



## STUDY OF THE IMPORTANCE OF INTEGRATING CREATIVE ARTS AND DESIGN EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN CHINESE UNIVERSITIES

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### Abstract

Because of the fast upheaval that is taking place in China's cultural and economic landscapes, there is a growing understanding of the significance of degrees in design and creative arts that are being offered at Chinese institutions. The findings of this study highlight the value of creative arts and design courses that are accessible to students at Chinese institutions. This article explores the ways in which these programs cultivate critical thinking, creativity, cultural awareness, and the capacity to approach challenges from a variety of viewpoints. By studying university curriculum, policy papers, and qualitative data collected from instructors and students, it may be possible to get a deeper understanding of the implications that creative education has on development and employability. Studies have shown that including art and design into school curriculum has two good effects: first, it helps students to refine their creative and expressive skills; second, it facilitates the shift to a knowledge-based economy. Both of these effects are beneficial. The findings of this study highlight the need of a more complete and inclusive educational system that puts an emphasis on creative disciplines. This is despite the fact that there are now problems such as a lack of resources, historical prejudices in the academic world, and limits in the classroom curriculum. This article offers a number of suggestions that might be of assistance to Chinese legislators and academics in their efforts to enhance the absorption and institutionalisation of creative arts into the curriculum of universities. Before the turn of the century, there was not a single Chinese school that offered a course of study in the field of entrepreneurship studies via its curriculum. Despite the fact that it took more than twenty years to finish, it has now achieved a level that has never been seen before.

**Keywords:** *Chinese Universities, Higher Education in China, Curriculum in Art and Design, Educational Policy in China, Skills for Employability.*

### Introduction

The art and design departments at colleges and universities face new problems and possibilities in this digital age. New norms for the cultivation of students' creative thinking capacities have been established by the proliferation of online resources, which have also transformed the production and dissemination of visual arts and design. Following the meteoric rise of the Internet, graphic design courses at universities and colleges have started to include more digital elements. Online resources provide pupils with state-of-the-art resources for creativity and learning. Having said that, this does imply that art design programs should put an emphasis on creativity education alongside skill development (Bird, 2019). Internet access provides art and design students with a wealth of information and new avenues for expression, which in turn encourages creative thinking. Collaboration between pupils from different cultural and aesthetic backgrounds may greatly enhance their creative thinking skills. Learning online also encourages students to work together and participate in cross-cultural and interdisciplinary interactions, which broadens their horizons. Higher education institutions can do a better job of fostering students' innovative thinking in the digital age by offering more cross-disciplinary courses, facilitating students' use of online resources for research and independent study, increasing students' exposure to new ideas and perspectives, and giving them more opportunities to put their skills to use, such as participating in group projects and contests.



Numerous obstacles stand in the way of fostering creative thinking in university art and design curricula. These include attracting students' interest in ongoing innovation, effectively utilising online resources, and striking a balance between the development of professional skills and creative ability. The future of art and design education in higher education is expected to focus on helping students become more creative thinkers and makers. Future art and design programs will offer students a more diverse and inventive curriculum thanks to developments in AI, VR, and other cutting-edge technology. There will also be a rise in the prominence of educational pathways that stress the need of working together across borders and cultures. Teaching art and design in the digital era presents both new possibilities and new obstacles. Encourage students to think creatively and critically because of this. The educational paradigm that incorporates internet resources may provide students a more diverse education and more opportunities for creative expression. Schools should look at this (Bohemia et al., 2021).

### **Background of the study**

As a consequence of its fast economic development and technical improvement, China has lately overtaken the United States as the world's leader in terms of both cultural impact and innovation. Despite the rising emphasis placed on STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) education in the nation, there is a growing understanding of the significance of design and creative arts education in the production of individuals who are varied, imaginative, and culturally sensitive (Bui Hoai et al., 2021). Universities are increasingly incorporating arts and design degrees into their curriculums as a result of China's growing significance in the worldwide creative industry. Increasing global competitiveness, fostering innovation, and safeguarding cultural treasures are the objectives that the researchers want to achieve via the action. In China, the curriculum has a tendency to favour courses that have apparent technical and economic repercussions. This is because China has a strong heritage of academic rigour and standardised testing. Individuals who work in creative sectors, such as the visual arts, cinema, architecture, and digital media, have a tendency to see professions that are more traditional as being supplementary to their employment. A number of creative businesses in China are booming, including fashion design, urban planning, digital entertainment, and animation, to name just a few. This demonstrates the enormous cultural and economic significance of arts and design in China. The fact that China's advertising, gaming, and film industries have been so successful is evidence that the country's creative and cultural economy is in need of thinkers and doers who are innovative. Furthermore, in today's increasingly competitive job market, highly sought skills include the ability to work in teams that include members from different fields, to think critically, and to solve issues in a creative manner. In its pursuit of an economy that is driven by innovation, China is looking for graduates who are capable of making a positive social effect, who are technically proficient, and who are artistically creative. As a demonstration of how the arts and design can stimulate creativity in a broad variety of other subjects, this multidisciplinary approach has already been embraced by other institutions all around the globe. It is becoming more common for creative arts programs at Chinese universities to include international partnerships, design academies, and creative hubs (Cascavilla et al., 2022).

### **Purpose of the research**

The primary objective of this research is to focus on the role and significance of creative arts and design courses that are offered at universities in China. This is done with the intention of gaining an understanding of the way in which such training contributes to the development of students as entire individuals, taking into consideration the students' uniqueness, cultural awareness, and creative capabilities. The study's primary objective is to make it possible for individuals to develop into individuals who are capable of thriving in a society that is



knowledge-based and networked. With the use of this study, the researchers want to demonstrate that creative disciplines at universities might be beneficial to China's educational and economic changes. Providing ideas that may be put into action to improve the promotion and funding of creative arts and design departments in Chinese universities is the overall objective of this research.

### **Literature review**

Art and design educators deserve great respect for the invaluable role they play in equipping today's students to succeed in the digital economy via critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving. Educators and researchers throughout the world have long recognised the power of the arts to encourage well-rounded growth and provide fresh perspectives. In contrast, China's educational system has long prioritised conventional ways of academic rigour and standardised testing above more creative disciplines (Durão et al., 2023). More and more people are realising that schools need to do more to foster creativity; this is in keeping with the nation's broad cultural and economic objectives. University students who take art and design classes report higher levels of cultural understanding, intellectual flexibility, and creative thinking. Yet, issues such as a lack of art instructors, inadequate funding for arts programs, and organisations that do not promote the arts continue, even with these advantages (Ip & Liang, 2021).

### **Research question**

- What is the effect of Encouraging Sustainability on students at Chinese universities?

### **Research methodology**

#### **Research design:**

Analyses of quantitative data were conducted using SPSS version 25. To measure the strength and direction of the statistical association, the researchers used the odds ratio and the 95% confidence interval. The scientists established a threshold that was deemed statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$ . Key aspects of the data were identified by a descriptive analysis. Data collected via surveys, polls, and questionnaires, as well as data processed using computing tools for statistical analysis, are often assessed using quantitative methods.

#### **Sampling:**

A convenient sampling technique was applied for the study. The research relied on questionnaires to gather its data. The Rao-soft program determined a sample size of 340. A total of 585 questionnaires were distributed; 560 were returned, and 75 were excluded due to incompleteness. In the end, 485 questionnaires were used for the research.

#### **Data and Measurement:**

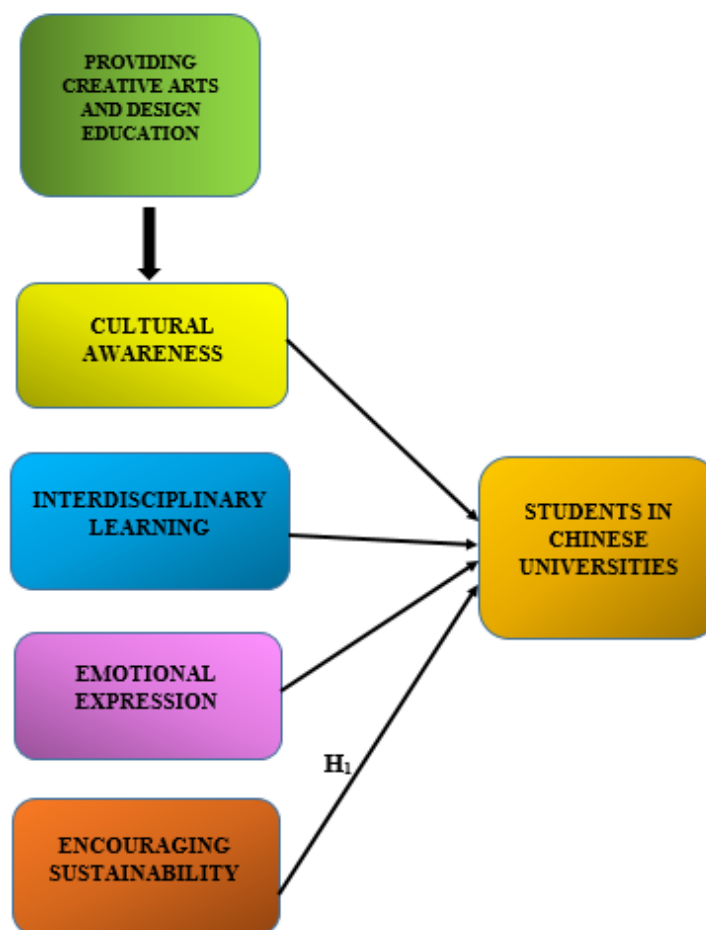
Research mostly made use of questionnaire surveys to gather data. Part B used a 5-point Likert scale to evaluate the importance of various channels, both online and off, while Part A requested basic demographic information. The necessary information was culled from a wide range of secondary sources, including internet 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



## 5. 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.



Table1: KMO and Bartlett's Test

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: KMO and Bartlett's**

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 confirmed the overall significance of the correlation matrices. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin sample adequacy value is 0.960. The researchers identified a p-value of 0.00 via Bartlett's sphericity test. The correlation matrix was shown to not be a valid correlation matrix by a significant result from Bartlett's sphericity test.

#### ❖ INDEPENDENT VARIABLE

##### • Providing Creative Arts and Design Education:

In a great number of art and design classes, the three most important concepts that are covered are conceptualisation, production, and presentation. The objectives of this introductory course are to familiarise students with various artistic forms such as drawing, painting, music, dance, and theatre. One of the most typical items covered in art management classes is the development of methods for the dissemination of creative works. In order to be successful, they need inventiveness, competence, and inspiration (Liang et al., 2020). The arts and other creative endeavours have long been a source of happiness for people. When they see them, a lot of people think about the human brain and the creative process and creativity. To name just a few examples, the creative arts include a wide variety of genres, including but not limited to the following: literature, photography, visual art, music, dance, theatre, and cinema. Creative art avoids classification and goes against the grain of conventional thinking since it employs a diverse variety of mediums and techniques. The fact that art puts a priority on creativity, analysis, and individual perspective is one of the reasons why it often crosses over into a variety of fields. However, the term "art" may also be used to refer to a broad variety of different acts. The visual arts, which include disciplines such as painting and sculpture, are the kinds of arts



that are most often referred to when using the word "art." Despite this, there are a number of other businesses that are not excluded in any manner, including the music and film industries. Before someone can "design" anything, anybody may "plan," "come up with ideas," and "put in measures" to make their ideas a reality. This is the first step in the creativity process. Design encompasses a wide range of subfields, some of which include engineering, manufacturing, and architecture, those are just a few examples. The field of art and design is responsible for the development of more complex activities that are intended to foster imaginative play and creative thinking in youngsters. As a consequence of this, their views are broadened in terms of the things that they are capable of creating and the ways in which things go (Liu & Wang, 2021).

#### ❖ FACTOR

- **Encouraging Sustainability:**

To advocate for and support activities that satisfy present needs without putting the ability of future generations to do the same in jeopardy is what it means to promote sustainability. It requires getting people to pay attention, promoting responsibility, and coming up with mechanisms or incentives to persuade communities, companies, and organisations to adopt sustainable practices that are beneficial for the environment, society, and the economy. In addition, it requires getting people to pay attention. Through the promotion of more conscientious production and manufacturing, sustainable development helps to reduce the amount of pollution and waste produced by industrial processes. In addition to this, it encourages governments, corporations, and non-profit organisations to consider the whole picture when making decisions, rather than just selecting the one that is the easiest, most straightforward, or most cost-effective (Othman et al., 2022). "Sustainable development is development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs," declared the United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development, which is the definition that is most usually used as an example of sustainable development. In addition to ensuring that future generations will have access to resources that will allow them to experience social justice and a high quality of life, encouraging sustainability helps to construct better environments in which the researchers must thrive. Sustainability refers to the process of developing systems that make it possible for us to live in a manner that is compatible with the constraints of the planet (Seidman, 2019).

#### ❖ DEPENDENT VARIABLE

- **Students in Chinese Universities:**

A significant number of students from other countries go to the People's Republic of China in order to seek higher education at the so-called "Chinese universities" located inside the country. At the bachelor's, master's, and doctorate levels of education, these students often study a wide variety of fields, including engineering, business, the arts and design, social science, engineering, and both the hard and soft sciences (Tomy & Pardede, 2020). These are just few of the numerous fields that they study. Under the legislation, it is mandatory for all students in China, even those who are enrolled in higher education, to adhere to the stringent criteria that have been set by the Ministry of Education. When it comes to adhering to any national education law, curricular requirements, or quality assurance procedures, exemptions will not be accepted under any circumstances. The student body is comprised of individuals hailing from regions all over the world, including a variety of nations. Their social and academic experiences are influenced by cultural characteristics such as collectivism, loyalty to authority, discipline, and academic achievement. This is true independent of the amount of exposure they receive to global educational concepts and perspectives. The Chinese government is working





on a bigger plan to change the educational system in the nation and stimulate innovation (Van Horne et al., 2020).

- **Relationship Between Encouraging Sustainability and Students in Chinese Universities**

Given the intensity of China's rapid economic expansion, environmental issues, and developing global commitments, the connection between sustainability education and Chinese college students is becoming more vital. This is because China is becoming more responsible for the environment. This comes as a result of China's growing global responsibility, which is the reason for this development. Since college students are the future leaders, innovators, and citizens, they have the ability to make a substantial contribution to the formation of a society that is more environmentally friendly (Zeng et al., 2021). This is because college students are the first generation of citizens. To educate young children about sustainable development and environmental preservation, it is equally important to enhance their practical awareness and motivate them to modify their conduct. This is because both of these things are essential to the education process. It is possible for educational institutions in China to have a large amount of influence over the thoughts and actions of their student population if they include sustainable practices into campus life, extracurricular activities, and classroom teaching. The curriculum of schools covers a wide range of subjects, some of which include environmental preservation, social justice, renewable energy, waste reduction, and resource efficiency. These are only a few of the many themes that are covered. Projects that are centred on sustainability have been conducted by a number of educational institutions. These projects include green campus policies, student-led environmental clubs, the adoption of low-carbon lifestyles, and events that have an emphasis on sustainability. Pupils have a better opportunity of becoming global citizens and being aware of environmental concerns as a direct consequence of these efforts, which have been established to help pupils acquire these skills. On the employment market in China, there is a significant degree of demand for students who have a strong understanding of sustainability (Zhao et al., 2022).

Because of the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which was analyse the relationship between Encouraging Sustainability and Students in Chinese Universities.

***“H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant relationship between Encouraging Sustainability and Students in Chinese Universities.”***

***“H<sub>1</sub>: There is a significant relationship between Encouraging Sustainability and Students in Chinese Universities.”***

**Table 2: H<sub>1</sub> ANOVA Test**

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
<b>Between Groups</b>	39588.620	236	5247.537	979.749	.000
<b>Within Groups</b>	492.770	248	5.356		
<b>Total</b>	40081.390	484			

This investigation yields remarkable results. The F value is 979.749, attaining significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the .05 alpha threshold. This signifies the ***“H<sub>1</sub>: There***



*is a significant relationship between Encouraging Sustainability and Students in Chinese Universities”* is accepted and the null hypothesis is rejected.

### Discussion

The purpose of this study is to investigate educational institutions, students, and the general growth of the country. The ramifications of this research are far-reaching and extend beyond the scope of students alone. This demonstrates that an increasing number of colleges in China are offering degrees in the creative arts and design and that this trend is expected to continue. As the Chinese economy shifts away from one centred on manufacturing and towards one based on information and innovation, creative education is becoming an increasingly significant component of the country's economic landscape. This is a direct outcome of developing trends on both a national and international scale, which has led to an increase in the number of institutions offering courses in creative subjects. This is considered to be a response at this time because of the growing prominence of colleges. Graduates will have mastered the content essential to make an effect in disciplines as varied as the creative, the technical, and the commercial by the time they walk across the stage upon completion of their studies. The final result that the program will create is as described above. Within the scope of this study project, one of the topics that will be taken into consideration is the transformational influence that creative education has on the development of pupils. The traditional Chinese educational system has made relatively little of an attempt to cultivate students' analytical, creative, and expressive mental processes. This is a significant shortcoming. Students that are majoring in art and design have the opportunity to develop these skills via their studies. Students are encouraged to engage in critical thinking about social and global issues, to challenge conventional knowledge, and to analyse their own identities via the use of the visual, intellectual, and interactive components of the programs. It is necessary to have a leader who has these skills in any sector that sets a high value on innovation, diversity of opinion, and cultural sensitivity. In point of fact, this is true for each and every field of labour.

### Conclusion

It would be beneficial for Chinese colleges and universities to provide their students with a more comprehensive education in the visual and performing arts than is often provided in the classroom setting. All of the social and economic benefits that would result from this would be enormous. This research was conducted with the intention of analysing the connection between CADE and the overall degree of knowledge possessed by Chinese college students, with a specific focus on the moderating influences of creativity and self-efficacy. A study was carried out in the country of China. As an additional benefit, it attempted to determine how their education affects their knowledge and what motivates them to acquire it. The outcomes of the research demonstrate that students' general knowledge does, in fact, increase as a result of their participation in Art and Design Education programs. Furthermore, the findings lend credence to the idea that the capacity of students to think creatively and to have faith in themselves is an essential component of their overall academic and personal growth. This is shown by the fact that these characteristics significantly increase the interaction between them together. In the interconnected corporate world of today, the ability to think critically is a crucial asset, and students who major in art and design have the opportunity to become more proficient in this talent. The ability to have a new viewpoint and the confidence that one has in their creative talents are two examples of these characteristics. According to prior research in this field, students' ability to cope with challenging emotions, think creatively, and find solutions to issues is significantly impacted by their participation in arts education.





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