Turkish Online Journal of Qualitative Inquiry (TOJQI)
Volume 12, Issue 7, July 2021: 12216-12225

Perspectives on Graphic Design Education in China from Stakeholders

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Abstract

This study examines how Chinese art education prepares students for their first employment. The research employs questionnaires to obtain data from three sources: students, teachers, and art professionals who can appraise students' abilities.

The poll revealed that students undervalue professionally skills (written communication, oral presentations, critiques, etc.) while overvaluing design skills (theory, principles, techniques, craft, etc). (i.e., programs, computer, coding, etc.).

As a result, art education should focus on skills other than finishing work effectively and efficiently, such as Photoshop and web design, to help students improve their work performance. And, maybe more significantly, communication skills to better interact with clients, coworkers, and bosses.

Keywords: *Graphics, Design, Computer Design, Education, China*

Introduction

One aspect of art school efficacy is how effectively it prepares students for the workforce. The art school is meant to assist students become the fresh blood in the art business, as well as better researchers of art theories. So it's logical to examine how the Chinese art school system prepares students for a career in art.

How to quantify the career efficacy and efficiency of the arts education now available in China? In other words, how students may participate and give prospective creative projects to their companies.

This investigation is not meant to criticise the educational system. Graphic design courses serve several purposes. Because students' professional trajectories vary greatly, art education can never be a one-size-fits-all answer. This study's goal is to observe and evaluate the outcomes.

The claim that art school does not primarily and universally teach students to become the greatest employees is correct. Securing a seamless transition into professional art designers and increasing income potential might be too materialistic. Art schools and universities must also foster knowledge and interest. Money and salary might be a goal, but not the only one.

This is understandable. After all, education was supposed to be a place where students and teachers could share ideas, debate prospective breakthroughs, and perhaps gain new information, not just how to earn a living from art. Professional success is a consequence of our educational education, not the end objective.

Literature Review

In the previous 70 years, China's graphic design education has grown exponentially. The strong foundations of economic transformation are causing tremendous social and cultural upheaval. China's Modern Design has undergone complicated nationalization and globalization trends. The growth of the economy and industrialization drives the growth of graphic design education. A person's life progresses in four.

1945- 1978 Facing the obstacles

1978-1988 Struggling to learn

1988-1998 Communicating with the west

1998-2008 Emphasizing the inheritance

2008-Current Combing with technology

1945- 1978 Facing the obstacles

After its founding in 1945, the People's Republic of China adopted a planned economy. According to Tsinghua University professor Chen Hanmin (2017), the design was unnecessary because people's main goal was to eat. The new communist regime concentrated control over all sectors of Chinese life, including education. Design nearly served as party propaganda without the market economy and creative freedom. The graphic design business was young. This time has scant historical resources and a single source. There was no denying that graphic design faced many challenges.

1978-1987 Struggling to learn

1978 was a pivotal year for Chinese design, marking the start of "China's Modern Design". The reform and open-door policy changed the course of arts and design education. The Chinese design community began to grasp the concept of "consumer-centered" design. The new Chinese design focused on the consumer, investigating the meaning of life and achieving economic advantages, rather than the political realities of conventional realism.

1988-1998 Communicating with the west

In the 1990s, thorough reform boosted the market economy. Private businesses were growing more active and competitive, especially in SEZs. The rise of a contemporary market economy gave the design a major boost. Chinese design underwent a new phase of Chinese-Western convergence.

Shenzhen, a special economic zone near to Hong Kong, was the first to encounter the newest innovative idea in graphic design. When traditional arts and crafts still dominated China's design sector, a new trend emerged in Shenzhen and quickly moved south. The GDC's first "Graphic Design in China 92 Exhibition" in Shenzhen in 1992 was a signal of graphic design's development in China. It was the world's first big graphic design exhibition and had global impact (Wang, 2018).

In the late 1990s, higher education in China was undergoing reform and turmoil. The “Outline for Reform and Development of China's Education” gave colleges and universities more autonomy. Most national ministries and commissions granted local governments and educational institutions control over colleges and universities. In this scenario, several schools merged and reorganized massively with the government's help. Some well-known Chinese colleges increased their majors and programmes (Wong, 2005). Tsinghua University merged with the Central Academy of Arts and Crafts.

1998-2008 Emphasizing the inheritance

For example, the success of Beijing's bid for the Olympic Games, the staging of the APEC summit in Shanghai, and its WTO membership drew worldwide attention at the turn of the century. Those key events suggested China was changing dramatically. The national cultural endeavours were vibrant, soft power was developing, the people's spiritual world was becoming richer, and the Chinese nation's cohesiveness force was considerably strengthened. The culture was clearly diversifying.

In addition to quality, consumers chose items with a strong brand and solid after-sales support. Their reading habit moved from print to symbol. In such a competitive environment, both international and domestic companies tried to gain an advantage through improving design. The graphic design business grew from newspapers to magazines, television to the internet.

2008-Current Combing with technology

The twenty-first century was a transformative one. The formerly abstract ideas of "digitalization" and "networking" have become part of our lives. In 2008, China had the world's most internet users. The internet has silently altered the way culture is created and communicated. Design-technology integration fueled economic growth and social innovation. Culture and art will be increasingly visible and significant with the rapid growth of media.

Modern graphic design works have been expressed in three-dimensional space rather than just a two-dimensional surface. Sound, light, and electricity were introduced as awareness art forms. We employed a lot of new materials and interactive technologies. More and more designers are using design elements like flavour and temperature.

Unquestionably, China's higher education has excelled. Problems arise due to changes in the economic environment, talent structure, values, and other concerns. I will compare the similarities and differences in curriculum design between the east and west to help us change China's curriculum.

Research Design

The research is self-adaptive. The questionnaire offers and asks questions based on the respondent's history and circumstances. The digital questionnaire format allows for such a strategy. Later questions will automatically modify based on early answers. For example, the following questions will change based on whether the occupation is student, educator, or

working professional. Making the questionnaire self-adaptable makes the questions more relevant to the respondents' experiences and the results more clear.

For example, student respondents will be asked more self-diagnosis and prediction questions. The inquiries are more personal. Students will inwardly examine these questions to find answers. Of course, one of the issues with questioning students is that they may all have different perspectives or misunderstand the situation. They may overvalue one part of the job while undervaluing another. And, as the research revealed, students' answers to these questions are biased.

Data Collection

The questionnaires are digitally organised and may be delivered via links. Initially, this option is owing to COVID-19's social isolation. However, online surveys have additional benefits. The physical anonymous questionnaire requires careful logistic to weed out non-target responder. However, with a digital survey, researchers can monitor IP addresses to identify participants who do not fit into the study's three target categories (fortunately, there was none, as it turned out).

The digital format also eliminates human mistake while assembling raw data. Assuming the data is digital, we can simply compute and assemble it to display the convergence (mean) and dispersion (standard deviation). The digital format also allows researchers to get real-time updates. Once sufficient data has been acquired, researchers can consolidate data into a more cohesive and uniformed manner to better comprehend what data has been collected.

Procedures

The targeted respondents are provided a link to the questionnaire, which they may complete using electronic devices such as laptops and smartphones. The survey is designed to work on all devices. Utilizing the same structure and style across devices to reduce unjustified discrepancies that may result from varied reactions using different electronics devices.

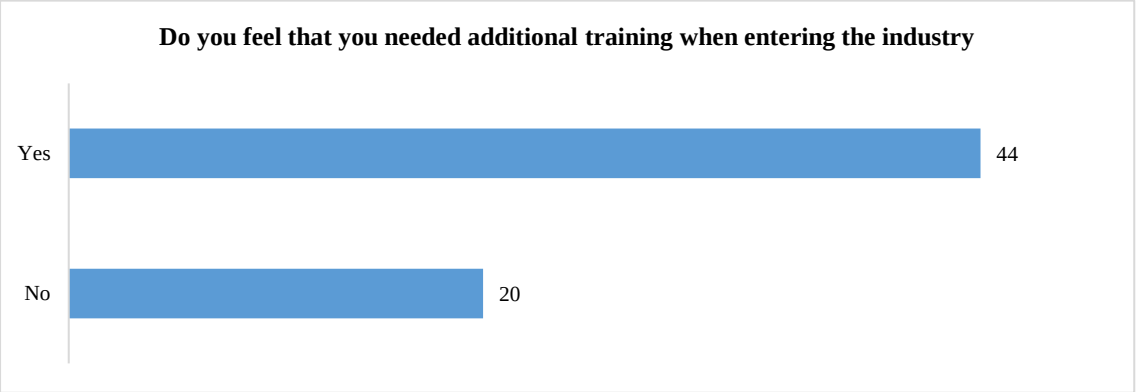
Validity and Reliability of the Data

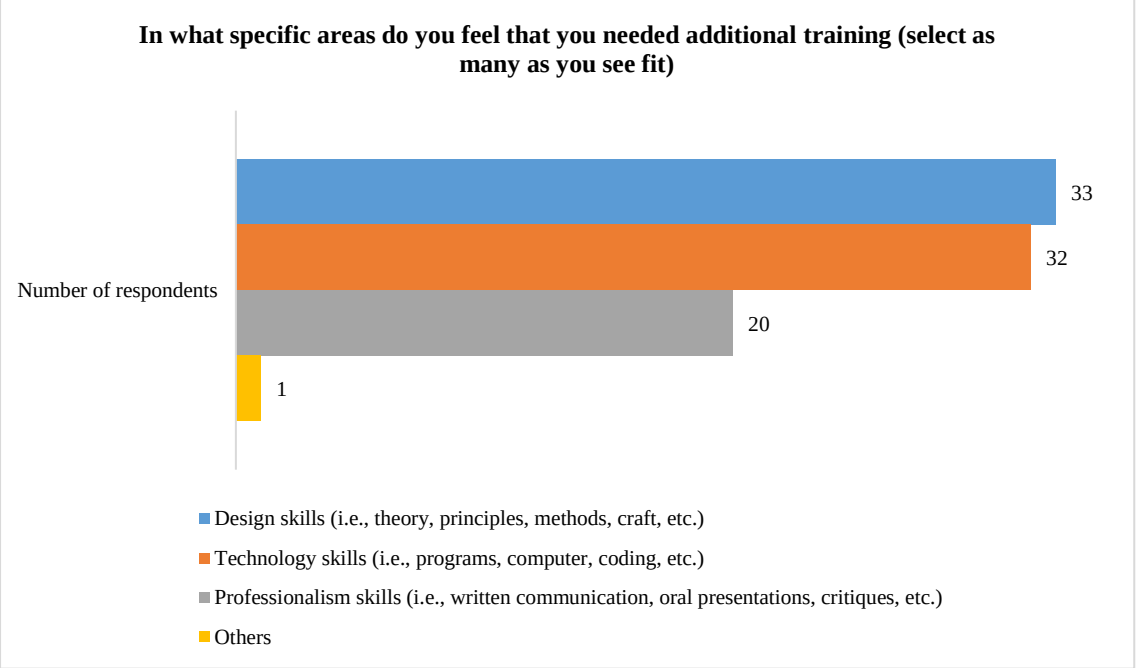
This questionnaire's creators have taken numerous steps to ensure the data is genuine and reliable.

First, the researchers make every effort to ensure their sample is representative. So the researchers examined several sources to decrease the likelihood of finding an underlying commonality that could not be duplicated by just sampling additional sources. To avoid this, the researchers collect data from as many schools and communities as feasible.

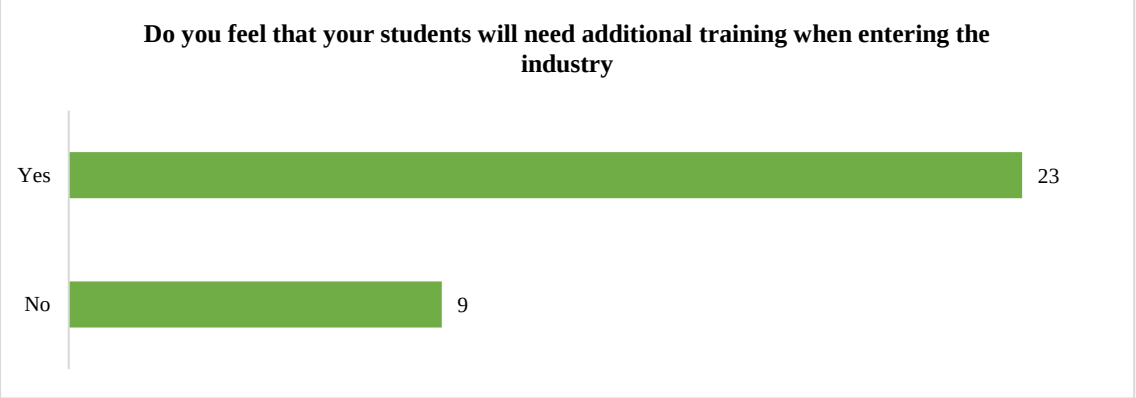
The questionnaire is also completely anonymous, so responders may give honest responses without fear of exposing their identify. Even though no names were necessary, research monitored how and who filled out the forms to ensure that the quality of the answer remained high. Despite omitting identifying information, researchers conducted a background check. Notable is that questionnaires are designed to be subjective. The replies may be genuine, but they may be skewed. The usefulness of feedback is subjective.

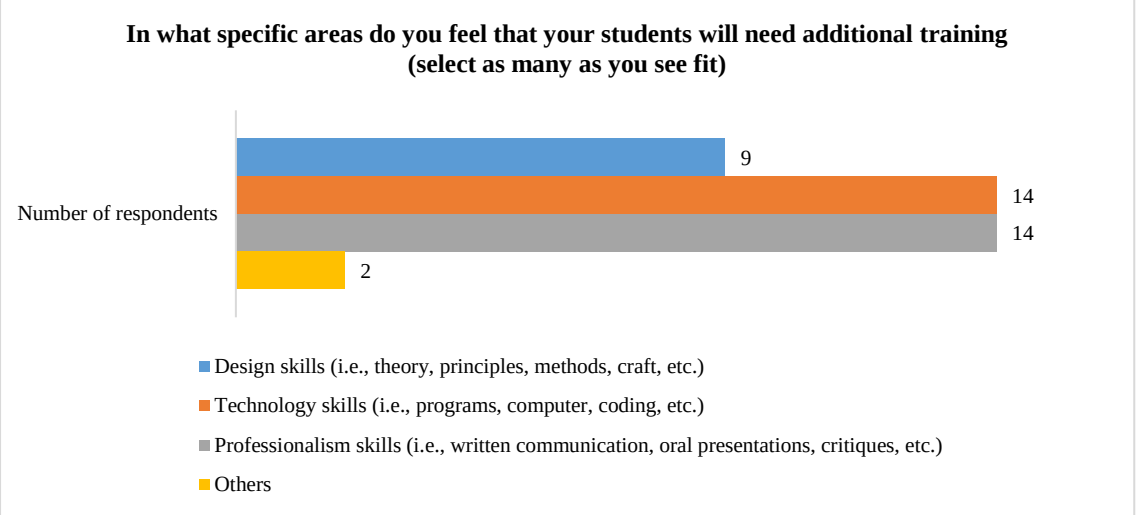
Data Collected - Student response



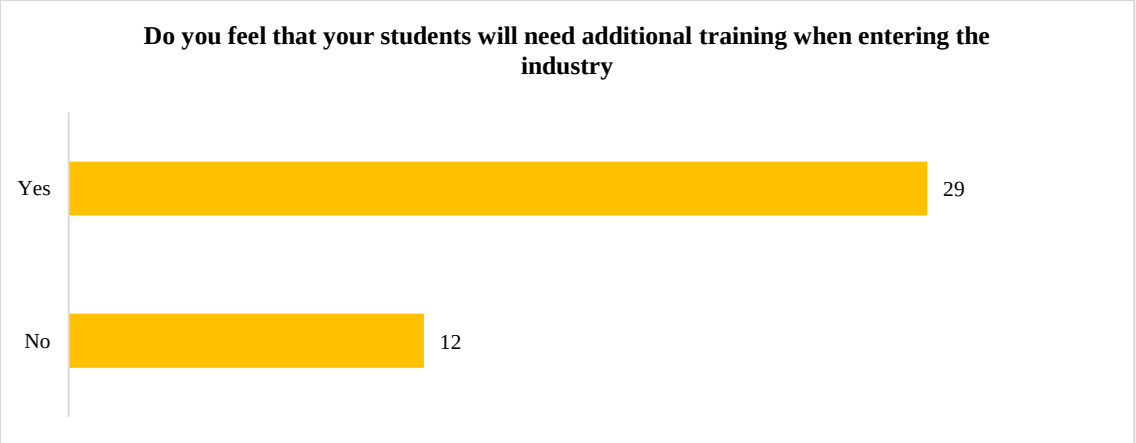


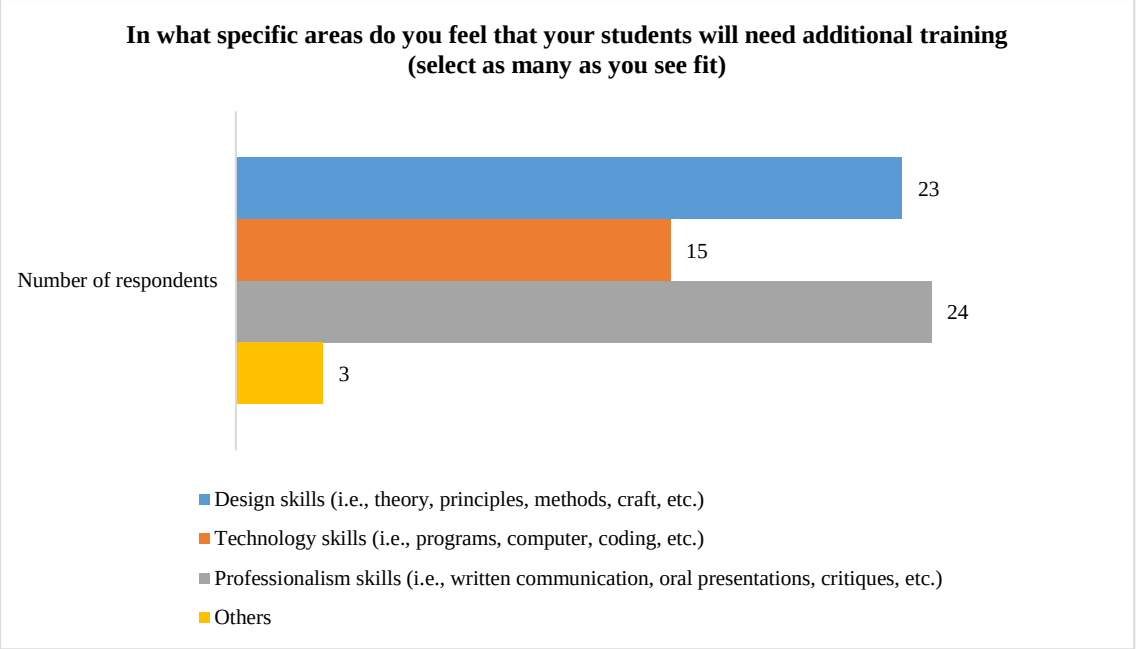
Educator response





Industry professional response





Conclusion

Almost usually, two-thirds of respondents (students, educators, or working professionals) believe that students need further training before acquiring a job. This phenomenon has three signs. First, despite not having entered the workforce, students have a strong grasp of the nature and reality of professional demands. Even as students, they have realised that graphic design education does not fully substitute professional training.

Another consequence is that while academics are not part of a professional network and may not have direct involvement with the recruiting process, they understand the demand. They realise that the business will likely require pupils to acquire extra training beyond their schooling. Another option is that teachers have adequately conveyed this notion to pupils. Thus, pupils realise the relevance of this requirement for further instruction.

This finding validated students' and instructors' assumptions about the need for extra job training for art students. With this awareness, students are no longer leaving art school with the expectation of finding a job immediately without any more training.

This finding has two interpretations. Art schools may be able to and should give students additional job crash courses. However, art schools may have done their best to prepare students because the range of abilities required for various art jobs may be too vast for schools to cover. The public is accustomed to criticising art education and blaming it. There is just too much knowledge and demand for a school to meet everyone's requirements. School may only be able to pick the main overlapped area so that everyone benefits. However, this might be harmful to pupils who are following alternative routes.

With the help of online learn, schools can technically hire fewer educators to still offer the same magnitude of content. Thus, graphic design department can free up more faculty to tutor additional professional training for students. From this point of view, online learning removes one of the limiting factors of the traditional brick and mortar classroom settings: cost of replication. The limiting factor is no longer the seating capacity inside the building. Hence, in ideal situations, online education can accommodate more students with less instructors.

Schools can also resort of collaboration with third party providers if possible. Online learning has been getting tractions and attracting investment capital from the finance world. With such a business environment, online education providers are developing more rapidly. Research and developments of these companies can result in solutions that overcome the prevailing problem of online learning such as the artificial distance created by screens and webcam.

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