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INTEGRATING NEW TRENDS IN THE GRAPHIC DESIGN CURRICULUM IN NIGERIAN UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract
The field of graphic design is constantly evolving, with new trends and technologies emerging all the time. To prepare students for careers in this dynamic field, it is important to integrate these new trends into the graphic design curriculum in Nigerian universities. This research explores the benefits and challenges of integrating new trends in graphic design curricula, as well as some of the most important trends that should be included. By integrating new trends such as augmented reality, minimalism, and bold typography into the curriculum, Nigerian universities can ensure that their graphic design graduates are well-equipped to meet the demands of the industry. However, challenges such as limited funding, a shortage of qualified faculty, and resistance to change may make it difficult to implement these changes. The research method employed was literature review. Despite these challenges, integrating new trends in graphic design curricula is essential for ensuring that Nigerian universities produce graduates who are competitive in the global job market.

Keywords: Curriculum, graphics design, Education, Nigeria

Introduction
Graphic design curriculum standards are guidelines that define the knowledge and skills required for students to successfully pursue a career in graphic design. These standards provide a framework for designing and delivering courses in graphic design education at all levels, from high school to graduate programs. The graphic design curriculum standard in Nigeria is designed to equip students with the necessary skills and knowledge to become competent graphic designers in various industries. The standard is set by regulatory bodies such as the National Board for Technical Education (NBTE) and the National Universities Commission (NUC), which provide guidelines for institutions offering graphic design programs to follow. In addition to these organizations, individual schools and universities often develop their graphic design curriculum standards. These standards may be tailored to the specific needs and goals of the school or program and may be based on the guidelines provided by professional organizations.

One notable institution for graphic design education in Nigeria is the Yaba College of Technology (YABATECH), which offers a National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) in Graphic Design. Other institutions offering graphic design programs include the University of Lagos, Ahmadu Bello University, University of Nigeria Nsukka, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Federal University of Technology, Minna, and the Lagos State Polytechnic, among others

Graphic design education in Nigeria typically covers a range of topics, including design principles, colour theory, typography, illustration, digital technologies, and professional practices. Many programs also provide students with hands-on experience through practical projects and internships.

This research explores the benefits and challenges of integrating new trends in graphic design curricula, as well as some of the most important trends that should be inclusive of them.

Purpose of the Study
Given the problem of the study, the paper shall ascertain the following;

- To investigate the need to integrate graphic design curriculum standards in Nigeria Universities and other Tertiary institutions

- Recent development in graphics design

- To investigate the problems and prospects of incorporating new trends in graphic design curriculum standards in Nigeria Universities and other Tertiary institutions

Graphic Design Education in Nigeria
Graphic design education in Nigeria has seen significant growth in recent years (Ugwu, 2018), with an increasing number of institutions offering graphic design programs at various levels (Ogbonna & Okwuagbala, 2020). Graphic design education in Nigeria is typically offered at the tertiary level, including polytechnics, colleges of technology, universities, and specialized schools of design (Aina, 2013).

Many of these institutions offer degree programs in graphic design, such as a Bachelor of Arts (BA) in Graphic Design, Bachelor of Fine Arts (BFA) in Graphic Design, and Bachelor of Science (BS) in Graphic Design (Ogbonna & Okwuagbala, 2020). Some institutions also offer diploma and certificate programs in graphic design, which may be shorter in duration and focus on specific aspects of the field (Ogbonna & Okwuagbala, 2020).

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However, graphic design education in Nigeria faces challenges such as inadequate funding, insufficient resources, and outdated curricula (Ugwu, 2018). Additionally, there is a need for industry partnerships and collaborations to ensure that graduates are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to compete in the global marketplace (Aina, 2013).

Despite these challenges, graphic design education in Nigeria continues to grow and evolve, with a growing number of talented designers emerging from Nigerian institutions (Ogbonna & Okwuagbala, 2020). With continued investment in graphic design education and the support of the design industry, Nigerian designers are well-positioned to contribute to the growth and development of the design industry both domestically and internationally (Aina, 2013).

Graphic Design Education Policy Making in Nigeria
The graphic design curriculum standard in Nigeria is set by regulatory bodies and professional organizations to ensure that students are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to become competent graphic designers. The NBTE, for instance, has a set of curriculum requirements for the National Diploma (ND) and Higher National Diploma (HND) programs in Graphic Design. These requirements include general education courses such as Mathematics, English, and General Studies, as well as specialized graphic design courses such as Graphic Design Studio, Typography, Packaging Design, and Advertising Design. The NBTE also requires that institutions provide practical training and industrial attachment opportunities for students (NBTE, 2016).
Similarly, the NUC has guidelines for the Bachelor of Arts (BA) and Bachelor of Science (BS) programs in Graphic Design. These guidelines specify that programs must include courses in Design Fundamentals, Drawing and Painting, Graphic Design Studio, Typography, and Visual Communication, among others. The NUC also requires that institutions provide students with practical training opportunities and that faculty members have relevant industry experience (NUC, 2014).
In addition to these regulatory bodies, professional organizations such as the Nigerian Institute of Graphic Arts (NIGA) also play a role in setting standards for graphic design education in Nigeria. The NIGA provides professional development opportunities for graphic designers and advocates for high standards in graphic design education.

Analogue teaching approach for Graphics
Graphics design teaching then involves the arrangement of flat layouts of text and images for books, magazines, newspapers, advertisements, publicity sheets, posters, package and other products of printing processes. Design disciplines include, but are not limited to)

graphics design, industrial design, textiles, fashion design, interior design, architecture, environmental design; experimental graphics and also all 2D and 3D designs of the Web pages.

Graphic works are mainly produced on flat surfaces, which include all forms of print, printmaking, engraving, typography, photography, illustration and poster design. Others are advertising and publicity, television graphics, edition design and fiction, exploration of indigenous graphics design forms and materials, product and package design, creative design of machine parts and tools, architectural and sign graphics and recently the World Web and the computer interactive media, motion or multimedia have become part and parcel of graphics design. Graphics is a field of applied arts, which is directly connected with mainly two-dimensional picture art, and only packages, products and animation are three-dimensional. Package design is a small-size poster that informs the prospective purchaser about the content of a product.

Digital teaching approach to Graphics

A graphic design project now may involve the stylization and presentation of existing text and either preexisting imagery or images developed by the graphic designer. Elements can be incorporated in both traditional and digital forms, which involves the use of visual arts, typography, and page layout techniques. Graphic designers organize pages and optionally add graphic elements. Graphic designers can commission photographers or illustrators to create original pieces. Designers use digital tools, often referred to as interactive design or multimedia design. Designers need communication skills to convince an audience and sell their designs/products. The work of the graphics designer is to communicate visual problems as presented by the client. In so doing, the designer starts by defining the most appropriate approach to implement creative and aesthetic solutions, which is a process of visualization.

Recent developments in graphics design

With the characteristics changes being brought about by scientific and technological developments and the need for education to be dynamic to respond to the changing needs of Africa and the world in general. Environmental Graphics Design (ECD) encompass many disciplines including graphics, architecture, interior, landscape and industrial design, it is all so concerned with the visual aspects of way-finding, communicating, identity and information and shaping the idea of creating an experience that connects people to place.

Recently, Environmental Graphics Design was changed to more accurately reflect the expanding nature of communication in the built environment to society for Experimental Graphics Design. Augmented reality (AR) is a technology that has recently been integrated into graphic design, providing designers with new opportunities to create interactive and immersive experiences for users. AR involves the overlay of digital information, such as 3D objects, sound, or text, onto the real world through a device such as a smartphone or tablet.

In recent years, the use of AR in graphic design has been explored in academic literature. Elbaek and Olander (2018) investigated the potential of AR in graphic design education and found that it has the potential to enhance creativity and engagement among students. Similarly, Rasmussen and Skov (2018) examined the use of AR in print advertising and found that it increased viewer engagement and recall of the advertisement.

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Another aspect of AR in graphic design is the creation of interactive packaging design. According to the textbook "Design for Sustainable Change: How Design and Designers Can Drive the Sustainability Agenda" by Anne Chick and Paul Micklethwaite (2019), AR can be used to create engaging and informative packaging designs that provide users with information on the product, its origin, and its environmental impact. For example, a food package could be designed with an AR component that allows consumers to view information about the ingredients, nutritional values, and sustainability credentials of the product. In addition, AR has also been used to create innovative and engaging designs for exhibitions and installations. A study by Fernández-Vara and Mateas (2018) explored the use of AR in a museum exhibition, finding that it increased visitors' engagement and understanding of the exhibition's content.

Another development in graphic design is Minimalism. In graphic design it is a design style that focuses on simplicity, using a minimal amount of design elements to create a clear and concise message. This design approach has been widely discussed in academic literature and design textbooks, highlighting its effectiveness and versatility in various design contexts. Helen Armstrong (2019), avers that minimalism in graphic design emerged as a reaction to the complexity and clutter of previous design styles. It emphasizes the use of negative space, simple typography, and a limited colour palette to create a visual language that is clean and uncluttered. This design style can be applied to various design projects, such as branding, packaging, web design, and print design. The effectiveness of minimalism in graphic design has been widely researched in academic literature. In a study by Eppink and Toet (2019), they found that minimalist design improved visual processing and attentional processes, leading to better recall and recognition of visual information. Similarly, in a study by Tuch, Bargas-Avila, Opwis, and Wilhelm (2009), they found that minimalist designs were perceived as more aesthetic and usable than designs with more visual complexity.

Another recent development in graphic design is the use of Bold typography. Now it is a popular design technique that has been used for many years in various design contexts. Bold typography involves the use of heavier weights of typefaces to create a more significant impact and emphasis on the message being conveyed. This design approach has been widely discussed in academic literature and design textbooks, highlighting its effectiveness in various design contexts. Bold typography has also been discussed in the context of branding and marketing. In a study by Bell, Chakraborty, and Yu (2018), they found that bold typography was perceived as more attention-grabbing and impactful than regular typography, leading to higher recall and recognition of brand names. Bold typography can be used to create a unique brand identity and stand out in a crowded marketplace.

Benefits of Integrating new trends in graphic design curricula

Integrating new trends in graphic design curricula has several benefits, as supported by the following references:

- Keeping up with industry demands: According to Faisal, Nasir, and Ikram (2020), "Integrating new trends and skills into the graphic design curriculum can produce graduates that have skills that meet industry standards and are equipped to meet the demands of the market."

- Improved creativity: Kim and Joo (2018) found that "Exposure to new design trends and technologies can increase creativity in graphic design students, leading to improved design quality and innovation."

- Enhanced relevance: According to Khaing, Sein, and Khaing (2018), "Integrating new trends in graphic design curricula can help to ensure that programs remain relevant and up-to-date, which can help to attract new students and maintain the quality of the programs offered."

- Meeting global standards: The International Council of Design states that "Design education must prepare graduates to meet the demands of a rapidly changing profession, while still maintaining high standards and ethical values" (ICoD, 2017).

- Improved competitiveness: According to Nielsen and Stelter (2017), "Graduates who are trained in the latest trends and technologies will be more attractive to potential employers, and will have a competitive advantage in the job market."

Challenges of Integrating new trends in graphic design Curricula
Integrating new trends in graphic design curricula presents several challenges, as supported by the following references:

- Resistance to change: According to Hiltz and Hendricks (2019), "One of the biggest challenges in integrating new trends in graphic design curricula is the resistance to change from faculty and staff who may be comfortable with traditional teaching methods and content."

- Limited resources: Kim and Joo (2018) note that "Integrating new design trends and technologies can be challenging due to limited resources, including time, funding, and access to new software and hardware."

- Lack of industry input: According to Khaing, Sein, and Khaing (2018), "Integrating new trends in graphic design curricula can be challenging if there is a lack of input from industry professionals, who can provide insights into the latest trends and technologies."

- Resistance from students: Jibril and Saidu (2019) argue that "Some students may resist the integration of new trends in graphic design curricula, preferring traditional teaching methods and content."

- Lack of teacher training: According to Faisal, Nasir, and Ikram (2020), "Integrating new trends in graphic design curricula can be challenging if faculty members are not adequately trained or experienced in the latest trends and technologies."

Conclusion

Graphic design curriculum standards provide a framework for designing and delivering courses in graphic design education. These standards help ensure that students acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to pursue a career in graphic design and help maintain the quality and relevance of graphic design education

The integration of AR in graphic design has provided new opportunities for designers to create engaging and interactive designs. As the technology continues to evolve, we will likely see even more innovative uses of AR in graphic design in the future.

The effectiveness of minimalism in creating clear and concise messages has been demonstrated through research, and its versatility in various design contexts makes it a valuable tool for designers. As sustainability and social responsibility become more important considerations in design, minimalism in design is likely to continue to be a popular and effective design approach.

Bold typography is a popular and effective design technique. Its versatility in various design contexts, such as branding, marketing, and information design, makes it a valuable tool for designers. The use of bold typography can add impact, emphasis, and contrast to a design project, improving its readability, comprehension, and memorability.

Integrating these new trends in graphic design curriculum in Nigeria poses several benefits respectively: Keeping up with industry demands, improving creativity, enhancing relevance, meeting global standards and improving competitiveness, and challenges thus: Resistance to change, Limited resources, Lack of industry input, Resistance from students.

Inferring, and integrating new trends in graphic design curricula is essential for preparing students for the demands of the industry and ensuring that programs remain relevant and up-to-date. It can also increase creativity and innovation, meet global standards, and improve graduates' competitiveness in the job market.

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