

A Study on the Cultivation of Innovative and Entrepreneurial Talents of Fashion Design Major in the Colleges and Universities of China

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ABSTRACT. *With the transformation and adjustment of China's apparel industry structure, fashion design has become a crucial part, clothing design has further developed to meet diversified needs such as fashion, culture, brand, image, etc. Given this landscape, the demand for talents in fashion design is also changing accordingly. This paper expounds the training suggestions of contemporary fashion design professionals.*

KEYWORDS: *Clothing industry, Fashion design major, Talent cultivation*

1. Introduction

Apparel industry, as a representative of traditional manufacturing industry, has played a significant role for the economic growth in China. In recent years, China has greatly advanced brand building and independent innovation competence of the industry, thus laying a solid foundation for high-quality development. With the continued economic growth and people's increased consumption of clothing, clothing has further developed to meet diversified needs such as fashion, culture, brand, image, etc. From the perspective of the whole apparel industry chain, fashion design is at the top, which is of great significance for China's apparel industry to develop from "made in China" to "created in China". Amid the rapid development, China's apparel industry further presents the trend of "design plus", which is characterized by comprehensive and integrated development: the apparel industry embraces such new technologies as big data, Internet of things, artificial intelligence, and so on to promote a higher level of development. Given this landscape, the demand for talents in fashion design is also changing accordingly. The whole industry will attach great importance to the comprehensive quality of talents, and those who are equipped with knowledge of different fields and open-ended thinking are in great need in the new era.[1]

2. The Necessity of Cultivating Innovative and Entrepreneurial Talents in Fashion Design Major

Currently, colleges and universities have the following defects in training fashion design talents:

First of all, colleges and universities have weak service awareness and do not take the industry's demand into consideration when cultivating fashion design talents. As a result, the unclear goals and positioning makes it impossible to meet requirements of economic transformation and growth.

Secondly, school and enterprise cooperation is not conducted in an effective way, failing to achieve collaborative training of talents and provide a robust supporting system of guarantee and evaluation.

Finally, due to enrollment expansion of students in colleges and universities, enterprises find it more difficult to deal with the great number of students. Besides, the relatively small scale of cooperation between colleges and enterprises makes it not easy to implement the practical projects of innovation and entrepreneurship.

In order to solve the problems mentioned above, the State Council issued the *Implementation Plan of National Vocational Education Reform* in 2019, which supports the industry and education integration from the aspect of policy and proposes specific indicators for the reform of vocational education: by 2022, tens of thousands of enterprises which are characterized by integration of enterprises with vocational schools and universities will be cultivated, 300 quality and professional training bases will be constructed to cultivate innovative and entrepreneurial talents by the integration of enterprises with vocational schools and universities.^[2]

3. Suggestions on the Cultivation of Innovative and Entrepreneurial Talents of Fashion Design Major in Contemporary Colleges and Universities of China

3.1 Constructing a Training Mechanism of School-Enterprise Collaborative Innovation Talents with Complementary Advantages

The resources of colleges and universities are mainly allocated in teaching and research, while the resources of enterprises are primarily distributed in operation, capital, practice, technical personnel and management. Through collaborative innovation, the two sides can achieve a “win-win” result of complementary advantages and resource sharing. Talent cultivation should start from problem resolution. Allowing students to enter enterprises and feel cutting-edge technologies enables them to know entrepreneurial environment, concept and spirit that are different from schools in advance so that they can improve their adaptability in innovation and entrepreneurship, and lay a solid foundation for innovation and entrepreneurship in the future. The continuous exchange and communication with students will also stimulate creativity of enterprise staff, helping them break through the traditional single mode and find talents with excellent design potential.

3.2 Achieving the Precise Docking between School and Enterprise by Means of Subject Competition

Due to the increasing employment pressure and the low transformation rate of fashion design in recent years, private colleges and universities in China have turned their attention to school and enterprise cooperation. Although the talent training mode of cooperation between universities and enterprises has been widely concerned and implemented, it is not conducted in an efficient way in general. And the weak initiative and driving force are mainly responsible for the problem. Subject competition should be selected as a way to strengthen the driving force and initiative. The competition mainly involves some cutting-edge high-end science and technologies, focusing on the discovery, analysis and solution of problems. Subject competition should avoid formalism and strengthen technical and practical support with the help of enterprises. Therefore, colleges and universities should break the shackles of “ivory tower” independently, have a close contact with society and enterprises, and strengthen school and enterprise cooperation through subject competition. Generally, a team has 3 to 5 members, which is much easier to be controlled and operated.[3]

3.3 Professional Practice Team Composed of on Campus and Off Campus Instructors

Highly competitive faculties is the premise for the full implementation of the innovation of practical teaching system, which is also the factor affecting the cultivation of innovative design talents. To this regard, the fashion design majors should strengthen teachers’ capability from a long-term perspective. First of all, we should vigorously “bring in” a group of industry experts through the humanized and diversified mode, so as to improve the professional level of the whole practice team in the shortest time. Secondly, we should advance “going out” to encourage teachers to participate in training, further study, investigation and exchange, thus improving their practical guidance level. Based on the modes of “bringing in” and “going out”, it is ensured that the practical teaching ability of a group of discipline leaders and key teachers in colleges and universities can be stably cultivated and trained. It is also needed to strengthen the cooperation with design enterprises and improve the assessment of “double-position” teachers. In addition, we should strengthen the construction of practical teaching guarantee system and perfect corresponding systems and standards.

3.4 Shaping “Cultural and Creative Thinking” of Fashion Design Talents

In the future era of “cultural and creative plus”, “cultural and creative thinking” is conducive to promoting communication and cooperation among industries, which will undoubtedly advance the cultivation of cultural and creative talents in China in the future. The practical experience of cultural and creative industry can be refined into “cultural and creative thinking” and applied in talent training. For example, the school of culture and innovation of Shanghai Jiaotong University is cooperating with enterprises and the school encourages students to independently organize interdisciplinary team of “culture and innovation plus X”, thus cultivating students’ cross-cultural ability and innovation and lessening the burden faced by enterprises. This project summarizes the methodology of digital cultural innovation in improving experience and identity, and helps students apply cultural and creative thinking in fashion design, and eventually become compound talents.

4. Conclusion

With the transformation and adjustment of China's apparel industry structure, fashion design has become a crucial part. Application-oriented fashion design majors in undergraduate colleges and universities pay more attention to the training of practical ability. Therefore, colleges and universities should attach great importance to the deep integration of enterprises and schools, improve student's design level, and establish an innovation system that is in line with the characteristics of colleges and universities. Besides, colleges and universities are also required to strengthen and stimulate student's innovative and entrepreneurial capability through a large number of practical training activities so as to cultivate more excellent talents for China's apparel industry.

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