

Impact of Integrating Professional Practice in Textile Design Curriculum

Ruby Kashyap Sood and Anu Sharma

Abstract

Fashion education in the 21st century faces many challenges, considering the rapid transformation of the industry. Educators need to constantly restructure their curriculum, pedagogy, and mode of assessment of students' learning to ensure adaptation to the needs of the industry and thus employability of their graduates. The academic community needs to address key domains, including technological innovation, globalization, the digital revolution, sustainability, ethical practices, changing consumer mindsets, and a new cohort of students.

To align the learning outcomes with the evolving needs, enhancing industry engagement in student learning will be the way forward to gain real-time experience, leading to relevant knowledge and skill attainment. In this context, a new subject, 'Professional Project', was introduced in the textile design curriculum to the final-year students. The subject aims to expose students to emerging industry trends and encourage them to undertake professional projects of their choice, thereby expressing classroom learning in a realistic environment and enhancing their professional skills and capabilities.

To study the impact of this new subject on students' learning, a structured questionnaire was distributed to three batches of textile design students who graduated in 2021, 2022, and 2023. The findings demonstrate the significance of the subject in developing students' professional capabilities. In addition to gaining knowledge, the different professional projects helped build up students' soft skills like time management, team building, communication, adaptability, problem-solving, decision-making, and analytical skills, which are essential for fast-tracking career growth and achieving success in the industry. The uniqueness of the subject highlighted by students was the opportunity to select their own short-term projects based on their self-interests and individual strengths to accomplish specific tasks.

The findings of the study bring to light the relevance of real-time practical learning in fashion education, which helps impart industry-oriented knowledge and skills and

provides diverse opportunities to enhance the future prospects of students. In order to enhance student learning and experience, academia should explore unconventional approaches to collaborate with the industry.

Keywords: Practical experience, real-time projects, industry engagement, problem solving, soft skills, professional development, career prospects

Introduction

In today's time, fashion institutes are facing a challenging time amidst the rapidly changing landscape of the industry, technological advancements such as 3D printing, augmented reality, and artificial intelligence, focus on sustainability and ethical practices, and global economic shifts. It is pertinent for fashion schools to rethink programs, curricula, and pedagogies to respond to the evolving needs of the industry. The curriculum should aim to inculcate relevant skills and capabilities in students belonging to a new generation in an endeavor to prepare dynamic professionals to handle the challenges of the fashion business.

In a fast-changing world with emerging technologies, education has to adapt to the evolving needs of the learner, enhancing their capabilities to be a better fit in the industry. According to ASSOCHAM's report 'Navigating the Shift to Education 5.0: Enhancing Higher Education in India' (2024), the education sector has transformed over a time, from education 1.0 to now transitioning to education 5.0, representing a 'paradigm shift' in pedagogy to enable enhanced learning experience. Education 5.0 stresses the well-rounded development of students, personalized learning, and industry-ready professionals. The report describes the adoption of Education 5.0, which includes planning relevant curriculum, integrating essential 21st century skills; innovative teaching through project-based, inquiry-based, experiential learning; human-centric learning by creating customized pathways; collaboration and networking with stakeholders; and accessibility and equal opportunities for all learners. Vimal and Alexander (2023) state that Education 5.0 aims to develop future-ready graduates with 21st century skill sets, including problem solving, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration that are necessary for the workforce. In order to stay relevant and develop competent professionals, fashion schools need to restructure their curriculum, pedagogy, and learning outcomes in alignment with Education 5.0.

Employability is the key to the success of a professional program. The knowledge and skills in line with the industry's requirements increase the employment opportunities of graduates. According to Peacock and McNeil (2014), the industry expects graduates to

have relevant technical and subject competency but also be equipped with a range of skills and attributes such as problem-solving, communication, planning and organizing, teamwork, and interpersonal skills. In the era of Industry 4.0, the designer's role is more of a strategist and thinker. With mechanization on the rise, practical and technical skills are not so crucial, and therefore learning should be based on problem driven design outcomes to foster strategic thinking, allowing future designers to adapt to any complex situations (Potgieter and Lavelle, 2021).

Integrating theory with practice in fashion education

Across the world, fashion institutes have incorporated typical activities like an industry internship or a final industry-linked graduation project in their curriculum to provide real-time exposure to the students. Kohli (2019) states that an industry internship enables students to gain experiential learning, empowering them with knowledge, skills, and attitudes to work effectively in the industry. Based on students' reflections post-internship, Kozar and Connell (2014) record that internships enabled students to identify their strengths and professional goals, which helped boost confidence in them. An internship is an important activity to combine theoretical understanding with practical application, thus serving as a bridge to strengthen students' know-how about fashion markets, consumers, business, and actual production (Ma, 2017). Practical teaching in fashion education, which includes classroom instruction, extracurricular activities, internships, graduation projects, and social practice, integrates theory and practice, knowledge, and capability to foster an innovative spirit and ability in students (ibid.).

Project-based learning is a type of pedagogical approach that is rooted in student-centric learning and based on the premise of 'learning by doing'. Wenyuan, Beibei and Gan (2020) adopt "Real Problems and Real Practices" project-based learning that integrates real-time projects into teaching. The design brief is based on real users and specific requirements to achieve practical solutions. Incorporating realistic projects into the fashion design course motivated students to enhance their practical ability, design thinking, and problem-solving capabilities and augmented their communication and teamwork skills (ibid.). In another study, integrating an 'authentic learning strategy' in an undergraduate apparel and merchandising curriculum improved professionalism, enhanced research abilities, and reinforced learning through real-time experience (Ma and Lee, 2012). Jones, et al. (2020) explore the positive learning outcomes for students in fashion and retail through 'experience-based learning', thus bridging the gap between the classroom and the real world. Work-based learning has a positive

impact on the students' learning in comparison to the traditional pedagogical approach (Bryant, Akinleye and Durrant, 2013; Appiah, 2023). Ma (2022) explains the importance of 'challenge-based learning' through a case study. The findings demonstrate that challenge-based learning incorporated in sustainable design education enhanced the problem-solving skills of the learners by following a step-by-step design thinking process in comparison to the conventional mode of learning, where every step of the design process is not critical.

Lam, et al. (2020) highlight the importance of participatory action research (PAR) in vocational education by way of knowledge co-creation between students, teachers, and industry members. The study stresses the drawbacks of the Bauhaus tradition of a top-down approach, creating graduates ready to work in junior positions. On the other hand, PAR enhances students' creativity, making them more competent to handle bigger challenges in the industry. According to Ma (2017), employment-driven, competence-based, and practice-led innovative practical teaching is an effective pedagogy that enhances the quality of teaching in the domain of costume and fashion design specialization in higher education institutes. The practice-based approach supports students to strengthen networking with the industry and leads to competitive design professionals to address the needs of the community and commerce.

Transformative learning is a learning theory that is specifically suitable for young adult education. It is a process of insightful, constructive, and meaningful learning as it assists learners to reflect deeply through conscious learning experiences, resulting in a fundamental change (Simsek, 2012). Sala (2016) shares an example of a transformative method of teaching through a case study of the Nike Sustainable Materials Project, a collaborative project to engage fashion design students in real-time industry practice. The design project was in partnership with London College of Fashion (LCF), the Centre for Sustainable Fashion, a research center at LCF, and Nike. The collaborative nature of the project integrated the experiences of various participants, including students, faculty guides, researchers, and industry professionals, creating an ideal environment that challenged students' minds and fostered "change-oriented" thinking to deliver innovative ideas and solutions.

Industry-linked classroom projects are beneficial for students, faculty members, and the industry, as academia-industry partnerships guide innovative problem-solving and novel solutions. Heffernan (2016) states that research projects with the industry provide an opportunity for students to find innovative solutions; the company gains from new research and findings, and academicians enhance their own academic

research by procuring funds for graduate students. The larger objective is to gain real-time experience, significantly contribute to the industry, and, in the process, achieve the learning outcomes and meet the academic requirements.

A new pedagogical approach

The review of literature indicates that fashion institutes across the globe have integrated industry exposure into their curriculum through industry internships, company-sponsored graduation projects, industry expert lectures, and collaborative projects. In 2018, the National Institute of Fashion Technology undertook a major curriculum restructuring exercise. The major goals of the curriculum rethinking entailed multi-disciplinary learning, a flexible learning model leading to personalized pathways for students, and enhanced industry connection. The primary focus revolved around empowering students with real-time industry exposure to supplement their classroom learning through a practical approach.

The Textile Design program proposed a revised curriculum model based on feedback from senior industry members who have hired Textile Design graduates over the years, alumni in higher positions, current students, and faculty. The feedback from the industry pointed toward strengthening the problem-solving skills of design students and developing awareness of critical, emerging areas such as environmental concerns and ethical practices. The industry leaders also stressed inculcating soft skills like presentation and communication, time management, adaptability, flexibility, and persistence. Drawing from the industry's response, a new subject, 'Professional Project', was included in the final year as part of an endeavor to augment the industry interface in the curriculum. The subject includes two components: a series of lectures by industry experts to delve into the latest industry trends and practices in the domain of fashion and textiles, and secondly, a professional project to adapt to real-time situations through practical assignments.

Methodology

The 'Professional Project' subject is offered to Textile Design students as a major in Semester VII, which is the beginning of the fourth year in the Bachelor of Design program. The goal of the subject is to engage students with the industry so they can gain real-time experience throughout the semester. The subject provides a unique opportunity for students to express classroom learning in a professional environment. As part of the subject, students are given options to engage in professional assignments related to the design field and as per their interests. The multiple options offered to students include freelance projects with the industry, participation and assistance in industry events like fashion weeks and exhibitions, participation in design competitions, paper

presentations at conferences, faculty assistance in consultancy projects, as well as self-learning through suitable online courses.

The assessment of the subject is based on two assignments, including a research-based essay and a professional project undertaken by the student. The first assignment focuses on thorough research on a specific topic, followed by a submission of an essay ranging from 1200 to 1500 words. The selection of the topic is based on the students' interest in relation to the emerging industry practices, drawn from the sessions conducted by the faculty and subject experts. As part of the second assignment, each student is required to undertake one or more professional projects, which should entail a minimum combined workload of forty-eight hours. The evaluation is carried out on the basis of the learning diary, detailed documentation of each of the projects, and the task-based learning outcomes achieved by the student.

The main objective of the study was to assess the impact of the new subject, "Professional Project," on students' learning and professional growth. It was pertinent to determine if the envisaged professional skills like project management, leadership, team building, self-discipline, self-motivation, and time management were inculcated in students towards the end of the course.

To assess the students' learning and experience in the professional project, a structured questionnaire comprising open-ended and close-ended questions was designed. The questionnaire link on Google Forms was shared with the Textile Design alumni of NIFT, New Delhi, from the batches of 2017-21, 2018-22, and 2019-23, a total of 109 graduates who had undertaken the subject 'Professional Project' in Semester VII. The close-ended questions were measured using a 5-point Likert-type scale ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (5). The open-ended questions were designed to examine the application of students' learning in their professional careers and the relevance of the subject from the perspective of alumni. The study exercised a mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data analysis. The close-ended responses were evaluated using descriptive statistics, and the open-ended responses were analyzed using content analysis. Both quantitative and qualitative data were interpreted to draw the findings of the study.

Results

"Professional Project" is a new subject that was introduced to the final-year textile design students. It is a new pedagogical approach to enhance students' professional capabilities and provide a real-time learning experience. The findings of the study are based on the responses obtained from the questionnaire. A total of 48 Textile Design alumni responded to the questionnaire: 14 from the 2017-21 batch, 16 from the 2018-

22 batch, and 18 from the 2019-23 batch (Figure 1). The data from the questionnaire was assessed to map the key learning outcomes achieved through the subject.

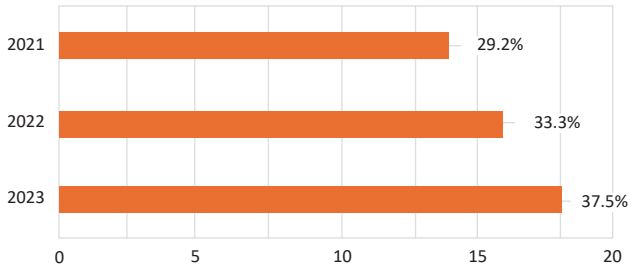


Figure 1: Participants from different graduating batch (2021, 2022 and 2023)

Nature of professional projects

The respondents were asked to mention the nature of professional projects undertaken by them in the subject. According to Figure 2, 64.6 percent of respondents engaged in freelance design projects with the industry to gain more practical experience. Another 29.2 percent of graduates opted to assist faculty in consultancy projects. Furthermore, respondents participated in a wide range of professional projects. A considerable 27.1 percent were part of research projects with either industry or faculty. Additionally, another 27.1 percent expressed their preference for enrolling in short-term, self-paced online courses to enhance their knowledge and skills. Participation in design competitions to showcase their talent was noticeable among 22.9 percent of the alumni. In addition to these prevalent trends, some of the respondents contributed to exhibition design and event management activities.

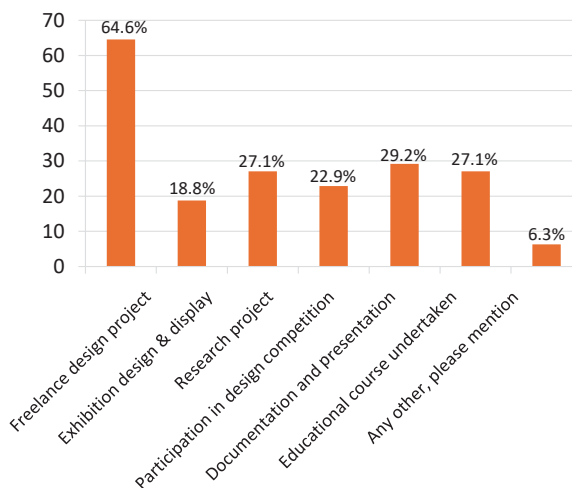


Figure 2: Different professional projects undertaken by the participants

Learning outcomes

To assess the learning outcomes, it was important to gauge if the subject contributed to the development of professional attributes in students in order to prepare them for their careers. A substantial 64.6 percent of the respondents were of the view that the subject helped in acquiring knowledge, skills, and professional capabilities (Figure 3). The findings further indicated that 12.5 percent of the alumni pointed to enhancements in their skills, while 10.4 percent conveyed improvements in their professional capabilities. A smaller percentage, 8.3 percent, credited an increase in the knowledge domain to the subject. The results indicate the multi-dimensional impact of the subject, attributed to the diverse professional projects undertaken by the students.

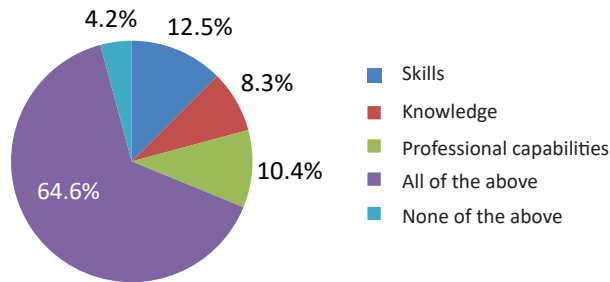


Figure 3: Development in student’s learning through professional project

In response to the query of whether the subject assisted in comprehending industry trends and practices, 75 percent of the respondents were in agreement with the statement, whereas 20.8 percent remained neutral (Figure 4). The results reveal that the majority of students gained valuable insights into the working of the industry.

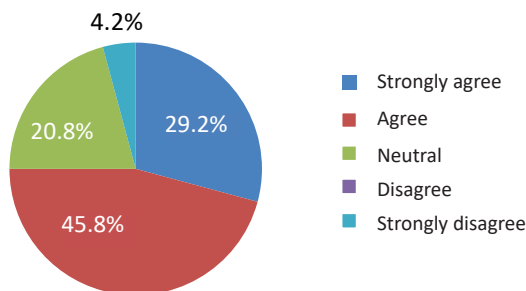


Figure 4: Participants’ response to ‘The subject helped me understand industry trends and practices.’

Professional development

The approach to the subject was planned to motivate students to undertake real-time projects in contrast to regular class assignments. A majority of 87.5 percent of the graduates agreed with this assertion, drawing attention to the uniqueness of the curriculum transaction as a means to inspire students to engage in more realistic learning (Figure 5). A notable 85.5 percent of the respondents also brought to light that the projects undertaken by them added value to their resumes by highlighting the variety of professional assignments conducted during their course of study (Figure 6). The finding points to meaningful learning in a professional environment, which enhances career prospects. 87.5 percent of the graduates further corroborate this by emphasizing the importance of the projects undertaken in enhancing their professional growth and development (Figure 7). On the contrary, it was observed that a minuscule 4.2 percent of the respondents displayed their disagreement with the benefits of the projects, perhaps due to differences in outcomes envisaged and achieved based on individual perceptions or experiences.

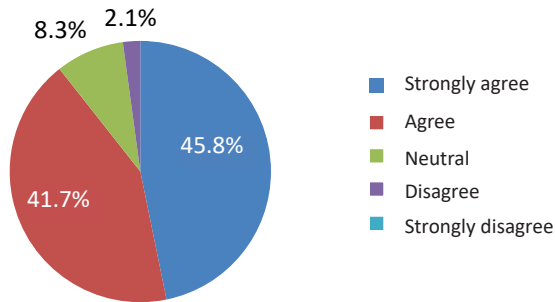


Figure 5: Participants' response to 'I was motivated to undertake real time projects/ assignments, beyond the regular class assignments.'

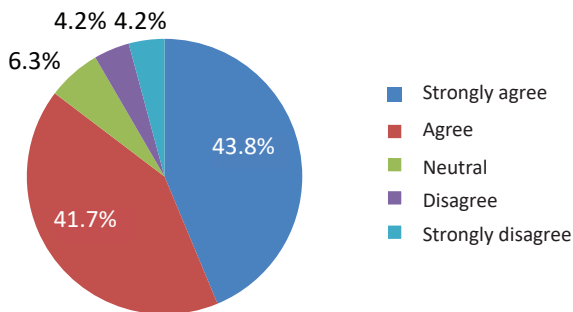


Figure 6: Participants' response to 'The professional project/s undertaken added value to my resume.'

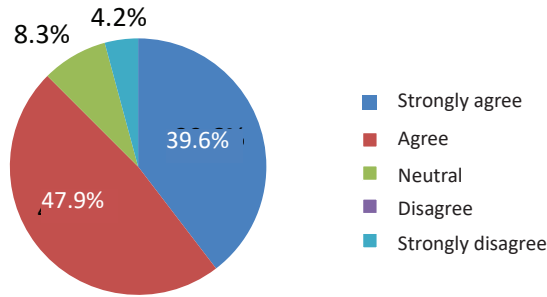


Figure 7: Participants’ response to ‘The professional project/s undertaken helped in my professional development.’

Development of soft skills

The primary goal of the subject was to instill soft skills, specifically time management. A majority of the respondents, 83.3 percent, agreed that the projects undertaken helped them to adhere to the project timelines successfully, thus indicating the usefulness of the subject to enhance the time management skills of future professionals (Figure 8). Furthermore, 12.5 percent of the respondents expressed a neutral perspective on the statement, while a mere 4.2 percent of alumni expressed disagreement with the improvement in time management skills following project completion. This may be attributed to various reasons like the nature of projects, student experiences and perceptions, project management, and other external factors.

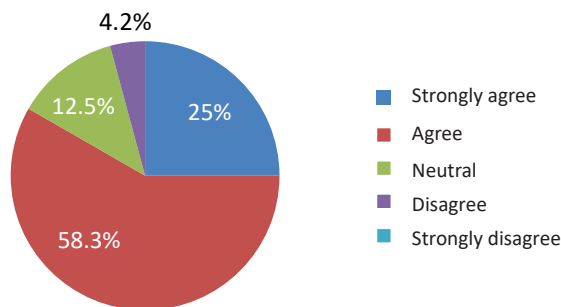


Figure 8: Participants’ response to ‘The professional project/s helped me realize the importance of adhering to timelines.’

In response to the question regarding the impact of projects on students’ perceptions of the importance of team building, different viewpoints came to light. More than half of the respondents (54.1 percent) accepted that the projects gave an insight into the

relevance of team building and collaboration to achieve the desired deliverables (Figure 9). However, 37.5 percent of the alumni took a neutral stance on the development of team building, and another 8.4 percent of the respondents were in complete disagreement with the statement. The varying viewpoints may have resulted from the students undertaking a wide variety of projects, not all of which required teamwork.

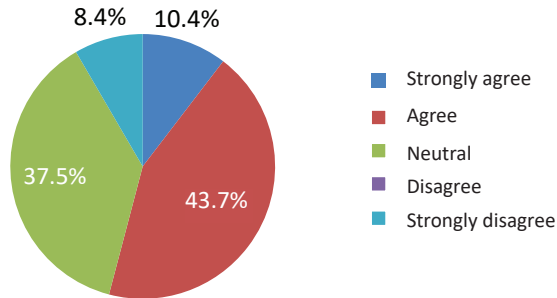


Figure 9: Participants' response to 'The professional project/s helped me understand the importance of team building.'

The results indicate a wide range of perspectives regarding the positive impact of the projects in building contacts and networking with the industry. More than half of the respondents (60.4 percent) acknowledged the contribution of the projects to connecting with the industry, followed by 25 percent who remained neutral, and a smaller number, 14.4 percent, disagreed with the statement (Figure 10). The variation in responses may be due to the nature of projects undertaken, which were not directly affiliated with the industry.

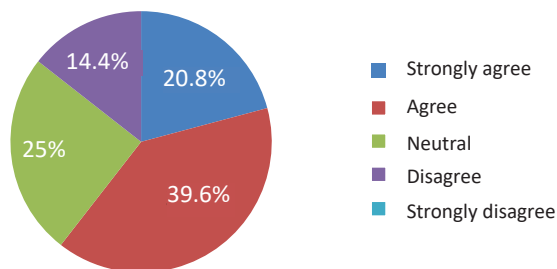


Figure 10: Participants' response to 'The professional project/s I undertook helped me build contacts with the industry.'

A majority of the respondents, 85.4 percent, affirmed that the projects assisted in improving their documentation and presentation skills (Figure 11). It may be inferred that the projects provided a platform for students to imbibe pertinent professional skills like report writing, developing visual presentations, and effective communication in a real-time environment.

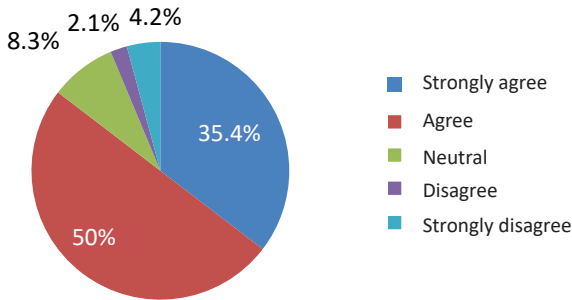


Figure 11: Participants’ response to ‘The subject helped me improve my documentation and presentation skills.’

Self awareness

The ‘Professional Project’ subject encouraged students to select projects of their choice. A noteworthy result of the survey was that a majority of the respondents, 77.1 percent, expressed the importance of the projects in identifying their strengths and weaknesses (Figure 12). The projects allowed students to self-introspect for further growth and professional development. A notable 18.8 percent remained neutral, and another 4.2 percent disagreed with the statement, indicating mixed student perceptions and interpretations about specific projects.

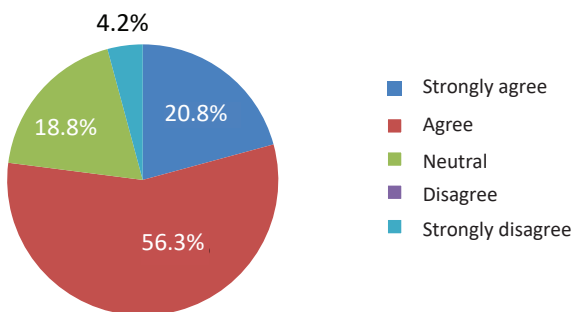


Figure 12: Participants’ response to ‘The professional project/s helped me identify my strengths and weaknesses.’

The respondents were asked if the projects undertaken in the subject assisted in defining their career pathway. A significant 60.5 percent of the alumni asserted the positive impact of the projects in guiding them in selecting their professional endeavors (Figure 13). It was observed that 29.2 percent of the respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement, and another 10.5 percent expressed their disagreement with the impact of the projects on their career choices. The diverse responses may be based on personal experiences and the project outcomes.

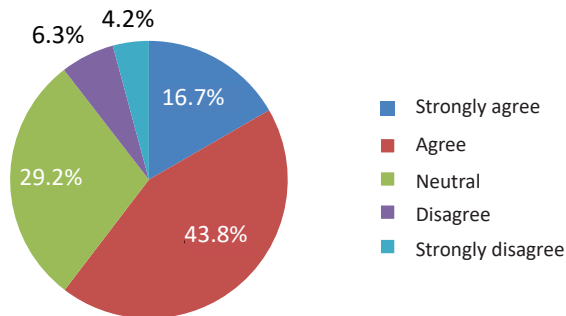


Figure 13: Participants' response to 'The professional project/s helped me define my career pathway.'

Learning experience and student reflections

It was critical to assess the application of the subject's learning by alumni in their professional careers. The majority of the respondents were of the view that the subject provided valuable insights on realistic industry projects. The practical learning fostered their professional skills, such as presentation, documentation and communication skills, time management, and team building. These were the key takeaways from the subject that they successfully integrated into their current professional roles. "I feel the subject enables you to work as a professional and develop several soft skills that are essential to thrive in the industry," mentions a respondent. Another respondent adds, "Real-time projects offer more insights on the industry and market trends, which has helped me understand the requirements of the business." Some of the respondents indicated that the development of other relevant attributes, such as in-depth research, detailed design processes, and improvements in digital rendering skills, has significantly enhanced their performance at work. "I did my professional project with a print design studio, which helped me update my skills in digital rendering in Procreate that are really useful in the industry as well," comments an alumni, which further corroborates learning relevant industry skills through real-time projects.

For one of the respondents who had undertaken an online course as a professional project, the subject assisted in defining her career pathway. She remarks, "I had taken a UI/UX online course as my professional project, and it proved to be an eye opener for me and paved my career. From textile to UX, it made me realize I deeply enjoyed it and would like to pursue it further in my career, and here I am writing this as a UX designer." Another alumnus opines, "The subject allowed us to select projects beyond our forte to make us more versatile. It is now easier for me to handle different tasks at my workplace like product styling, digital product rendering, and space design." This further highlights the relevance of the subject to developing multi-faceted professionals for the industry.

Lastly, the respondents were asked to share their views regarding the continuation of the subject in the Textile Design curriculum. The feedback was overwhelmingly positive, with 98 percent of the respondents advocating for the inclusion of the 'Professional Project' subject in the curriculum. The majority of the alumni stated that the projects undertaken as part of the subject added value to their resume and portfolio and connected them to pragmatic assignments, thereby applying their classroom learning. The diverse projects gave an opportunity to students to develop additional skills of their choice beyond their major studies. Some of the alumni's comments expressed below are indicators of the positive outcomes of the subject.

- "The professional projects added immense value and made me stand out among other job aspirants. My company HR was very appreciative of the wide range of projects undertaken by me during my study."
- "Yes, the subject should be included in the Textile Design curriculum as it pushes us to learn more, way beyond our comfort zone."
- "These projects gave me extra credits while applying for my post-graduation studies in international universities."
- "Yes, I think it's an important subject and allows students to explore different areas of interest, not necessarily related to their major, thus providing flexibility and independence, which serves as a perfect precursor to the graduation project."

Challenges and suggestions

Alongside the overwhelmingly positive response, there were a few suggestions proposed by the respondents to enhance the overall structure and assessment of the subject. One of the respondents felt that it is sometimes challenging to secure industry

projects, given the preference of most companies for physical presence. Due to shorter timelines prescribed by the industry, the time allocated to work on the project is less, as the subject is planned during the semester. The suggestion was to run the subject in a modular format over a few weeks, rather than scheduling it across the semester. Another alumnus stressed the need for implementing a more explicit assessment process, engaging both academia and industry in the project evaluation. Another suggestion was to use social media to reach out to the industry and find suitable freelance projects. The valuable insights and recommendations from the survey will further help streamline the implementation of the subject in the future.

Conclusion

NIFT was set up in 1986 to train students and prepare professionals for the fashion industry. Over the years, the institute has evolved itself, restructuring its curriculum, teaching and learning methods, and assessments to cater to the changing requirements of the industry. From the traditional classroom instruction approach to more interactive learning and building in a more real-time experience for the students, the institute has been making conscious efforts to align with emerging trends, integrate technological advancements, and enhance the learning experience of today's learners.

The introduction of the 'Professional Project' subject in the textile design curriculum aims to transition from a conventional classroom setup with one-way communication to more realistic learning by integrating a project-based and experience-based learning approach. This is in alignment with 'Education 5.0', which aims to build a future that encourages dynamic and continuous learning, flexible learning pathways, and integration of industry-based learning for real-time exposure (ASSOCHAM, 2024). The teaching methods for the 'Professional Project' involved expert lectures to familiarize students with emerging industry trends and students' engagement in multidisciplinary collaborative projects to build on their learning from previous semesters and application in the real world. To obtain projects, the industry was approached, and other opportunities like volunteering for events, exhibitions, and fashion weeks and participating in design competitions were also shared with the students. The projects were selected by students according to their personal interests, keeping in mind their strengths and envisaged learning outcomes. The students were instructed to do detailed documentation of each project. Periodic assessments were conducted to review the progress of the projects and provide constructive feedback to the students to enhance their work further.

The intention of the subject 'Professional Project' was to strengthen students' professional capabilities, enhance their understanding of industry trends and practices, and inculcate requisite soft skills to prepare them to handle the challenges of the industry. Conventionally, industry internships and graduation projects are the two significant activities ingrained in the curriculum that provide industry exposure to the students. The subject was a step further to enrich students' real-time experience and an opportunity to apply their classroom learning in a professional environment. Unlike a regular internship that is conducted with a textile/fashion company, 'Professional Project' provided an opportunity to students to engage with multi-skilled projects beyond the textile industry for a versatile learning experience.

One of the main objectives of 'Professional Project' was to align academic inputs with the industry's demands. This was achieved through expert lectures on emerging industry trends and topical domain areas like sustainability, textile conservation, the application of artificial intelligence in the fashion industry, entrepreneurship, augmented reality, virtual reality, and wearable technology. The introduction of up-and-coming fields that are not a part of their major studies generated interest among students, providing a platform to learn and imbibe new knowledge.

A major component of the subject involved engagement in different professional projects. The subject was planned to be multi-disciplinary in nature, allowing students to select projects of their choice based on their strengths and capabilities. The participants affirmed that the projects provided a unique experience, offering a more flexible learning approach, distinct from traditional classroom learning. The opportunity to experience different project types highlighted individual strengths and weaknesses, aiding in self-assessment regarding future opportunities and scope for improvement to enhance professional development.

The diversity in projects encouraged students to assimilate and strengthen their skill sets, thus assisting them to make informed decisions regarding their future career prospects and professional growth. Furthermore, the addition of industry-linked projects and other professional assignments in the student's resume and portfolio unfolded more avenues and increased their chances of securing better placements. The interaction with the industry during the course through lectures and projects led to networking, forging connections, and exposure to various sectors, thereby widening the student's horizons in terms of knowledge and experiences.

The findings of the survey administered to alumni who undertook the subject indicated an all-rounded development of the students, especially reinforcing soft skills like time management, discipline, team building, presentation, and communication skills. The

time-bound projects with clear-cut deliverables provided students with exposure to the professional work environment and equipped them with the requisite skills to adapt to the industry's requirements. The detailed step-by-step process documentation for each of the projects ensured the originality of the work, stressing the importance of professional ethics and integrity.

The 'Professional Project' subject provides a unique opportunity for students to integrate theory with practice and earn credits by participating in professional tasks of their choice, thereby offering a more flexible learning model. The subject aligns with the Education 5.0 framework, as mentioned in the ASSOCHAM 2024 report. The prospect of engaging in real-time projects within the curriculum framework is a successful pedagogical approach that accomplishes the learning outcome of enriching professional development, augmenting soft skills, and preparing graduates to perform and adapt to the industry needs and challenges. The versatile nature of the subject facilitates self-reflection to assist students in selecting suitable career pathways.

The fast-paced, evolving fashion industry and the growing uncertainties point toward a dynamic and flexible fashion and textiles curriculum. The academia needs to delve deeper to brainstorm and ideate more novel ways of enhancing industry connections and building professional capabilities within the realm of the course.

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About the authors

Ruby Kashyap Sood is Professor in the Textile Design department at NIFT, New Delhi, and Head of the Publication Unit. She is on the Board of Directors at Apparel Made-up, Home Furnishing Sector Skill Council. Ruby has more than two decades of teaching experience. Her areas of specialization include surface design, craft studies, and textile art. With a Master's in Textiles and Clothing from Delhi University, she has done extensive research on traditional Indian textiles and costumes. Ruby has co-authored books titled 'Celebrating Dreams: Weddings in India,' 'Traditional Indian Textiles,' and 'Anant: Sustainability and Circularity in Indian Handlooms.' Her doctoral thesis is an extensive body of work on the Indian blouse. She has presented research papers at prestigious conferences and published several articles in reputed journals and periodicals. She is also a member of the Advisory Board of The Journal of Dress History, UK.

ruby.sood@nift.ac.in

Anu Sharma is Associate Professor in the Textile Design department and has more than 19 years of teaching experience as an academician at NIFT Delhi. She did her doctoral research on double cloth using camel hair, titled 'The Double Cloth from Napasar, Rajasthan: An Intervention Study.' Anu is a postgraduate in textile design from NIFT Delhi, specializing in home fashion textiles. Her areas of specialization are home products, design fundamentals, weave design, portfolio design, sustainable design, and new product development. She has several publications and presentations in the area of weave design, trends in the handloom sector, textile fabrics, and product innovation in national and international journals and conferences, with two articles published in Scopus-indexed journals.

anu.sharma@nift.ac.in