

RESEARCH ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PROVIDING CREATIVE ARTS AND DESIGN EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES.

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ABSTRACT

The importance of design and creative arts education at China's universities is becoming more acknowledged as the country's cultural and economic landscapes change at a fast pace. This study delves into the importance of creative arts and design courses at Chinese universities, looking at how these courses help students develop skills in critical thinking, innovation, cultural awareness, and addressing problems from several perspectives. Highlighting the transforming influence of creative education on personal growth and job preparedness, the research conducts qualitative analysis of policy papers, university programs, and interviews with educators and students. Research indicates that exposing pupils to the arts and design helps they develop their expressive and aesthetic skills while also supporting endeavours to transform the economy into one that relies on information and innovation. The study highlights the need of a more inclusive and comprehensive approach to education that prioritises creative disciplines, even when there are current obstacles such as inadequate resources, conventional academic prejudices, and curricular limits. In order to better integrate and institutionalise creative arts in China's higher education system, this article offers suggestions to educators and legislators. It wasn't until the early 21st century that universities and colleges in China started teaching courses on entrepreneurship. Its evolution took almost 20 years, but now it has reached a level never seen before. Currently, there is a dearth of research on entrepreneurship courses offered by universities and colleges in China, in contrast to the abundance of research on undergraduate entrepreneurship programs. Specifically, there has been little to no discussion of studies examining the current state of entrepreneurship education for kids or efforts to improve it.

Keywords: Chinese Universities; Creative Arts Education; Cultural Sustainability; Design Education; Educational Development; Student Participation.

INTRODUCTION

There are tremendous opportunities and challenges for art and design education in the modern era of online learning. The internet has not only revolutionised the ways in which art and design are created and expressed, but it has also introduced ground-

breaking demands for the development of students' creative thinking skills. As the Internet has developed at a fast pace, art design programs at universities have begun to include more digital components. Online platforms provide students with a wealth of instructional materials and cutting-edge design tools for their creative endeavours (Durão et al., 2023). On the other hand, this suggests that art design programs should prioritise encouraging students' creative thinking alongside their professional skill development. Students of art and design are encouraged to think creatively by the abundance of material and communication channels made available to them on the Internet. Students may readily interact with people from all walks of life and all corners of the design aesthetic spectrum, which is sure to spark their imaginations. Students' perspectives are expanded by the Internet's promotion of cooperation, multidisciplinary and cross-cultural contacts. Institutions of higher learning can do a better job of fostering students' innovative thinking in the digital age by instituting measures such as interdisciplinary courses that emphasise the need of integrating knowledge and creative thinking from different disciplines, requiring students to conduct independent research and study using online resources, broadening their perspectives and providing them with opportunities to collaborate on projects and compete in online contests. Finding the right balance between developing students' professional skills and their creative abilities, making good use of online resources, and piquing their interest in continuous innovation are just a few of the challenges that art and design education at the university level encounters when trying to promote creative thinking. There will likely be a shift in the focus of art and design programs in higher education in the coming years towards encouraging students to think creatively. More innovative and varied approaches to teaching art and design will become available in schools as a result of the proliferation of AI, VR, and other cutting-edge technological tools. International collaboration and cross-cultural communication will also play a larger role in the curriculum in the future. College and university art and design programs in the Internet age have new opportunities and challenges. It is much more crucial to encourage kids to think creatively in this situation. Universities and colleges should investigate the educational approach that uses online resources to provide students more freedom to be creative and a more well-rounded education. Examining novel teaching approaches in art and design education at the college and university levels, this research aims to determine how well the flipped classroom model, which is based on massive open online courses (MOOCs), increases students' capacity for creative thinking (Gill, 2020).

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Recent years have seen China's rapid economic growth and technological advancement propel the nation to the forefront of global innovation and cultural influence. While the value of STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education is well acknowledged, the relevance of arts and design education in fostering diverse, creative, and culturally aware persons is also becoming more acknowledged. Incorporating arts and design education into

university curriculum is becoming more crucial as China evolves into a worldwide creative powerhouse (Hindle et al., 2020). This will help cultivate innovative minds, protect historical artefacts, and increase international competitiveness. Academic rigour and standardised testing have long played a significant role in Chinese education, with a tendency to prioritise topics that have direct relevance to the country's economy and technology. As a result, traditionally more traditional occupations have often been seen as supplementary to creative fields such as digital media, graphic design, cinema, fashion, and the fine arts. However, the tremendous cultural and economic worth of artistic and design-based domains has been shown by the growth of China's flourishing creative industries, which include digital entertainment and animation, urban planning, and fashion design. Advertising, gaming, and cinema are thriving industries that demonstrate the high need for creative individuals to fuel China's burgeoning cultural and creative economy. In addition, art and design programs encourage students to think critically, solve problems creatively, and work together across disciplines, all of which are highly valued in today's job market. China is on the lookout for graduates who can drive innovation in the country's economy while also making a positive social and technological effect. The potential for the arts and design to inspire new ideas in many other domains has led many universities throughout the world to embrace an interdisciplinary approach. As they gradually catch up, colleges in China are establishing international partnerships, design academies, and creative hubs to improve their creative arts programs (Hou et al., 2019).

PURPOSE OF THE RESEARCH

This study's major purpose is to analyse the function that attending courses in creative arts and design plays in Chinese institutions and to establish the importance of doing so. Additionally, the research will assess whether or not taking such classes is relevant. The purpose of this study is to get a knowledge of the ways in which such training helps to the maturation of students in general. This includes the creative capabilities, cultural literacy, and creativity of the students. The study also aims to highlight how China's economic and educational reforms may be enhanced by the entrance of creative disciplines into higher education. The major objective of the research is to produce persons who are capable of living in a world that is composed of information and is interconnected. This study aims to identify alternative solutions that Chinese universities might use to make their creative arts and design programs more visible and efficient. In order to achieve this goal, it will be necessary to carry out an investigation into the opportunities and threats that are now present in this industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

In order to provide students with the critical thinking, problem-solving, and creative capabilities that are necessary in the information economy of the contemporary day,

it is commonly agreed that education in the creative arts and design is essential. Over the course of many years, academics all over the globe have acknowledged the ability of the arts to stimulate the development of novel ideas and to foster holistic growth (Ip & Liang, 2021). On the other hand, China's educational system has a long history of placing a greater emphasis on academic rigour and standardised testing than it does on subject areas that need more creativity. Recent legislative changes demonstrate a growing appreciation of the need to stimulate innovation via education. These developments are in alignment with the greater economic and cultural goals of the country. According to the findings of study, the incorporation of creative arts and design into university courses has the effect of enhancing students' intellectual flexibility, cultural awareness, and ability to generate original ideas (Liberona et al., 2019).

RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the impact of Cultural Awareness on Students in Chinese Universities?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESEARCH DESIGN

Quantitative data analyses were performed using SPSS version 25. The researchers used the odds ratio and the 95% confidence interval to quantify the intensity and direction of the statistical link. The researchers determined a level considered statistically significant at $p < 0.05$. A descriptive analysis revealed the key characteristics of the data. Data obtained via surveys, polls, and questionnaires, together with data analysed using computational tools for statistical evaluation, are often evaluated using quantitative methodologies.

SAMPLING

A straightforward sampling method was used for the investigation. The study used questionnaires to collect its data. The Rao-soft software calculated a sample size of 340. A total of 585 questionnaires were disseminated; 560 were retrieved, and 75 were discarded owing to incompleteness. A total of 485 questionnaires were used for the investigation.

DATA AND MEASUREMENT

The research mostly used questionnaire surveys to collect data. Part B used a 5-point Likert scale to assess the significance of several channels, both online and offline, while Part A solicited fundamental demographic data. The necessary information was extracted from several secondary sources, including online databases.

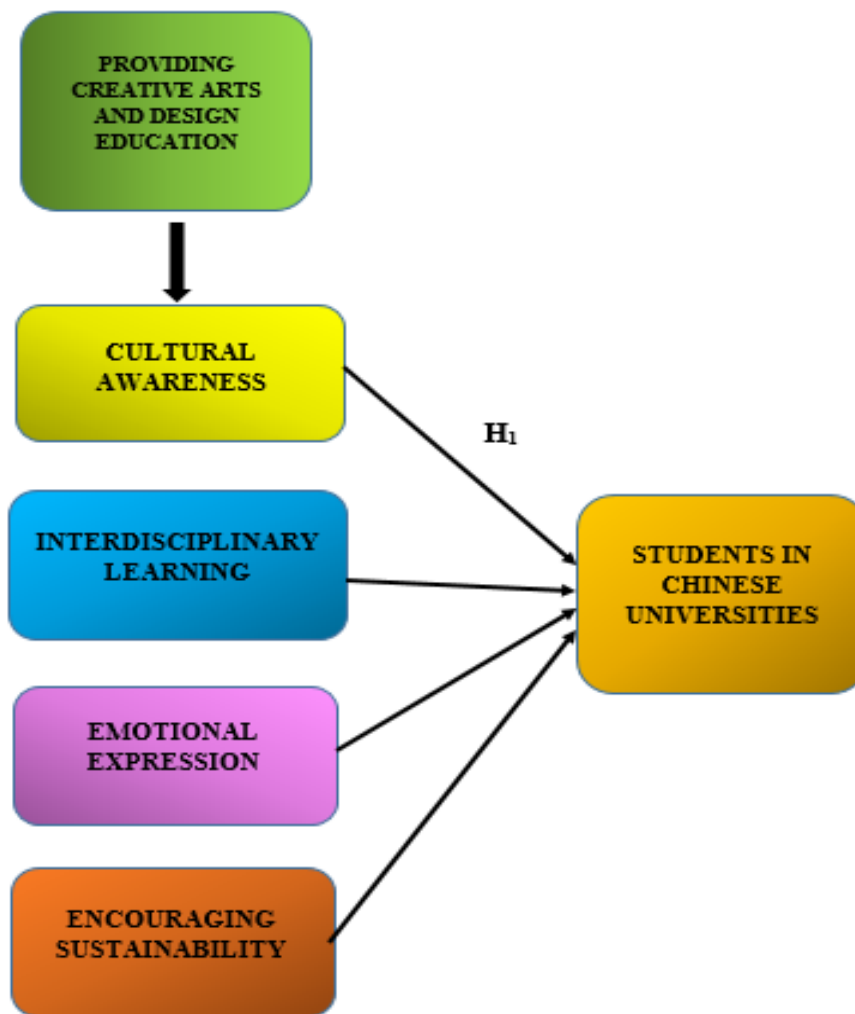
STATISTICAL SOFTWARE

The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 and MS-Excel.

STATISTICAL TOOLS

To grasp the fundamental character of the data, descriptive analysis was used. The researcher is required to analyse the data using ANOVA.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK



RESULTS

Factor Analysis: One typical use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to verify the existence of latent components in observable data. When there are not easily observable visual or diagnostic markers, it is common practice to utilise regression coefficients to produce ratings. In FA, models are essential for success. Finding mistakes, intrusions, and obvious connections are the aims of modelling. One way to assess datasets produced by multiple regression studies is with the use of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test. They verify that the model and sample variables are representative. According to the numbers, there is data duplication. When the proportions are less, the data is easier to understand. For KMO, the output is a number between zero and

one. If the KMO value is between 0.8 and 1, then the sample size should be enough. These are the permissible boundaries, according to Kaiser: The following are the acceptance criteria set by Kaiser:

A pitiful 0.050 to 0.059, below average 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often fall within the range of 0.70-0.79.

With a quality point score ranging from 0.80 to 0.89.

They marvel at the range of 0.90 to 1.00.

Testing for KMO and Bartlett's Sampling Adequacy Measured by Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin .960

The results of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: approx. chi-square

df=190

sig.=.000

This establishes the validity of assertions made only for the purpose of sampling. To ensure the relevance of the correlation matrices, researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin states that a result of 0.960 indicates that the sample is adequate. The p-value is 0.00, as per Bartlett's sphericity test. A favourable result from Bartlett's sphericity test indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.960
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

Bartlett's Test of Sphericity further validated the overall relevance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sample adequacy is 0.960. The researchers determined a p-value of 0.00 via Bartlett's sphericity test. The correlation matrix was deemed invalid due to a significant outcome from Bartlett's sphericity test.

INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

Providing Creative Arts and Design Education: Classes in creative arts and design have an emphasis on the process of conception, development, and presentation as their primary topics of study. They cover the principles of a variety of artistic areas, including as architecture, painting, music, dance, and theatre, among others. In a number of art management classes, students learn about the many strategies that may be used to efficiently disseminate creative products (Mei et al., 2020). They need drive, the ability to be creative, and skill. Creativity has been something that people have liked doing for a very long time. There is a strong connection between them and the creative process as well as the human mind. The creative arts include a wide range of artistic forms, including but not limited to the following: literature, visual art, photography, music, dance, theatre, and cinema all fall under this category. In order to express itself in ways that transcend classification and conventional thinking, creative art makes use of a broad variety of mediums and approaches. Due to the fact that it focusses an emphasis on innovation, fresh ideas, and unique interpretation, the borders between the many genres of art are usually blurred. Even though there are a great number of different fields that may be considered kinds of art, the ones that are most often thought of are the visual arts, which include things like painting and sculpture (Sun, 2020).

FACTOR

Cultural Awareness: Being able to interact successfully with individuals who come from a variety of cultural backgrounds requires a level of cultural awareness that allows one to be attentive to the similarities and differences that exist between different cultures. Being culturally aware means being open to a broad variety of cultural experiences and viewpoints, actively participating in those experiences, and gaining understanding from those experiences. The process of cross-cultural understanding enables the exchange of ideas, behaviours, perspectives, traditions, and values from a variety of cultural backgrounds, as well as the comprehension of these differences (Van Horne et al., 2020). To be culturally sensitive is to acknowledge and accept these differences, as well as to acknowledge that one's own culture is not superior to another. To be culturally aware means to be aware of the fact that there are other cultures that have different perspectives and worldviews. A person who is culturally sensitive is one who is aware about various cultures and is tolerant of the identities that individuals bring to them. Another name for this quality is cultural awareness, and it is also known as cross-cultural sensitivity. Through participation in cultural awareness training, employees acquire the ability to communicate more effectively across cultural borders, which in turn leads to an improvement in teamwork. Put an end to conflicts. A typical source of conflict in the workplace is a lack of cultural understanding or ignorance of the other party's culture (Zeng et al., 2021).

DEPENDENT VARIABLE

Students in Chinese Universities: Students in Chinese institutions are being enrolled by universities that are part of the People's Republic of China's higher education system. These students often go on to earn bachelor's, master's, or doctorate degrees in a variety of fields, such as engineering, business, the arts and design, engineering, the social sciences, engineering, engineering, and the natural and physical sciences. Within China's highly organised and state-regulated educational system, which includes students attending universities, the Ministry of Education is in charge of overseeing the system (Hou et al., 2019). It is necessary for them to comply with the processes for quality assurance, the requirements for the curriculum, and the national education rules. A diverse variety of nationalities are represented within the student population, in addition to the presence of international students hailing from an assortment of countries all over the globe. Despite the fact that students are becoming increasingly exposed to global educational trends and views, their social and academic experiences are still shaped by cultural qualities such as discipline, respect for authority, academic achievement, and collectivism (Durão et al., 2023).

Relationship Between Cultural Awareness and Students in Chinese Universities: College students in China are increasingly being instructed that cultural understanding is an important component of a well-rounded education. This is a really positive development. The use of this instructional strategy is becoming more and more popularity. To attain tolerance, empathy, and social cohesiveness in China's multiethnic society, as well as in today's fast globalising world, it is vital to have an awareness of cultural diversity and to actively engage with it (Gill, 2020). This is true both in China and in the world as a whole. This is a process that is ongoing for Chinese college students; it starts with having a thorough grasp of Chinese history, philosophy, art, and traditional values. Being culturally sensitive is a process that is ongoing. One of the most important factors that determines whether or not students are able to confidently and proudly represent their country on international stages is the information that they have gained from this core curriculum. In the same spirit, engaging in activities such as networking with students from other countries, reading about other cultures in the media, participating in study abroad programs, and engaging in other forms of cultural immersion all provide opportunities to examine things from a variety of viewpoints and to think critically. A wide range of professions, such as those in the fields of technology, diplomacy, education, and international commerce, place a high premium on those who possess the ability to demonstrate intercultural competence (Hindle & Moroz, 2020).

Based on the above discussion, the researcher proposed the following hypothesis to examine the link between Cultural Awareness and Students in Chinese Universities.

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between Cultural Awareness and Students in Chinese Universities.

H_1 : There is a significant relationship between Cultural Awareness and Students in Chinese Universities.

Table 2: H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	201	5655.517	1055.922	.000
Within Groups	492.770	283	5.356		
Total	40081.390	484			

The findings of this inquiry will be significant. The F value is 1055.922, demonstrating significance with a p-value of 0.000, which is below the 0.05 alpha level. This denotes the “ H_1 : There is a significant relationship between Cultural Awareness and Students in Chinese Universities” is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

DISCUSSION

This study has far-reaching ramifications for students, schools, and the general growth of the country. It indicates that design and creative arts programs at Chinese universities are increasing prominence. As China transitions away from an economy that is centred on manufacturing and towards one that is driven by information and innovation, the importance of creativity education is growing at an alarming rate in the nation. Universities are progressively incorporating creative fields into their course offerings as a reaction to developing trends on both the national and international levels. This will assist in the production of graduates who possess the knowledge and abilities necessary to make important contributions in a broad range of fields, ranging from the arts and entertainment to technology and business. The revolutionary impact that creative education has on the development of pupils is one of the general issues that will be covered in this research. The capacity to think critically, artistically, and expressively is something that has been ignored in traditional Chinese education. Students who participate in programs that focus on the arts and design are able to acquire these qualities. Students are encouraged to engage with social and global concerns, to question traditional thinking, and to investigate their own personal identities via the use of visual, intellectual, and interactive tools in these programs. Any profession that sets a premium on innovation, diversity of thought, and cultural understanding must have a leader with these qualities. Additionally, the research shows that creative education is closely related to the study of many other fields.

CONCLUSION

If Chinese college students were to get a more comprehensive education in the arts and design than what they often receive in the classroom, there may be a multitude of social and economic advantages that would result from this intervention. The purpose of this study was to investigate the impact that Creative Arts and Design Education has on the overall level of knowledge possessed by Chinese university students. Particular attention was paid to the moderating influences of creativity and self-efficacy. In addition, they were interested in the advantages of education and how it influences their level of knowledge; hence, they believed that studying was essential. The findings of the research provide sufficient evidence to back up the assertion that educational programs that focus on art and design contribute to an increase in the total level of knowledge possessed by pupils. Further evidence that creativity and self-efficacy are essential to the personal and academic development of kids is supplied by the results, which demonstrate that these talents significantly strengthen the connection between the two.

The study of creative arts and design may provide students with the opportunity to acquire the critical thinking skills that are highly appreciated in today's global corporate environment. Examples of these attributes are the ability to be creative and the confidence that one has in their own creative abilities. The tremendous influence that arts education has on the development of emotional resilience, cognitive flexibility, and problem-solving ability has been the subject of much study in the area in the past, and previous studies have repeatedly highlighted this benefit. Its findings are very pertinent to the process that is now being investigated. According to the findings, education in the creative arts and design has the potential to significantly improve both the mental health of students and their overall quality of life. This demonstrates that this field is more than just a topic that is studied in the classroom. This research makes a number of important contributions, one of the most important being that it investigates the ways in which creativity and self-efficacy may regulate the impacts of each other. There were greater positive relationships between students' psychological health and their engagement in arts and **design** programs when the students scored better on measures of self-efficacy and creativity. This was the case when the students entered the programs.

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