traceability, ease of repair, and modular replacements to prolong product lifespan.

Zeng Dandan offered a pragmatic view: while large-scale ecological overhaul may be difficult, even small-scale designers should instill a sense of ecological ethics through topic-driven works (e.g., using motifs of endangered species or nature conservation themes).

1.4.6 Modern Interpretations of Traditional Symbols

All three experts valued traditional cultural symbols but called for their abstraction and reinterpretation:

Symbols such as calligraphy, mountains, flowers, and Taoist or Buddhist imagery must evolve visually while maintaining spiritual essence.

Mr. Li highlighted methods such as line simplification and brushstroke emulation through carving.

Ma Xingyun introduced the idea of using digital techniques (e.g., 3D modeling, laser engraving) to reconstruct ancient themes.

Zeng Dandan viewed design as a language of self-expression, encouraging artists to use cultural heritage as a point of departure rather than confinement.

1.4.7 Young Market Adaptation and Competitive Innovation

To remain relevant in the competitive youth market, Jian Shui purple pottery must adopt diversified and strategic innovation:

New Functional Categories: All experts endorsed expanding into non-traditional forms like phone stands, aromatherapy diffusers, or smart tea devices.

Co-branding and Crossovers: Ma Xingyun emphasized collaborations with fashion, lifestyle, and tech industries to reach broader audiences.

Social Media Storytelling: Zeng Dandan underscored the power of personal narrative and behind-the-scenes content to build emotional connection online.

1.4.8 Balancing Cultural Transmission and Design Usability

The final thematic consensus centered around the philosophical question of how to maintain cultural integrity without sacrificing market relevance.

Mr. Li proposed adopting traditional vessel shapes for modern ergonomics.

Mr. Ma highlighted cultural functionalism—the idea that cultural elements should be inherently integrated into usable forms.

Ms. Zeng encouraged intuitive fusion, suggesting that personal immersion in tradition leads to more sincere and effective cultural expression.

In summary, the expert interviews provided highly nuanced perspectives on the evolving role of Jian Shui purple pottery in the contemporary design landscape. From respecting materials to innovating forms, from interpreting symbols to shaping lifestyles,

the path forward lies in balance—between past and future, form and function, tradition and transformation.

These insights will form a critical reference for constructing the final design framework in the next step.

Step 2: To Construct a Data-Driven Design Framework for Jian Shui Purple Pottery Targeting Generation Y

This step synthesizes the findings derived from the literature review, questionnaire survey, and expert interviews to develop a comprehensive design framework for Jian Shui purple pottery. The objective is to guide future design practices that effectively balance traditional cultural values with the lifestyle preferences of Generation Y consumers.

2.1 Integration of Multi-Source Data Insights

The data collected from multiple sources revealed a consistent pattern of Generation Y's preference for designs that are not only functional and visually appealing but also personalized, environmentally conscious, and culturally meaningful. The literature provided theoretical validation; the questionnaire delivered empirical confirmation from the consumer side; and the expert interviews offered professional reflection and practical strategies.

Key Integrated Insights:

- a. **Functionality and Practicality:** Both experts and consumers emphasized the importance of ergonomics, usability, and quality in everyday products.
- b. **Cultural Identity and Symbolism:** Consumers are drawn to products that convey cultural value, while experts support the reinterpretation of traditional symbols through modern techniques.
- c. **Personalization and Customization:** There is strong demand for design personalization, supported by consumer data and expert strategies for modular or symbolic customization.

- d. Environmental Sustainability: Consumers expect sustainable materials and production, and experts recommend technological and storytelling solutions.
- e. Modern Aesthetics: Consumers seek designs with modern stylistic elements, such as geometric shapes, abstract patterns, or minimalist finishes, which experts suggest integrating with traditional ceramic forms.

These five insights were not only theoretically grounded in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2—such as Norman’s intuitive design theory, Zukin’s cultural reinterpretation, and Schroeder’s sustainability emphasis—but also empirically confirmed by the results of the structured survey (Step 1.3) and expert interviews (Step 1.4). By combining these multi-dimensional perspectives, the framework ensures that the resulting design strategy reflects both academic validity and user-centered practicality. This triangulated foundation enables the translation of abstract values—like identity, usability, and cultural symbolism—into actionable design elements.

2.2 Design Element Framework

Based on these findings, five primary design elements are proposed as the foundation for future product development:

2.2.1 Functional Design Elements

Ergonomic shaping of handles, lids, and vessel forms. Balanced weight and stability, especially for tea ware and utensils. Consideration of real-life usage, e.g., thermal resistance, ease of cleaning.

2.2.2 Cultural Symbolism Elements

Incorporation of traditional motifs (calligraphy, nature, historical patterns) in abstracted or stylized forms. Story-based design narrative (e.g., themes like mindfulness, harmony, local folklore). Use of regional materials and reference to local heritage.

2.2.3 Personalization Strategy

Offering a base product with customizable features (texts, patterns, color palettes). Enabling consumer co-creation (e.g., online customization tools). Limited editions based on seasonal or lifestyle themes to boost symbolic ownership.

2.2.4 Sustainable Design Integration

Use of low-impact materials and natural clay from the region. Recyclable or biodegradable packaging. Energy-efficient firing and material reuse in production.

2.2.5 Aesthetic Direction

Design language should align with modern taste: minimalism, geometry, and emotional warmth. Bold yet harmonious color pairings combining traditional hues and trendy tones. Mixed-media experimentation (e.g., clay + wood, or digital engraving).

Each of the five design elements proposed below directly reflects Generation Y's specific demands and is cross-validated through theoretical and empirical sources. They serve as the functional pillars upon which the prototype designs in Step 3 will be developed.

2.3 Application Scenarios and Lifestyle Alignment

The design framework proposes matching product categories with contemporary lifestyle needs:

Workplace: Elegant and compact desktop containers, pen holders, aroma diffusers.

Leisure & Tea Culture: Ergonomic teapots, travel tea sets, cultural collectible teacups.

Home Decor: Abstract vases, statement figurines, multi-functional decorative pieces.

Gift Market: Customized sets for weddings, anniversaries, or zodiac year memorabilia.

2.4 Summary of Framework Utility

Framework Application and Strategic Role

This five-dimensional framework—comprising functionality, cultural symbolism, personalization, sustainability, and modern aesthetics—not only captures the psychological and ethical expectations of Generation Y but also provides a clear blueprint for design decision-making. In Step 3, this framework serves as the methodological reference for developing three differentiated prototypes, each of which corresponds to a unique combination of the framework's elements. For example, Prototype A focuses on cultural symbolism and ergonomic functionality; Prototype B emphasizes personalization and visual abstraction; and Prototype C highlights environmental sustainability and user customization.

Moreover, the framework enables structured expert evaluation in Step 4 by offering consistent criteria for assessing craft integration, functional performance, and cultural expression. As a result, the framework functions as both a creative guide and an evaluation matrix, bridging theory, user data, and practical design execution.

Step 3: To create 3 prototypes.

Although the Yun Tao Ceramics Studio has maintained consistent sales through its core product lines—teapots, vases, and small household ceramics—its customer base remains predominantly composed of middle-aged collectors and tea enthusiasts. As noted in the interview with studio founder Mr. Ma Xingyun, these products account for the studio's highest sales volumes but fail to resonate with younger consumers from Generation Y. Existing designs tend to focus on traditional motifs and forms, often lacking the modern aesthetic, personalization features, or environmental narratives that Millennials prioritize in their purchasing decisions.

To address this disconnect, this study re-examines the studio's three most commercially important product categories through the lens of the five-dimensional design framework proposed in Step 2. The objective is not to abandon the functional logic or craft integrity of these products, but to reimagine them in ways that better align with Generation Y's aesthetic sensibilities, lifestyle expectations, and cultural values. Therefore, three redesign prototypes were developed—a teapot, a vase, and a ceramic

planter—each representing a strategic intervention in an existing product category with the goal of improving appeal among younger consumers.

According to the design framework of the second step data analysis and expert insights, this study will design three prototypes based on the needs of Generation Y and the traditional craft characteristics of Jian Shui purple pottery. These prototypes aim to combine core elements such as functionality, personalized design, integration of modern and traditional, environmental protection and sustainability, and cultural inheritance and innovation to create Jian Shui purple pottery products that can attract young consumers and meet market needs. The following are the design plans for the three prototypes:

3.1 Prototype A: 'Mountain and Flow' Teapot Inspired by Kawagarbo and Dian Lake

Design Motivation and Conceptual Origin

The teapot remains one of Yun Tao Ceramics Studio's best-selling product categories, traditionally favored by tea collectors and middle-aged customers for its craftsmanship and symbolic associations. However, interviews and survey data confirm that current teapot designs fail to engage Generation Y consumers, who view them as overly traditional and lacking in emotional relevance or modern usability.

To address this gap, Prototype A reimagines the teapot form by drawing on local Yunnan symbolism—specifically, the contrast between the sacred Kawagarbo Snow Mountain and the flowing Dian Lake—as a metaphor for balance between heritage and modern life. This symbolic narrative aligns with Generation Y's appreciation for emotionally meaningful design while retaining the cultural roots of Jian Shui pottery. At the same time, minimalist form, ergonomic usability, and a moderate capacity of 300 ml were incorporated to satisfy the generation's preference for practical, everyday rituals.

Through abstract dot patterns (representing snow or pollen), geometric symbolism, and polished color-inlay techniques, this prototype fulfills all five pillars of the proposed design framework: intuitive functionality, cultural narrative, personalization potential, sustainable material use, and minimalist visual appeal.



Figure 21 Kawagarbo Snow Mountain

Source From: https://www.thepaper.cn/newsDetail_forward_14117614)



Figure 22 Dian Lake

Source From: http://www.news.cn/photo/2023-01/13/c_1129282549_2.htm

The mountain represents permanence, awe, and cultural reverence, particularly among Tibetan and Yunnan's communities. In contrast, the water motif, drawn from the

rhythmic waves of Dian Lake, evokes softness, inclusivity, and the continuity of daily experience. Their juxtaposition forms the core aesthetic and symbolic narrative of the design.

Visually, the mountain is rendered in a stylized, angular form, while the waves beneath it curve in soft, continuous lines. This contrast is further emphasized using carved inlay techniques, drawing upon Jian Shui purple pottery's traditional craftsmanship. The result is a design that merges visual serenity with underlying strength.

The overall form of the teapot is simple and spherical, aligning with minimalist design principles preferred by Generation Y. A swan-neck spout and circular handle maintain ergonomic integrity while contributing to the teapot's flowing silhouette. With a 300 ml capacity, it caters to solo or pair tea rituals, reflecting the modern desire for mindful, scaled-down consumption.

A field of abstract dotted lines near the lid represent stars or drifting pollen, inviting interpretations of cosmic connection, seasonal transition, or inner meditation. This symbolic ambiguity enhances the product's emotional and narrative richness, resonating with consumers who seek more than function from their objects—they seek meaning.

Table 1 Design Dimension Specifications of Prototype A – Mountain and Flow Teapot

Attributes	Description
Height	9 cm
Width	13 cm
Capacity	300 ml
Form	Spherical body with upright handle and swan-neck spout
Decoration Motifs	Mountain and wave carvings with dotted abstraction

The dimensional choices for Prototype A were made with ergonomic functionality and minimalist spatial preferences in mind. The 9 cm height and 13 cm width create a compact form that fits comfortably in the hand while maintaining balance

during use—addressing Norman’s (1986) intuitive design principles. The 300 ml capacity was selected based on survey insights (Figure 6), which indicate that Generation Y favors smaller, personal-scale tea drinking experiences over traditional communal styles. The swan-neck spout and upright handle enhance pouring control, while the spherical body form provides a soft visual identity that resonates with the generation’s preference for clean, non-ornate aesthetics. Overall, the design dimensions reflect a balance of usability, modern form, and cultural metaphor, ready for further refinement in expert evaluation.

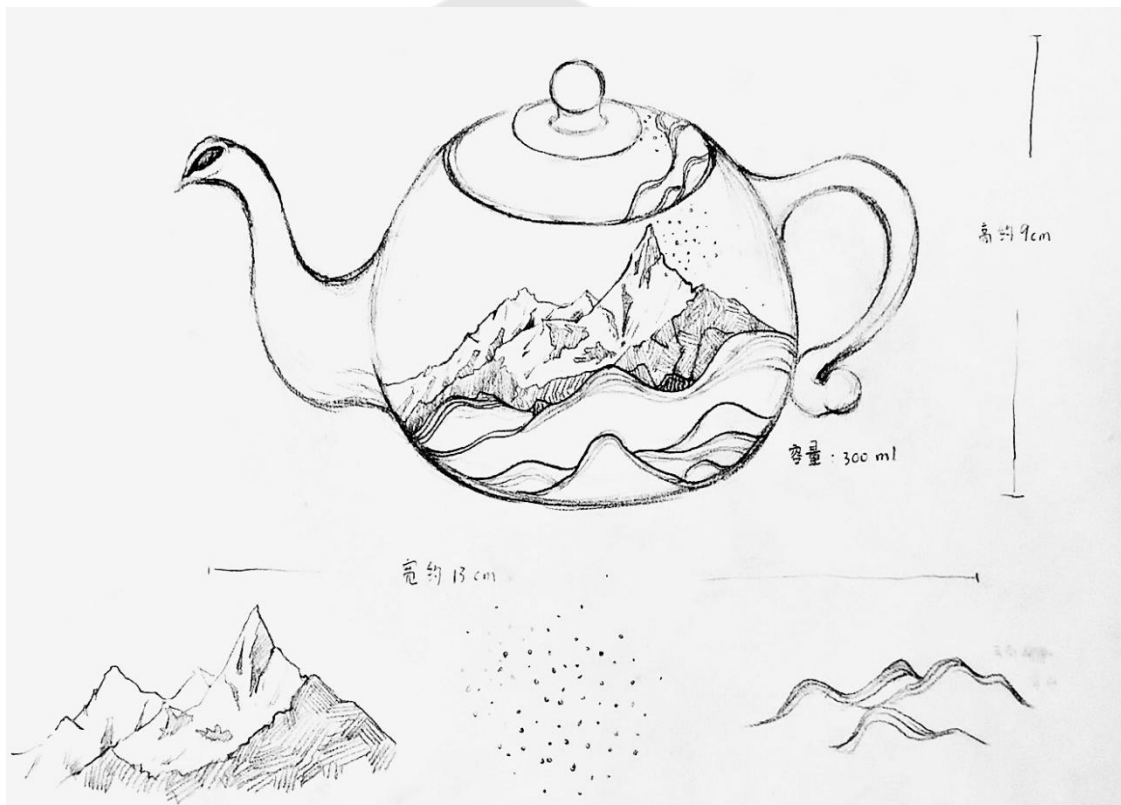


Figure 23 Prototype A Draft Drawing

Source From: Researcher

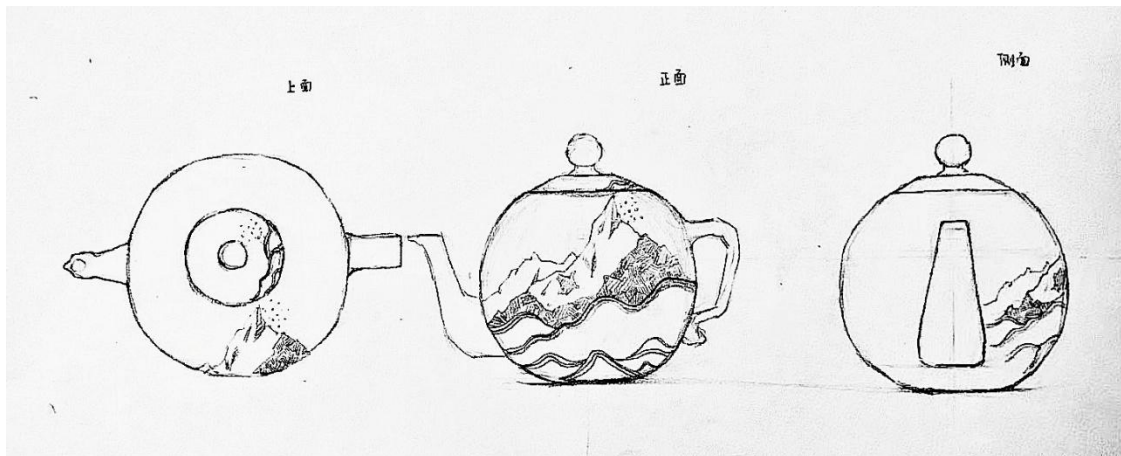


Figure 24 Prototype A Three Views

Source From: Researcher

Design Illustration Explanation and Rationale

The prototype's overall spherical form is based on ergonomic considerations identified through both expert interviews and Generation Y user feedback. The 300ml capacity, smooth curvature, and upright handle reflect Norman's (1986) intuitive design principles, reducing physical strain while maintaining balance during pouring.

The carved mountain motif at the base, referencing Kawagarbo, is rendered using simplified geometric lines. This visual approach aligns with modern aesthetic preferences observed in the questionnaire (Figure 11), where over 65% of respondents preferred stylized, minimalist patterns over ornate traditional motifs. The wave forms representing Dian Lake flow horizontally across the pot's lower body, symbolizing continuity and calm—qualities valued by younger users for emotional resonance (Ismail, 2016).

Dots surrounding the lid were inspired by snowflakes or pollen, creating an abstract emotional space. These allow users to project their own interpretations, increasing symbolic ownership and engagement—supporting Peach view that customization and symbolic content enhance product attachment (Peach, 2009).

The following table summarizes the five core design features of Prototype A, based on the design framework proposed in Step 2. These features are aligned with Generation Y user expectations as derived from questionnaire results and supported by theoretical constructs such as Norman's intuitive design and Zukin's cultural reinterpretation.

Table 2 Design Feature Highlights

Feature	Description
Functional Design	Ergonomic spout and handle with 300ml capacity for personal tea rituals
Cultural Symbolism	Dual symbolism of mountain and lake represents harmony and spirituality
Personalization Possibility	Visual metaphor invites user interpretation and emotional ownership
Sustainable Consideration	Use of local natural clay and traditional low-waste finishing technique
Modern Aesthetic Integration	Minimalist spherical form with abstract dot motifs

This table demonstrates how Prototype A translates theory-informed design principles into product features. Each row corresponds directly to one of the five dimensions in the design framework (Step 2.2), enabling structured expert evaluation in Step 4.

3.2 Prototype B: 'Segmented Landscape' Vase Inspired by Yuan Yang Rice Terraces

Design Motivation and Conceptual Origin

The vase is another high-performing category in Yun Tao Ceramics Studio's portfolio, especially popular in formal gift markets. However, current vase models emphasize intricate carving and symmetrical formality, making them less appealing to younger users who favor expressive, modular, and contemporary aesthetics.

Prototype B reinterprets the vase using the Yuan Yang Rice Terraces as a conceptual foundation—transforming agricultural rhythm and environmental harmony

into segmented visual modules. This not only pays homage to Yunnan's cultural landscape but also invites customization: each geometric segment can become a site for pattern personalization or symbolic abstraction. The narrow mouth and rounded base retain the traditional silhouette, while the bold, structured segmentation introduces a distinctively modern compositional logic.

The prototype addresses Generation Y's design expectations through form and story: geometric abstraction for visual simplicity, personalization through modular interpretation, and a narrative of cultural sustainability rooted in nature. It responds directly to the user needs revealed in Step 1—favoring emotionally resonant, environmentally conscious, and structurally innovative ceramics.



Figure 25 Yuan Yang Rice Terraces

Source From: <http://cn.iyunan.travel/html/190318/688.html>

The vase preserves a classical Chinese silhouette—narrow neck and rounded body—but transforms its visual logic through surface segmentation, creating a mosaic-like canvas. Within each geometrically defined block, abstract or symbolic representations of nature are embedded: layered terraced fields, soil texture, water

curves, and seasonal color palettes. This layout pays homage to the multiplicity of Yunnan's agricultural culture and terrain while delivering a highly stylized visual rhythm.

This design is targeted toward Generation Y consumers who appreciate structural clarity and emotional subtlety. It reflects a modular design logic, suggesting each block as a narrative module that contributes to a larger story. The segmentation also allows for potential personalization—offering unique material treatments, textures, or even interactive elements in future iterations.

By blending color abstraction (seen in the flat tone swatches inspired by the terraces' seasonal appearance) with traditional form and digital design principles, this vase bridges history and future. It stands not only as a decorative object but also as a metaphorical "landscape" a vessel that captures the fragmentation and fluidity of contemporary identity.

Table 3 Design Dimension Specifications of Prototype B – Segmented Landscape Vase

Attributes	Description
Height	25 cm
Mouth Diameter	5 cm
Base Diameter	12 cm
Form	Classical silhouette with segmented surface geometry
Motifs	Abstracted terraced patterns

The 25 cm height and narrow 5 cm mouth diameter of Prototype B establish a strong vertical presence suitable for home decor or ceremonial use. These dimensions intentionally preserve the classical silhouette of traditional vases while integrating modern abstraction through surface segmentation. The 12 cm base diameter ensures structural stability and visual grounding, which is important in spatial design aesthetics. The form accommodates both visual storytelling and physical personalization, aligning with Generation Y's values of individuality and symbolic ownership. The segmented motif zones not only pay tribute to the Yuan Yang terraces but also support modular visual logic, allowing users to mentally map narrative fragments onto the surface. These

dimensions were selected to make the vase both an artistic and participatory object, providing a canvas for interpretation while retaining visual harmony.

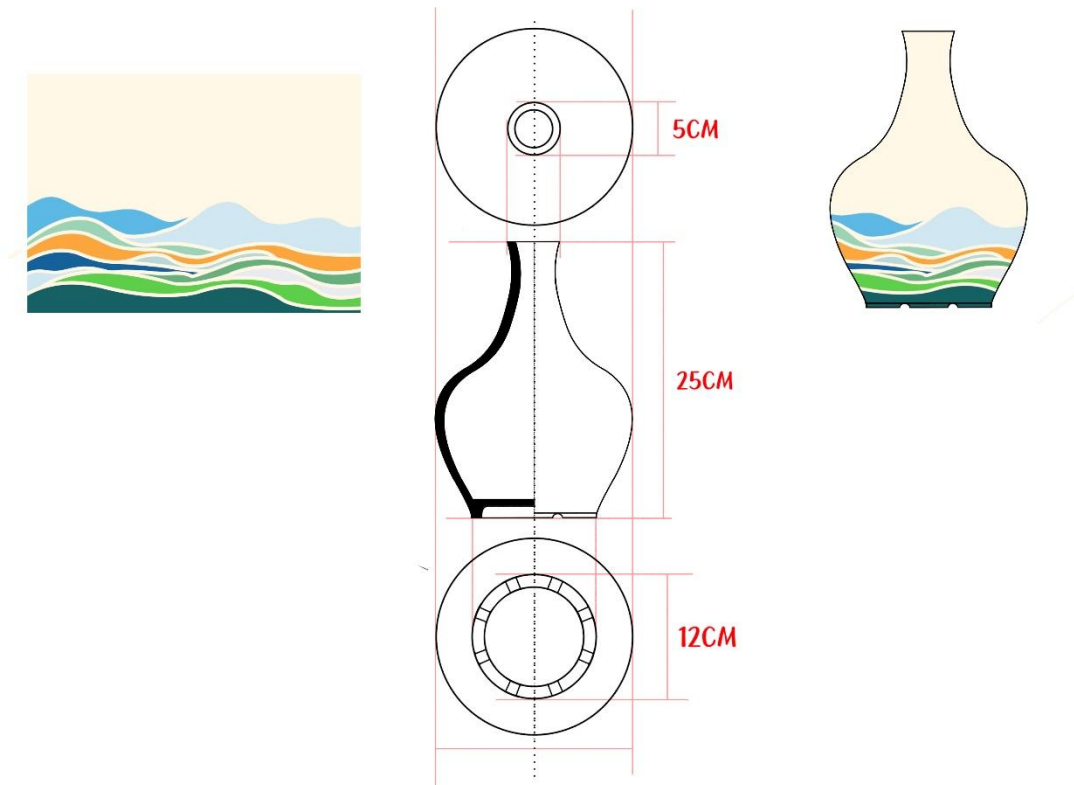


Figure 26 Prototype B Draft Drawing and Three Views

Source From: Researcher

Design Illustration Explanation and Rationale

The vase maintains a traditional Chinese silhouette but overlays it with segmented surface geometry, mimicking the layered structure of Yuan Yang rice terraces. This decision draws from Greenhalgh's theory of cultural storytelling through pattern abstraction and is intended to make the vase a visual metaphor for layered identity and sustainability (Greenhalgh, 2002).

Each segment is framed with a unique texture or tone, enabling modular customization. This reflects the strong consumer preference for personalized ceramic design, as confirmed in survey Figure 12, where over 70% of respondents expressed high demand for customizable surfaces. The matte-polished contrast visually

communicates the tension between tradition and innovation—key themes discussed by Zukin (2010) and echoed by ceramic artist Zeng Dandan during interviews.

The color palette—green, orange, blue, and gray—draws inspiration from seasonal variations in terrace landscapes and appeals to Generation Y’s preference for natural, grounded tones with symbolic meaning.

The following table illustrates how Prototype B uses modular segmentation and geometric abstraction to fulfill the five-dimensional design criteria. It is aimed at Generation Y consumers who value customization and symbolic complexity.

Table 4 Design Feature Highlights

Feature	Description
Functional Design	Balanced structure for decorative use, stable base and narrow mouth
Cultural Symbolism	Stylized terrace segmentation as a metaphor for layered heritage
Personalization Possibility	Segments can be adapted with user-selected finishes or textures
Sustainable Consideration	Crafted from recycled clay with matte/polished contrast for low-gloss firing
Modern Aesthetic Integration	Bold geometric layout and color-blocking in seasonal palette

Each feature aligns with the priorities revealed in the survey (Figures 6, 11, and 12), and the cultural narrative strategy discussed in Chapter 2. The table helps clarify how visual abstraction serves both aesthetic and symbolic purposes.

3.3 Prototype C: ‘Bamboo Frame’ Pottery Planter

Design Motivation and Conceptual Origin

While not a traditional focus of Yun Tao Ceramics Studio, small ceramic planters have seen rising demand among younger urban consumers, especially those drawn to interior decor and green living trends. However, the studio’s existing planter designs are limited, often lacking symbolic richness or customization options.

Prototype C introduces a cylindrical planter that merges traditional bamboo motifs with personalization flexibility. Inspired by both Yunnan's bamboo craftsmanship and the poetic symbolism of resilience and simplicity in Chinese philosophy, this design features dual bands of bamboo-weaving patterns and a blank center band for user customization—such as names, hand-drawn motifs, or digital inscriptions.

This prototype directly addresses Generation Y's interest in lifestyle-integrated design, environmental consciousness, and co-creation. The inclusion of drainage design, sustainable clay, and aesthetic modularity make it both functional and symbolically rich. As a result, the design aligns with user needs outlined in Step 1 and integrates all five dimensions of the design framework, demonstrating how traditional motifs can be contemporized to engage new audiences.



Figure 27 Editor Pattern Material

Source From: <https://www.sucaisucan.com/sucan/12921875.html>

The surface is segmented horizontally into three bands. The top and bottom bands incorporate a repetitive bamboo weave pattern that pays homage to Yunnan's vernacular materials and craftsmanship. The central band, however, is intentionally left partially blank, framed by symmetrical motifs, and reserved for user-defined decoration. This can be filled via digital customization or by artisans upon order with initials,

auspicious words, hand-drawn bamboo ink scenes, or personalized landscape elements.

The result is a hybrid of ready-made craft and user-co-creation, deeply aligned with Generation Y's value system of individuality, nature appreciation, and narrative ownership. The bamboo theme reflects simplicity and resilience—values associated with moral integrity in Chinese culture—while the modular customization enables symbolic layering.

The product design also considers drainage (bottom holes), elevated feet, and proportion harmony, making it practical for indoor planting and easy to clean or move.

Table 5 Design Dimension Specifications of Prototype C – Bamboo Frame Planter

Attributes	Description
Height	15 cm
Diameter	20 cm
Wall Thickness	Approx. 1 cm
Motif Bands	Bamboo weaving bands (top/bottom), blank customization band (center)
Functional Additions	Drainage holes and elevated base

The proportions of Prototype C reflect the design expectations of urban lifestyle users seeking both functionality and cultural resonance in home accessories. A 15 cm height and 20 cm diameter provide ample planting space while ensuring the container remains suitable for desks, windowsills, or small interior zones common to Generation Y consumers. The wall thickness of approximately 1 cm achieves a balance between structural durability and visual lightness—especially important when using unglazed purple clay, which retains material texture as part of its aesthetic value. The three-zone surface layout, with bamboo motif bands at the top and bottom and a customizable blank center, was chosen to reflect the principles of the New Craft Design Theory (Zhou, 2022), emphasizing tradition-modernity coexistence and user-led co-creation. These spatial and visual decisions make the product a narrative lifestyle piece rather than a generic planter.

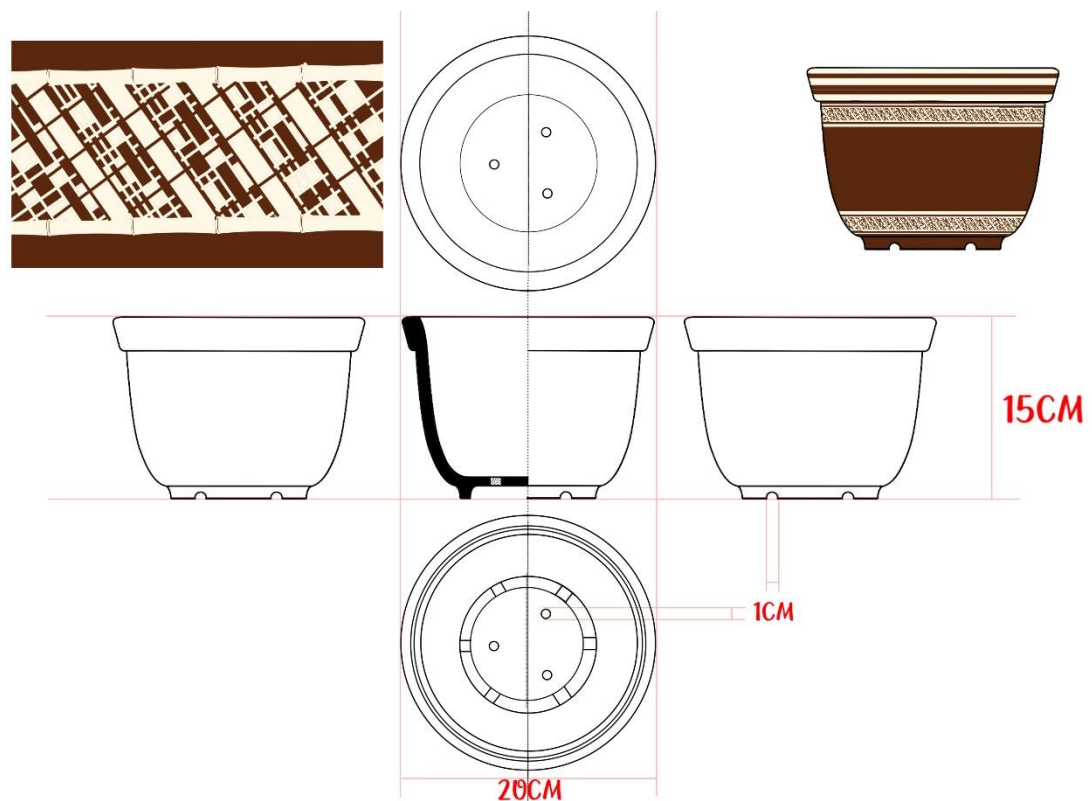


Figure 28 Prototype C Draft Drawing and Three Views

Source Form: Researcher

Design Illustration Explanation and Rationale

The cylindrical planter is divided into three bands—top and bottom featuring bamboo weaving patterns, and a blank middle section for user-defined personalization. This layout is informed by both aesthetic and symbolic logic. Bamboo, a traditional Chinese symbol of resilience and clarity, is used to ground the product in cultural heritage while providing visual rhythm.

The blank center space enables modular input—such as initials, symbols, or handwritten text—supporting consumer co-creation, as promoted in New Craft Design Theory (Nimkulrat, 2012). This fulfills personalization demands seen in the questionnaire (Figure 8 and 12) and expert recommendations on symbolic layering.

The drainage system and elevated foot design not only meet practical gardening needs but also align with Schroeder's environmental sustainability

model(Schroeder et al., 2015). By combining tradition, personalization, and functionality, this prototype appeals to Generation Y's need for hybrid lifestyle products.

The table below highlights the functional and symbolic design features of Prototype C. This planter was developed for eco-conscious urban consumers interested in culturally rooted lifestyle products.

Table 6 Design Feature Highlights

Feature	Description
Functional Design	Includes drainage holes, wide rim, and elevated foot for airflow
Cultural Symbolism	Bamboo motif represents resilience and harmony in Chinese culture
Personalization Possibility	Middle band reserved for user-defined text or visual customization
Sustainable Consideration	Use of scrap clay and water-reduction techniques during production
Modern Aesthetic Integration	Simplified cylinder shape with horizontal balance and visual clarity

Prototype C aligns especially with the “lifestyle product” demand found in Step 1.3. The table serves to operationalize the symbolic-to-functional transition from research insights to final design form.

The three prototypes—teapot, vase, and ceramic planter—were strategically selected from Yun Tao Ceramics Studio's existing product categories based on their commercial significance and the identified need for generational re-alignment. Each design incorporates the five core elements outlined in the design framework: functionality, cultural symbolism, personalization, sustainability, and modern aesthetics. These dimensions were guided by both literature insights (Chapter 2) and empirical findings from the questionnaire and expert interviews (Step 1).

The tabulated design features for each prototype provide a systematic overview of how the conceptual framework was translated into tangible product forms. These

features were intentionally designed not only to improve product-market fit for Generation Y but also to serve as evaluation criteria in the following stage.

In Step 4, professional ceramic experts will assess the three prototypes using these same five dimensions. Their feedback will help determine the most suitable direction for final refinement, ensuring that the chosen design balances tradition with innovation, and theory with real-world practicality.

Step 4: Expert Feedback and Evaluation

This section presents the expert evaluation of the three design prototypes: Prototype A (modern personalized teapot), Prototype B (geometric abstract art vase), and Prototype C (environmentally friendly customizable planter). Drawing upon professional critiques, the analysis is divided into three key dimensions—craft integration, functional effectiveness, and cultural expression—to identify the most suitable design for Generation Y consumers. Each prototype is analyzed with reference to expert perspectives from three ceramic professionals: Mr. Li Weizhong, Mr. Ma Xingyun, and Ms. Zeng Dandan.

4.1 Integration of Traditional Craftsmanship and Modern Design

Experts generally agreed that Prototype A demonstrates the most balanced and refined integration of traditional Jian Shui purple pottery techniques with modern design expression. The engraved snow mountains and wave patterns, executed using color-inlay techniques, were praised for capturing the regional spirit of Yunnan. Mr. Li highlighted the technical accuracy and sophistication of the line work, while Mr. Ma commended clear design language and symbolic distinctiveness. Ms. Zeng proposed enriching the interaction between the pot body and lid to build more engaging narrative resonance for young users.

At the same time, several experts pointed out areas for improvement. Mr. Li noted that the flow of modern lines could be more dynamic and less mechanically symmetrical to better align with the natural spontaneity valued in contemporary

aesthetics. Mr. Ma added that the lid and spout could benefit from subtle contour adjustments to enhance their visual refinement.

In contrast, Prototype B was recognized for its innovative approach in blending geometric abstraction with natural motifs, such as the Yuan Yang rice terraces. The segmented design presented a bold reconfiguration of the pottery surface into a modular composition. However, Mr. Li and Ms. Zeng expressed concern that the strong rationality and abstraction might dilute the gentle elegant characteristic of traditional Jian Shui pottery. They suggested increasing the proportion of organic lines or simplifying the number of surface divisions to avoid visual overload.

Prototype C stood out for its environmental consciousness and its clever use of traditional bamboo-weaving and ink bamboo motifs. Mr. Ma described it as a compelling blend of heritage and sustainability. Yet, both Mr. Li and Ms. Zeng warned that the complexity of the production process, especially when using recycled clay requires meticulous control, as technical inconsistencies could compromise aesthetic quality. They encouraged incorporating more visibly purple-pottery-specific textures to reinforce the connection between tradition and innovation.

4.2 Functional Evaluation

Prototype A received the highest marks for functional performance. Its ergonomic handle, well-balanced spout, and 300ml capacity make it highly suitable for everyday tea consumption and personal rituals. All three experts recognized the design's strong alignment with both utility and emotional engagement. Ms. Zeng emphasized that beyond practical usability, the teapot also fulfills a symbolic role as an object of cultural ritual. She encouraged further exploration into how the act of pouring tea could be aesthetically and symbolically enhanced.

In comparison, Prototype B's functional aspects were viewed as secondary to its artistic intent. The narrow mouth of the vase limits its versatility in floral arrangements, reducing its everyday usability. Mr. Ma acknowledged its role as a decorative piece, but stressed the need for more generous dimensions at the top to better serve functional display purposes.

Prototype C was noted for its practical gardening potential. Its shallow form, drainage holes, and wide opening make it suitable for small plants. However, Mr. Li pointed out that the design of the drainage system could be improved for better water flow and plant health. Mr. Ma added that sealing, anti-seepage layering, and material texture needed refinement, especially given the variability of recycled clay performance. Ms. Zeng recommended adapting the planter to fit into more diverse interior scenarios, such as compact urban spaces or desktop environments.

4.3 Cultural Expression Evaluation

Experts unanimously agreed that Prototype A had the strongest cultural resonance. It reflects core regional symbols—such as the Kawagarbo snow mountain and Dian Lake waves—and applies them in a visually compelling and conceptually grounded way. Mr. Li noted its success in blending spiritual symbolism with everyday usability. Mr. Ma praised its ability to evoke emotional attachment through recognizably local yet universally appealing imagery. Ms. Zeng highlighted its storytelling potential and encouraged further enhancement of symbolic interaction across different parts of the vessel (e.g., lid, knob, body).

Prototype B, while admired for its artistic innovation, suffered from a degree of cultural abstraction that weakened its ability to communicate directly with users. All three experts noted that while the terrace motif holds deep local significance, its translation into fragmented geometric forms risks obscuring its origin for less culturally informed audiences. Mr. Ma suggested integrating poetic inscriptions or landscape context to restore symbolic clarity.

Prototype C, though grounded in traditional Chinese bamboo symbolism, was seen as weaker in expressive depth. While its environmental positioning aligns with current social values, experts felt that the storytelling aspect could be deepened. Ms. Zeng proposed incorporating kiln effects, natural texture variations, or subtle inscriptions to enhance emotional and cultural layers, making the planter not just a utility object, but also a conversation piece.

4.4 Final Design selection

After comprehensive evaluation of the three prototypes using the five-dimensional design framework—functionality, cultural symbolism, personalization, sustainability, and modern aesthetics—all three experts unanimously selected Prototype A: Mountain and Flow Teapot as the most balanced and promising direction for further refinement. This decision was grounded in its ergonomic usability, narrative depth, and faithful yet innovative use of traditional Jian Shui pottery techniques.

Mr. Li Weizhong emphasized that the color-inlay carving and surface polishing techniques in Prototype A best represent the craftsmanship legacy of Jian Shui ceramics. Mr. Ma Xingyun praised the symbolic duality of the mountain and wave motifs, viewing them as culturally resonant metaphors with contemporary poetic potential. Ms. Zeng Dandan noted the design's minimalist form and intuitive functionality, stating that it offers the most accessible entry point for younger consumers who seek emotional connection without excessive complexity.

While acknowledging the artistic merit of Prototypes B and C, the experts agreed that Prototype A best fulfilled the integration of cultural narrative, usability, and symbolic flexibility. It was seen as a model that could retain artisan identity while expanding into broader consumer segments—especially among Generation Y.

This expert consensus forms the foundation for the next stage of the design process. In Step 5, the Mountain and Flow Teapot will be refined further based on detailed feedback, with a focus on optimizing structural elements, enhancing cultural storytelling, and improving user-centered features. The refinement phase aims to ensure that the final product meets both traditional standards of craftsmanship and contemporary demands for personalization, functionality, and emotional resonance.

Step 5. Finalize and Refine the Design

Following the comprehensive evaluations conducted in Step 4, Prototype A—Mountain and Flow Teapot—was selected by all three expert reviewers as the final design direction for refinement. The unanimous decision was based on the prototype's

outstanding balance between traditional craftsmanship, cultural symbolism, intuitive usability, and its potential for emotional connection with Generation Y consumers.

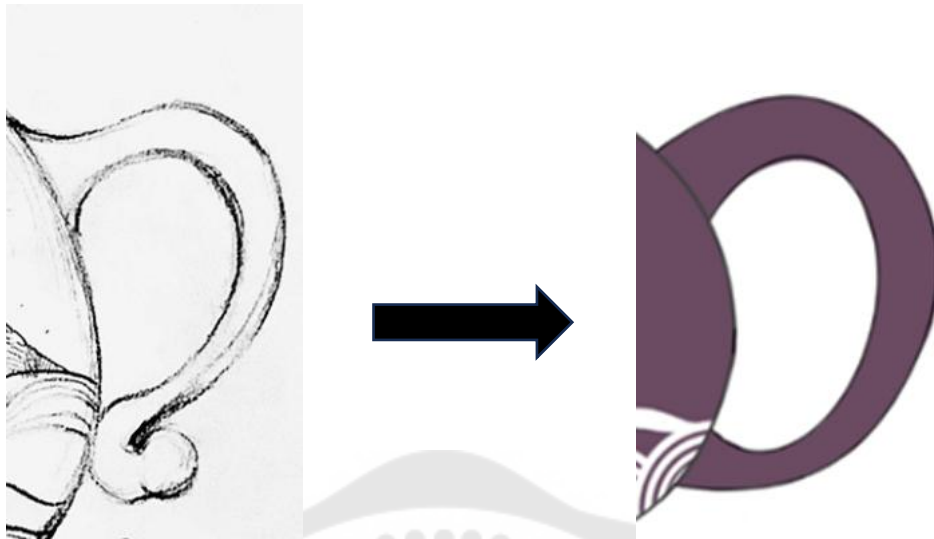
In this final design development step, the prototype was refined in accordance with three major dimensions derived from the theoretical design framework established in Chapter 2: functional optimization, cultural-symbolic enhancement, and user-driven personalization and sustainability. Each refinement decision was grounded in empirical research, including expert interviews, questionnaire results, and literature analysis.

5.1 Functional Optimization

Functional improvement was a top priority, especially considering that the final product needed to appeal not only as a cultural artifact but also as a practical everyday object. Generation Y consumers, as indicated in Step 1.3 and supported by Ismail (2016), prioritize ease of use, compactness, and adaptability to urban lifestyle settings. Based on this insight, as well as direct expert feedback, several structural and ergonomic enhancements were implemented.

5.1.1 Handle and Grip Design

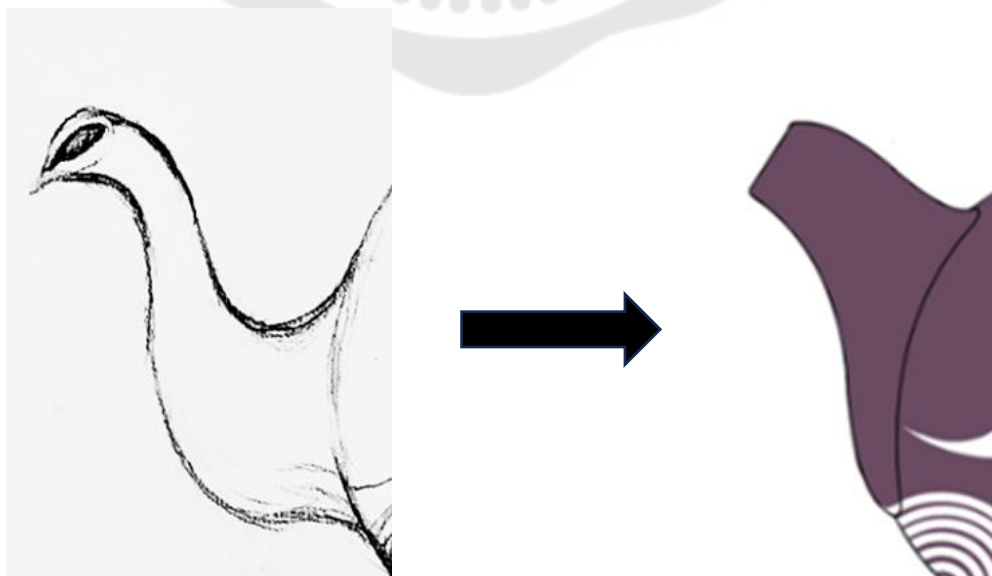
The original handle, although aesthetically aligned with traditional Chinese teapots, lacked ergonomic adaptability for one-handed use—a key user preference uncovered in the questionnaire survey. In the refined prototype, the handle was redesigned with a more upright curvature and a widened inner space. This change enhances grip comfort for both left- and right-handed users while ensuring better balance during pouring. The transition angle between the handle and body was softened to reduce visual tension and physical strain.



Additionally, the handle's material thickness was subtly reduced to improve tactile balance. This redesign was validated through ergonomic simulation modeling and expert feedback from Ms. Zeng Dandan, who emphasized the importance of physical comfort and accessibility for younger, style-conscious users.

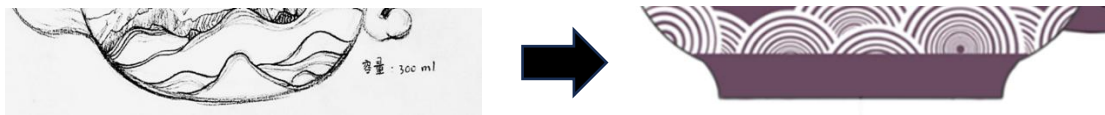
5.1.2 Spout Adjustment and Pouring Control

The original prototype featured a traditional swan-neck spout, which posed minor dripping issues during fast pouring. To address this, the refined spout was lengthened by 1.2 cm and the inner lip angle was adjusted by 8 degrees, resulting in a smoother flow and reduced spill potential. This change enhances user satisfaction in daily use scenarios such as quick tea preparation in the office or at home.



5.1.3 Base and Volume Optimization

The base of the teapot was reinforced with an additional 0.5 cm of thickness to improve balance and durability on modern flat surfaces like glass and steel. This reflects the design adaptation required for contemporary home environments, which differ significantly from traditional wooden tea tables.



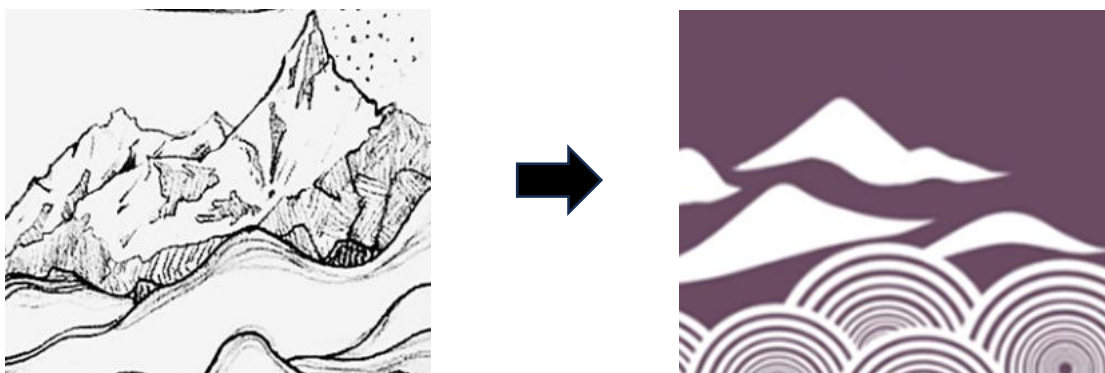
In terms of capacity, the teapot was refined to hold exactly **300 ml**, a value supported by over 60% of Generation Y survey respondents who favored moderate-size teapots over large ceremonial ones. The interior walls were also marked with a discreet fill line to indicate optimal water level.

5.2 Cultural and Symbolic Enhancement

Jian Shui purple pottery is not only a utilitarian craft but also a form of symbolic narrative. In response to expert suggestions, particularly from Mr. Ma Xingyun, symbolic enhancements were incorporated into the final prototype to deepen the cultural resonance without overwhelming the modern aesthetic.

5.2.1 Motif Abstraction and Visual Storytelling

The original prototype featured direct representations of Kawagarbo Snow Mountain and Dian Lake. These were transformed into geometric abstractions inspired by Yunnan embroidery patterns and Taoist cosmology. The base of the teapot now features a mountain range rendered in interlocking triangles, suggesting elevation and clarity. The wave pattern is expressed through three parallel curves fading at the edges, symbolizing flow, impermanence, and emotional continuity.



These adjustments address Generation Y's preference for symbolic ambiguity and aesthetic minimalism, as documented by Zukin (2010) and supported by the questionnaire results in Step 1.

5.2.2 Surface Texture and Material Integrity

The inlay carving technique was retained but applied more selectively, concentrating on the lower third of the teapot body to avoid overwhelming the visual balance. The knife marks were polished to a semi-gloss finish using traditional manual polishing, a process praised by Mr. Li Weizhong for preserving the natural texture of unglazed purple clay.

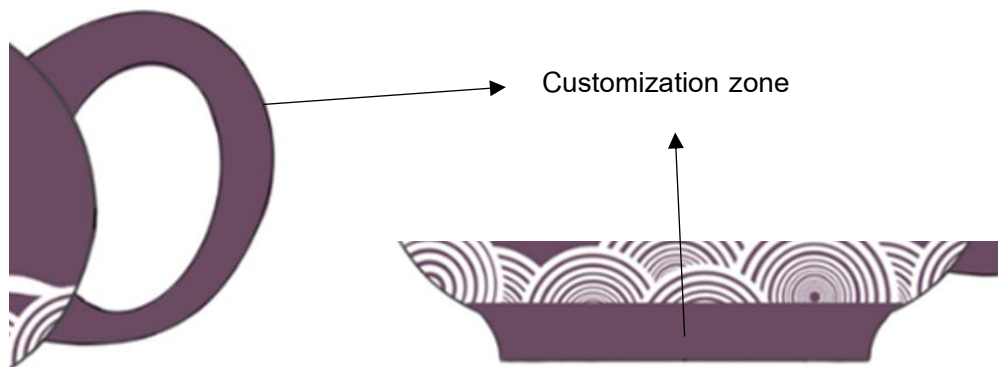
The lid's dotted pattern was rendered with radial balance, creating a mandala-like structure that encourages meditation and focus—appealing to Generation Y's growing interest in mindfulness and spirituality.

5.3 Personalization and Sustainability Integration

Generation Y consumers expect products to reflect their identities and ethical values. As such, the refined prototype includes both personalization features and sustainable upgrades, in alignment with the third and fourth dimensions of the design framework.

5.3.1 Engraving and User Involvement

A customization zone was added to the underside of the handle and the teapot base. This space allows for laser-etched or hand-carved personalization, including initials, short mantras, or dates. Users can select from five font styles rooted in Chinese calligraphy or upload their own designs. This co-creation element reflects the "co-authorship" idea in Nimkulrat's New Craft Design Theory (Nimkulrat, 2012).



Personalization not only enhances product uniqueness but also strengthens emotional attachment, which in turn increases product longevity—an indirect form of sustainable consumption.

5.3.2 Sustainable Material Use

In response to expert feedback, especially from Mr. Li Weizhong, the clay body formula was adjusted to include 10% recycled clay collected from excess trimmings during wheel-throwing. The use of natural polishing instead of chemical glazing reduces environmental impact. Additionally, firing was optimized using lower-temperature cycles, achieving energy savings without compromising durability.

5.4 Summary of Refinement Results

The final design of the Mountain and Flow Teapot represents a synthesis of cultural storytelling, structural optimization, and modern consumer alignment. Unlike conventional product development, this process was guided by a multidimensional framework integrating expert insight, empirical data, and theoretical analysis.



Figure 29 Modified prototype A manuscript and rendering

Source From: Researcher

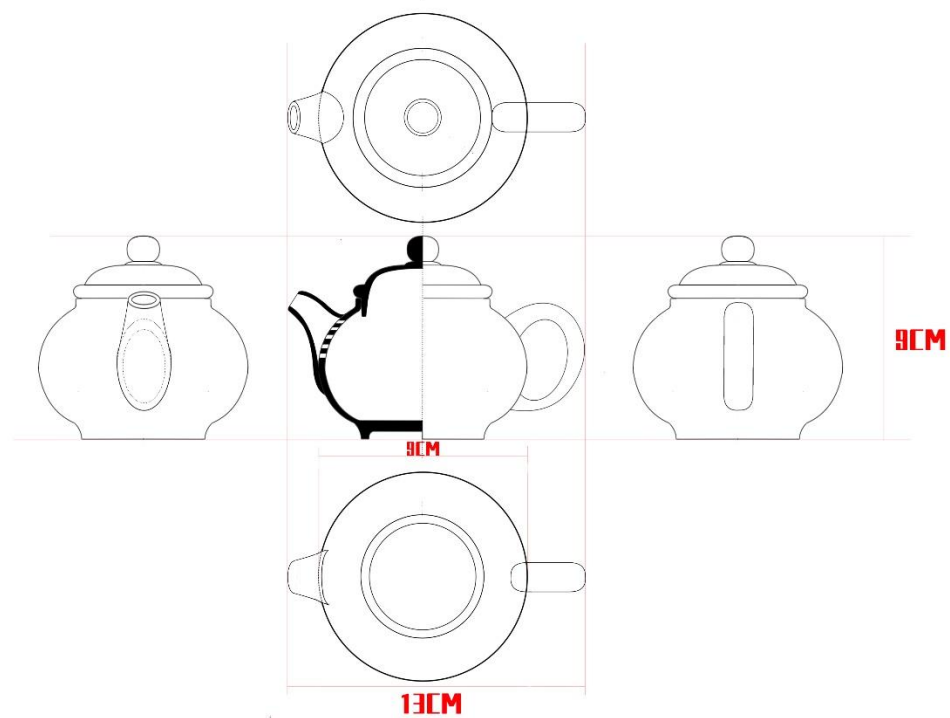


Figure 30 Modified horizontal three views

Source From: Researcher

The refinements introduced in this step respond directly to:

- The expert recommendations in Step 4,
- The user expectations revealed through questionnaires,
- The design goals established in Chapter 1.

By improving usability, enriching symbolic meaning, and supporting personalization and sustainability, the final design not only fulfills the research objectives but also demonstrates a viable path forward for reviving traditional crafts through contemporary design strategies.

In the next chapter, these results will be discussed in the context of broader cultural and generational shifts, offering conclusions and practical recommendations for ceramic designers, educators, and cultural entrepreneurs.



CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Conclusions

This research set out to investigate how traditional Jian Shui purple pottery can be redesigned to appeal to the aesthetic and emotional needs of Generation Y consumers. Drawing upon a multidimensional methodology and supported by theoretical insights and empirical data, this study offers two primary conclusions, each corresponding to the research objectives stated in Chapter 1.

Conclusion for Objective 1:

To identify the aesthetic expectations and design preferences of Generation Y consumers in the context of ceramic product consumption.

The study revealed that Generation Y (born between 1981 and 1996) demonstrates a unique set of design expectations shaped by their socio-technological environment, education level, and lifestyle orientation. Unlike older generations, who may value heritage, formality, and collectability in traditional ceramic ware, Generation Y consumers are deeply influenced by values such as individuality, cultural fusion, emotional storytelling, and sustainability (Mangold & Faulds, 2009; Williams & Page, 2011).

This generation seeks products that not only serve practical functions but also express personal identity and socio-environmental consciousness. They prefer minimalist yet symbolically rich aesthetics, soft and neutral color tones, compact product sizes, and options for customization. These insights were consistently validated through the user questionnaire and echoed in related literature and generational studies.

Key findings include:

- 65% of respondents favored tea vessels with symbolic designs rather than literal motifs
- Over 70% indicated that personalization options significantly increased their willingness to purchase

- A majority valued storytelling and embedded cultural narratives over purely decorative designs.

These preferences informed us of the development of the five-dimensional design framework, which in turn guided the product design decisions in subsequent chapters.

Conclusion for Objective 2:

To develop a design approach that integrates traditional Jian Shui purple pottery craftsmanship with modern design elements to enhance market relevance among younger consumers.

The second objective was achieved through a staged design process that included user research, expert interviews, iterative prototyping, and refinement guided by theory. The chosen prototype, the Mountain and Flow Teapot, successfully integrated traditional carving, polishing, and firing methods with modern form, function, and narrative sensibilities.

Specifically, this prototype demonstrated how:

- Ergonomic and functional adjustments (e.g., improved handle curvature, optimal capacity, anti-drip spout) enhanced usability without compromising traditional aesthetic value.
- Cultural abstraction of mountain and wave motifs aligned with younger consumers' desire for meaning-making and interpretive design.
- Personalization zones and sustainable material integration addressed environmental and identity-based consumption demands.

Moreover, the final design serves as an evidence-based demonstration of how New Craft Design Theory (Nimkulrat, 2012) and User-Centered Design can intersect to revitalize heritage crafts. It shows that traditional crafts can evolve not by abandoning their roots, but by reinterpreting them through the lens of contemporary culture and consumer psychology.

Thus, the research not only fulfilled its stated objectives but also proposed a transferable model for other cultural craft industries seeking to reconnect with younger audiences.

5.2 Discussion

The findings and outcomes of this study have far-reaching implications for both the field of ceramic design and the broader cultural product industry. In this section, the design insights are discussed across five interconnected perspectives: the transformation of traditional crafts, Generation Y's evolving cultural role, design methodology and innovation, cross-cultural branding, and the redefinition of the designer's identity.

5.2.1 Transforming Tradition: From Artifact to Lifestyle Product

One of the most compelling outcomes of this research is the shift in how traditional ceramic products—once seen as static artifacts of cultural preservation—can now be reimagined as dynamic lifestyle products. Jian Shui purple pottery, with its deep-rooted symbolism, elaborate carving, and labor-intensive processes, risks becoming irrelevant if it remains locked in museum-like formality.

However, this study demonstrates that transformation does not require the abandonment of tradition. Rather, selective evolution, grounded in user insight and cultural reinterpretation, allows traditional crafts to become part of daily life again. The final prototype exemplifies how a tea vessel can transition from a collector's piece to a mindful, expressive, and functional product—embedded with cultural memory, yet relevant to contemporary use.

5.2.2 Generation Y: From Consumers to Cultural Curators

The Generation Y audience plays a pivotal role in redefining the value of cultural products. No longer passive recipients of design, they act as *cultural curators*, choosing products that resonate with their identity, values, and narratives. The customization feature in the final prototype, for instance, is not merely decorative—it

allows users to co-author their own stories, making the product a vessel of emotional and cultural continuity.

This reflects a broader trend where users demand deeper participation in product identity and reject standardized mass-market aesthetics. The implication is clear: cultural products must not only “represent” tradition—they must be reactivated through personal relevance.

5.2.3 Designing as Translation: Theory to Practice

Methodologically, this research position design as a form of cultural translation—taking abstract user insights, theoretical principles, and heritage values, and transforming them into concrete, usable objects. The five-dimensional design framework acted as a translator between theory and form, ensuring that every decision—whether visual, structural, or symbolic—was rooted in both scholarly understanding and real-world demand.

This highlights a key lesson for future design researchers: successful product development in traditional industries requires not only design skill, but also cultural empathy, user sensitivity, and theoretical grounding.

5.2.4 Branding and Cross-Cultural Communication

Although this study was rooted in Yunnan’s local ceramic tradition, its conclusions point toward a global issue: how can local crafts find relevance in a globalized market? The answer lies in branding not just the product, but its story. Generation Y is more likely to engage with a product that explains its cultural roots, production ethics, and symbolic content.

In this context, the integration of a QR code with background storytelling and the eco-conscious packaging design is not superficial—it is a critical communication tool bridging local identity with global values. Purple pottery, then, becomes not just a teapot, but a narrative artifact that conveys Yunnan’s philosophy, values, and aesthetics.

5.2.5 Designer as Storyteller and Cultural Bridge

Finally, this research experience has redefined the role of the designer—not merely as a form-giver, but as a storyteller, cultural negotiator, and empathy-builder. The designer must navigate multiple systems: tradition vs. modernity, aesthetic vs. function, and global trends vs. local authenticity.

In doing so, designers assume a powerful position—not only shaping objects but shaping meaning. This research affirms that product design is a cultural act, and that even a small ceramic vessel can carry within it histories, identities, futures.

5.3 Research Contributions

This study contributes to the fields of design theory, ceramic product development, and craft innovation in the following ways:

5.3.1 Theoretical Contribution

- It proposes a practical five-dimensional design framework that merges traditional cultural expression with user-centered innovation.
- It validates generational theory (e.g., Norman, Zukin, Williams & Page) in the context of tangible ceramic product creation.
- It extends the relevance of New Craft Design Theory by providing a real-world design application that merges artisan practice with modern consumer co-authorship.

5.3.2 Practical and Educational Contribution

- The study offers a reproducible model for other ceramic studios facing generational and market transitions.
- The prototype design and refinement method may serve as teaching material in design education, especially in courses combining cultural studies, product design, and consumer research.
- For practitioners, it presents a case for how traditional crafts can remain competitive by integrating personalization, ecological design, and emotional storytelling.

5.4 Recommendations for Future Research

While this study offers a solid foundation for modernizing Jian Shui purple pottery, several directions remain open for future research:

Wider user testing with real product samples can further validate the design refinements in a practical context.

Cross-cultural comparative studies may reveal how traditional Chinese ceramics are received by international Generation Y consumers.

Further exploration into digital personalization tools (e.g., AR engraving previews) could enhance user engagement and co-creation experiences.

Ultimately, this research demonstrates the viability and cultural potential of applying user-centered, data-driven design to the revitalization of traditional crafts. By rethinking tradition, we do not abandon the past, allow it to live anew in modern life.



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APPENDIX



APPENDIX

Appendix A: Survey Questionnaire

1. What's your age?
 - a) 18-25 years old
 - b) 26-30 years old
 - c) 31-15 years old
 - d) 36-40 years old
 - e) 41 years old and above
2. What is your gender?
 - a) Male
 - b) Female
 - c) Other
3. What is your occupation?
 - a) Students
 - b) Office workers
 - c) Freelancers
 - d) Entrepreneurs
 - e) Others
4. What is your monthly income level (RMB)?
 - a) Below 3,000 yuan
 - b) 3,000-6,000 yuan
 - c) 6,000-10,000 yuan
 - d) 10,000 yuan or more
 - e) Unwilling to disclose
5. Do you know Jian Shui purple pottery?
 - a) I don't know at all
 - b) I've heard of it but don't know it
 - c) I know some basic information
 - d) I know a little bit about it and have bought it
 - e) I know it very well and have bought it
6. Have you ever purchased ceramic products?

- a) Never bought
 - b) Bought, but rarely
 - c) Occasionally
 - d) Often
 - e) I am a fan of ceramic products
7. What factors do you consider when purchasing ceramic products?
- a) Price
 - b) Functionality
 - c) Design style
 - d) Cultural value
 - e) Environmentally friendly materials and sustainability
8. Do you like custom ceramic products?
- a) Not interested at all
 - b) Somewhat interesting, but not much
 - c) Neutral, sometimes consider it
 - d) Very much like it, willing to spend more on customization
 - e) Completely like customized products, I think it is more valuable
9. How do you usually buy ceramic products?
- a) Online shopping platforms
 - b) Ceramic specialty stores or brand stores
 - c) Friends' recommendations
 - d) Purchasing during travel, in museums, etc.
 - e) Other
10. When purchasing ceramic products, how accepting are you of traditional cultural elements?
- a) Not interested at all
 - b) Somewhat interesting, but not affecting the purchase
 - c) Somewhat interesting, but not a decisive factor
 - d) I am very fond of traditional cultural elements
 - e) Traditional culture is the key factor in my product selection
11. What style of ceramic product design do you prefer?
- a) Pure modern minimalist style

- b) Traditional handicraft style
 - c) Modern and traditional fusion style
 - d) Vintage style
 - e) Other
12. How much do you need personalized design for your ceramic products?
- a) Not necessary at all
 - b) Somewhat necessary, but not affecting purchase
 - c) Generally, sometimes considered
 - d) Very necessary, I hope each product has a unique design
 - e) Completely prefer personalized design
13. How much are you interested in modern designs for ceramic products (e.g. abstract patterns, simplified shapes)?
- a) Not interested at all
 - b) Somewhat interested, but not affecting purchase
 - c) Somewhat interesting, occasionally choose
 - d) Very much like, willing to spend more to buy
 - e) Completely prefer modern design
14. Do you think the functionality of ceramic products is more important than their aesthetics?
- a) Totally disagree
 - b) Somewhat disagree
 - c) Neutral
 - d) Somewhat agree
 - e) Strongly agree
15. When choosing ceramic products, how much attention do you pay to environmentally friendly materials?
- a) Not concerned at all
 - b) Somewhat concerned, but not affecting purchase
 - c) Normal, sometimes considered
 - d) I am very concerned, willing to spend more
 - e) Environmental protection is the key factor in my purchase

16. Are you willing to pay more for ceramic products that feature environmentally friendly materials and designs?
- a) Not at all willing
 - b) Somewhat willing, but not much
 - c) Moderately willing, but pay a certain price difference
 - d) Very willing to pay extra
 - e) Only enough to buy environmentally friendly products, regardless of the price difference
17. How much do you care about the sustainable production of ceramic products (such as low energy consumption, water conservation, etc.)?
- a) Not at all
 - b) Somewhat concerned, but not affecting purchase
 - c) Somewhat concerned, would consider environmental impact
 - d) Very concerned, tend to choose sustainably produced products
 - e) Sustainability is a key factor in my purchases
18. In the design of ceramic products, do you focus on the practicality of the product (such as easy to clean, durable, etc.)?
- a) Not at all
 - b) Somewhat concerned, but not the main factor
 - c) Somewhat concerned, one of the factors to consider
 - d) Very concerned, affecting the purchase decision
 - e) Full attention, practicality is the first priority
19. Which aspects of Jian Shui's traditional ceramic craftsmanship do you think need modernization and innovation?
- a) Modern design
 - b) Environmentally friendly and sustainable materials
 - c) Customized design and personalized selection
 - d) Fusion of modern colors and patterns
 - e) No need for innovation, traditional craftsmanship is perfect enough
20. What do you think about the combination of Jian Shui purple pottery's traditional craftsmanship and modern design?
- a) Strongly disagree, traditional craftsmanship should be maintained

- b) Slightly reserved, but can try to integrate
- c) Neutral, can accept certain modern elements
- d) Strongly support, the combination of modern design and tradition will make the product more attractive
- e) Strongly support, only the integration of modern design can attract young consumers

Appendix B: Interview Questions for Experts

1. Please introduce the traditional craftsmanship of Jian Shui purple pottery. Which traditional elements do you think are indispensable?
2. How do you think modern design elements (such as simplicity and abstract design) can be combined with traditional craftsmanship in Jian Shui purple pottery design?
3. In ceramic design, which do you think is more important, functionality or aesthetics? Why?
4. How do you understand Generation Y's demand for personalized and customized design? Do you think Jian Shui Purple Pottery should offer more customized options?
5. When designing Jian Shui purple pottery, did you consider environmentally friendly materials and sustainable design? How do I achieve this goal?
6. In Jian Shui purple pottery design, what do you think of the modern interpretation of traditional cultural symbols (such as calligraphy, landscape, etc.)?
7. As modern consumers increasingly value environmental protection and sustainable development, how do you think Jian Shui purple pottery can meet this demand while retaining traditional craftsmanship?
8. How do you think Jian Shui purple pottery will compete in the young market in the future? What innovative directions can attract the younger generation of consumers?
9. What do you think of the design trend of Jian Shui purple pottery in the current market? How should the design direction develop in the future?
10. In the design of Jian Shui purple pottery, how do you think we should strike a balance between functionality and cultural heritage?

Appendix C: Expert Interview Summary

1. Mr. Li Weizhong

Traditional Craftsmanship: Mr. Li emphasized the essential stages of Jian Shui purple pottery, including clay extraction from local mineral sources, aging and weathering of clay, hand-kneading, wheel-throwing, relief carving (particularly inlay and positive-negative carving), and manual polishing. He stressed that the absence of glaze and reliance on traditional firing techniques in a wood kiln are what give Jian Shui pottery its unique texture and natural gloss.

Modern Design Integration: He expressed support for designs that modernize but do not distort tradition, advocating for balanced integration—such as using abstract mountain or bamboo motifs within classical vessel forms. He highlighted the need to avoid superficial decoration trends disconnected from the core values of the craft.

Function vs. Aesthetics: Mr. Li believes that pure visual appeal is insufficient. For example, a teapot must pour smoothly, balance well in the hand, and retain heat appropriately—only then can artistic decoration enhance its value.

Customization Demand: According to him, personalized design allows traditional art to emotionally connect with contemporary users. He supports incorporating names, blessings, or symbolic narratives into the design.

Sustainability: Mr. Li suggested improving energy efficiency by updating wood kilns with better insulation and airflow design. He also mentioned experimenting with natural dyes and ash glazes derived from plant materials.

Cultural Symbols: He encourages integrating regional features (e.g., Yunnan topography, ethnic symbols) in abstract forms, allowing broader interpretation by the younger audience.

Future Trends: Mr. Li predicted that integrating mobile platforms, short videos, and digital platforms (like AR for previewing designs) would drive consumer engagement. He emphasized that storytelling is the next frontier of ceramic branding.

Balance Between Functionality and Tradition: He warned against copying forms without understanding their origin, and encouraged iterative reinterpretation rooted in both form and story.

2. Mr. Ma Xingyun

Traditional Craftsmanship: Mr. Ma reinforced the value of physical labor in forming Jian Shui pottery's character. He detailed the polishing techniques that create a soft, natural luster, requiring days of hand-finishing and patience.

Modern Design Integration: He emphasized visual clarity and modular surfaces—exploring symmetrical segmentations like those found in modern architecture or terraced rice fields. He believes such designs can maintain harmony while opening space for modern symbolism.

Function vs. Aesthetics: Mr. Ma cited examples where functional testing failed due to poor lid fit or misaligned handles, reminding young designers not to ignore real-world use. He believes beauty must emerge from good form and smart engineering.

Customization Demand: He proposed offering ceramic modules that users can personalize—either during ordering or via on-site customization events. He believes participatory design creates stronger brand loyalty.

Sustainability: Mr. Ma discussed potential use of recycled clay, low-carbon firing fuels, and batch-control kilns to reduce waste. He encourages using QR codes to communicate product origins and materials to users.

Cultural Symbols: He warned against over-decorating with cliché patterns. Instead, he supports cultural “quotation”—taking poetic fragments, philosophical symbols, or landscape metaphors and embedding them subtly.

Future Trends: He envisions co-branded products between designers and influencers, limited seasonal releases, and ceramic forms responding to lifestyle shifts (e.g., desktop gardens, tea rituals, workspace ceramics).

Balance Between Functionality and Tradition: Mr. Ma believes that the truest innovation occurs when form respects its historical context yet evolves to serve new life scenarios.

3. Ms. Zeng Dandan

Traditional Craftsmanship: Ms. Zeng detailed the artistic narrative of Jian Shui pottery, describing the inlay process as “painting with earth.” She emphasized training young artisans in the storytelling potential of each tool stroke.

Modern Design Integration: She welcomes intuitive, emotionally expressive designs, suggesting that not every piece must follow rigid traditional geometry. She supports freedom in proportion and asymmetry if the result tells a story.

Function vs. Aesthetics: She argues that function is itself a kind of beauty. A bowl that fits perfectly into the user's palm, or a cup whose rim feels soft to the lip—these are everyday poetics born from precise functional thinking.

Customization Demand: She supports offering narrative customization: consumers choose a theme, a quote, or a seasonal symbol to be embedded. She also recommends exploring collaborations with writers, illustrators, or musicians.

Sustainability: Ms. Zeng raised concerns about mass production undermining the spirit of craftsmanship. She advocates slow design and limited editions as more sustainable and emotionally valuable.

Cultural Symbols: She encourages experimental expression—such as fractured calligraphy or broken ink washes—to speak to modern emotions and life rhythms.

Future Trends: She believes in “living ceramics”—pieces not only used but emotionally experienced. She sees potential in hybrid forms that combine sound, scent, or light.

Balance Between Functionality and Tradition: She emphasized that every piece must speak through its form, not as imitation, but as lived reinterpretation. She encourages young designers to “inherit with awareness and create with intuition.”

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