

NYAMAWERO NAVEI

Tumu Senior High Technical School

Post Office box 24, Tumu

Upper West Region, Ghana

[navei47@gmail.com](mailto:navei47@gmail.com)

# Tracer study on the employability of Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba

## How to cite:

Navei, N. (2020). Tracer study on the employability of Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba. *Journal of African Art Education*, 1(2), 1-18.

## Abstract

*Premised on qualitative case study design, the study investigated the employability of Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba (UEW) with reference to graduate expectations and realities in the world of work. Twenty-eight (28) Bachelor of Arts (BA) Graphic Design graduates of the July 2012 year group and one other key participant all of the Department of Graphic Design of UEW were selected through the use of purposive and exponential non-discriminate snowball sampling techniques. Empirical data were collected through opinionnaire and semi-structured interview. The study found the rationale of BA Graphic Design programme of UEW to have bi-focal agenda of equipping its graduates with the needed expertise in Graphic Design practice and education as well as guarantee its graduates employability in the industrial or entrepreneurial establishments. It was also established that most of the July 2012 BA Graphic Design graduates of UEW expected to gain immediate employment by the industry only, after graduation. Since the rationale of the programme is bi-focal in nature, the study recommends that the department of Graphic Design, UEW should provide adequate sensitization and orientation to prospective applicants including continuing students on the nature of the programme as well as initiate career orientation programmes for its graduates in order to broaden their knowledge on employability in any of the job prospects of the programme after school.*

## Keywords

Employability, expectations, graduates, Graphic Design, tracer study, University of Education, Winneba

## 1.1 Introduction

Graphic Design as a field of study forms part of Visual Arts education in Ghana. The general rationale for the inclusion of Graphic Design and for that matter Visual Arts education in Ghanaian schools was to diversify the then liberal-based curriculum in order to include practical or hands-on activities with the primary focus of producing well-rounded graduates that are developed morally, aesthetically, physically and with employable skills to take-up job opportunities. It is based on this orientation that, the 1987 and 2007 education reforms of Ghana strictly vocationalised Visual Arts education at the Senior High School (Akyeampong, 2002, Aidoo, 2018) with universities (Technical) mandated to engage in career training and the production of highly skilled manpower that is much needed in industry and the world of work (Ansah, 2012). Kemevor and Johnson (2015) concur that since independence, Ghanaian governments have periodically reformed the education and training system of the country by putting emphasis on technical and vocational education and training. This is aimed at making the Ghanaian educational system more relevant for the world of work as well as boosts the informal economy in order to minimize unemployment and poverty in the country. Therefore, the vocationalisation of Visual Arts education in Ghana is generally aimed at providing learners with the requisite employable skills for responsible livelihood. deGraft-Yankson (2015) states that, "Visual Arts as a course of study focuses on a balanced education that emphasizes both studio and academic coursework with great sensitivity to the future of graduate employability" (p. 4). Visual Arts education in Ghana revolves around eight (8) broad areas such as; Graphic Design, Textiles, Painting, Ceramics, Jewellery, Sculpture, Leatherwork and Basketry (Coe, 2005; Anamuah-Mensah Committee Report, 2007; Aidoo, 2018). Although the expectations amongst others are that, graduates of any of the Visual Arts disciplines such as Graphic Design, whose education is terminated even at Senior High School level should be well equipped with knowledge and practical skills to take up self-employment opportunities in order to earn a meaningful living, it is important to point out that graduate employability is not identical to employment. Whether Graphic Design graduates will actually be employed is dependent partly on their employability as well as a range of other factors, most importantly, the availability of jobs (Tristan et al., 2016). This probably might be the reason why there is high level of unemployment in Ghana despite the employment and graduate employability focus of Visual Arts education in Ghana. Although to a large extend, universities and other higher learning institutions in Ghana including University of Education, Winneba (UEW), have over the years churned

out several graduates, reports are that hundreds of unemployed graduates add up to the already existing batches on yearly basis making schooling not only a disincentive but a recipe for social unrest if not checked (Kosi, Tsadidey, Isaac & Millicent, 2008).

Amidst the plethora scholarly works on the high rate of graduate unemployment in Ghana (Kosi, Tsadidey, Isaac & Millicent, 2008; William; 2015; Eric, 2016; Ghana Employers Association; 2018), little is known about the employability of Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba (UEW). A tracer study such as this, sought to investigate the employability of Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba. This was to reveal the job expectations and employability of the graduate and realities in the world of work.

## **2.0 Review of Related Literature**

### **2.1 Job Prospects of Visual Arts Education and Graduate Employability**

In order for competencies achieved from Visual Arts education to match a specific job, first and foremost, the job and the skills required must be identified in terms of job titles and job descriptions. Since the primary focus of Visual Arts education in Ghana is premised largely on vocational education with learners given the required practical exposures, the job prospects of Visual Arts education are heterogeneous in nature. They include; Art teachers/lecturers, Art critics/writers, Art administrators, Curatorial consultants, Publishing proofreaders, Art organization consultants, Art Historians, Art law Specialists, Conservators, Curators, Archivists, Graphic Designers, Ceramists, Sculptors, Jewelers, Painters, Consultants, Advertisers, Art Directors, Textiles/Fashion Designers, Production Designer, Book Illustrator, Fashion Designer, Cartoonist, Technical/Production Illustrator, Exhibitions Designer, Freelance Photographer, Font Designer, TV/Film, Entertainment, Multi-media specialist, Visual effect animator, Computer Animator, 3D Animator, Game Designer, Package Designer and many others (Amenuke et al., 1999; Curriculum Research and Development Division - CRDD, 2010; Tyler School of Art, 2014; deGraft-Yankson, 2015).

From the discussion, it could be said without ambiguity that, Visual Arts education does not only target academic laurels and paper qualifications, but indeed provides a cornerstone upon which a vast array of potential careers can be built (UBC, 2015; as cited in deGraft-Yankson, 2015). With the numerous job prospects associated with Visual Arts education as enumerated, it is good to juxtapose that with its graduate employability in Ghana. Generally, "the concept of graduate employability encompasses a simplistic and holistic view on the

qualities of a graduate in a community” (Shivoro, Shalyefu & Kadhila, 2018, p. 219). With respect to Visual Arts graduate employability, deGraft-Yankson (2015) says that:

The most abiding of all the reasons for studying Visual Arts and considering it as a subject of choice is that, no student, after any level (whether certificate, diploma, first degree, second degree or PhD) has a place in Unemployed Graduates Association of Ghana (UGAG) unless such graduates opt to join for personal reasons (p.3).

Despite this, deGraft-Yankson (2015) proceeds to concede that, it is hot, stormy and rough out there in terms of job acquisition. But with discipline and just a little more effort, Visual Arts graduates could be on their way to taming the shrewd, calming the storms and neutralizing the heat. To ensure this, Visual Arts graduates (and students) need to avail themselves to programmes that will assist them in making and implementing informed educational and occupational choices through career guidance sessions in order to develop the requisite competencies in self-knowledge, educational and occupational exploration and career planning. Some of these entails: getting prepared to take advantage of all opportunities; identifying and considering your personality and aptitude with regard to choosing a field of practice in Visual Arts and above all, being mindful of the fact that students’ success as future professional artists depends on their success as student artists while in school (deGraft-Yankson, 2015). The discussion reveals the availability of numerous job prospects of Visual Arts education which are grounded on the application of practical skills. However, Visual Arts graduate employability in Ghana is not definitely stated but largely dependent on their readiness to avail themselves for career guidance and other available entrepreneurial opportunities in their immediate environment.

## **2.2 The Link between School and the Job Market in Ghana**

The existence of a harmonious and lasting collaboration between school and job market or man-power needs of the country is a recipe for national development in that, graduate employability is partly guaranteed in advance. The prevailing graduate unemployment situation in Ghana is a matter that needs discerning scrutiny. The annual report of Ghana Employers Association (GEA) (2018) suggests high unemployment situation in the country which depicts a gloomy picture for the economy and national security. In order to ascertain the level of collaboration between the National Development Policy and the critical skills

requirements of the job market, the Ghana Employers Association in its 2006 Annual Report, identified the critical skills to ensuring efficient and employable workforce in Ghana. It includes high analytical skills, creativity, resourcefulness, quick learning skills, excellent verbal and written communication skills, interest in new and emerging technology and the ability to work under pressure. Additionally, other critical skills need is maintaining calmness in emergency, practical oriented skills, dynamic and problem-solving skills, strong entrepreneurial ability, familiarity with the state-of-the-art technology, emotionally stability with strong interpersonal skills and commitment and a strong team player (Kosi et al, 2008). A careful study of the aforementioned skills reveals a strong emphasis on skills training which is centrally embedded in Visual Arts education in Ghana. In the report, GEA believes that graduate employability is largely dependent on their expertise such as the enlisted skills. In view of this, universities and other training institutions ought to make a paradigm shift by amending their curricular with focus placed on such critical skills in order to guarantee the employability of their graduates in the industrial job market. Despite this, there appears to be low level of collaboration between the various universities and the job market of the country. Kosi et al (2008) found low collaboration between the various universities and the industry from respondents, some of whom were university staff, graduates, human resource managers of organizations and senior officials of the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment in Ghana.

To address some of the bottlenecks identified in the skills training of university graduates in Ghana vis a vis the job market of the country, Kosi et al (2008) suggest that: more emphasis should be placed on practical training especially with industrial attachment to expose graduates to enough practical work; critical skills needed by the job market of the country are clearly identified and specific steps taken to address their acquisition; university course structure should be reviewed regularly in line with demands of the country's development goals; facilities, logistics, and working conditions are improved in the universities to enhance quality teaching and learning; Students should be re-oriented to see all jobs as important so as to strive to make the best out of them and many others. The foregoing discussion points to low level of collaboration between university education (including Arts education) and the job market of the country. The resultant effect of this is that, the employability of Visual Arts graduate is questionable as industries shun accepting them even for internship let alone engaging them as employees in their outfits.

### **2.3 Expectations of Graduates and Realities in the Real World of Work**

Generally, a lot has been said on graduate expectations and realities in the real world of work. Touching on the realities in the real world of work, Shivor, Shalyefu and Kadhila (2018) are of the view that, "the labour market is inundated with graduates with similar qualifications competing for graduate jobs" (p. 216). It is probably based on this that Kosi et al (2008) say that graduate unemployment in Ghana has become a debatable one. They argue that a section of the public is claiming that there are enough jobs in the system to absorb all graduates while others also believe that the job market is choked and cannot absorb the large army of graduates coming out of institutions of higher learning in the country. These and many other views, according to Kosi et al (2008), were revealed by staff of universities, graduates, Human Resource Management officials of various organizations and senior officials of the Ministry of Manpower Youth and Employment (MYE). In their joint research work, Kosi et al (2008), found out that, the perceived causes of graduate unemployment and realities in the real world of work in Ghana are as a result of a host of factors such as: misdirected training of graduates-most courses are not relevant to the current demands for labour; inadequate practical training during course of study; societal and graduates discrimination among jobs; insufficient support for graduates by both government and private sectors to set up their own businesses; lack of counseling on job prospects and others. Williams (2015) points out that, the increasing phenomenon of unemployment among graduates is a reflection of the problem of skills mismatch between graduates churned out by schools and the skills requirement by firms, raising concerns about the relevance of education and training on job prospects. The reality of the job market has sent many graduates back to school and the rest are left to wonder how to get a foothold in the job market. The number of job openings and vacancies are minimal, meaning labour market supply of graduates has outgrown the labour demand (Eric, 2016).

If the claim of Williams (2015), the findings of Kosi et al (2008) and others as shared in connection with graduate expectations vis-a-vis unemployment in Ghana are anything to go by, it suggests that, graduate expectations and reality in the real world of work amidst the high level of unemployment in Ghana is a multifaceted one. Key amongst them is skills mismatch, suggesting that, the skills possessed by graduates (including Visual Arts graduates) do not match the skills requirement by firms and industries in real terms. This calls for a thorough review of the current Visual Arts curriculum to emphasize on the 21<sup>st</sup>

competencies that are required to make Visual Arts graduates become more creative, problem solvers and critical thinkers and remain the most sought-after by firms and industry in Ghana as well as being able to start their own businesses for a living. Also, graduate discrimination among jobs has also been noted. This could stem from wrong perception held by graduates, hence the need for the implementation of regular career development programmes by government and well-meaning entities in order to disabuse the minds of Visual Arts graduates and make them explore for opportunities in their immediate environment including the establishment of their own small-scale businesses. To adequately appreciate graduate expectations and realities in the real world of work, it is relevant to hold a discussion on the human resource needs of the country.

### **3.0 Methodology**

The study adopted qualitative paradigm and guided by case study design. Responses were adequately elicited from respondents through the use of opinionnaire and semi-structured interviews mostly by means of phone calls due to the case that the respondents are geographically scattered across the country. While the opinionnaire was made up of short statements and questions eliciting respondents' brief but frantic opinions relating to the study, the semi-structured interview came with a guide with open-ended questions to allow for probing. The items of both the opinionnaire and the semi-structured interview were pretested and reviewed to enhance the validity and reliability of the findings of the study. The opinionnaire was conducted in two ways; providing hard copies of the opinionnaire to the few respondents who were physically accessible, and mostly, soft copies of the opinionnaire were sent through email or Whatsapp to respondents all of the sampled July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of UEW. Hard copies of the opinionnaire were retrieved from the respondents on a later agreed date while those whom soft copies were given were accordingly followed-up with phone calls and their opinions on each item of the opinionnaire were sought and recorded one after the other. The study population focused on the July 2012 batch of Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba who were 56 in total as well as all Graphic Design lecturers in the department of Graphic Design, UEW. Since it was practically impossible to take a complete and comprehensive study of the population because of the nature and pattern of distribution or dispersion of the graduates (Umar & Madugu, 2015), purposive and exponential non-discriminate snowball sampling techniques were utilized. The Head of



department of Graphic Design, UEW and twenty-eight of the July 2012 BA Graphic Design graduates totaling 29 respondents constituted the sample. Names of respondents were shielded during the discussion of the findings in order to protect their confidentiality and/or anonymity. The data collected were analysed using thematic data analytical method.

## **4.0 Discussion and Analysis of Findings**

The discussion and analysis of the study findings are thematically done under major and sub-headings.

### **4.1 Rationale and Job Prospects of B A Graphic Design Programme of UEW**

The rationale of B A Graphic Design programme in the department of Graphic Design in University of Education, Winneba-Ghana is expressly imbedded in the general aims and objectives of the programme as revealed by the Head of the department of Graphic Design. The Head of department emphasised that, the rationale of the programme is to impart knowledge and understanding of Graphic Design research methods, professional consultancy and extension services that would enable Graphic Design graduates influence policy in Graphic Design Education and Technology in Ghana after their graduation. The general aims and objectives of the programme provide clarity to the aforementioned rationale of the programme and therefore provide further and better understanding of the nature of the programme as ran by the department of Graphic Design in University of Education, Winneba.

#### **4.1.1 General Aims of the Programme**

The general aims of the B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education, Winneba, as revealed through the study is to provide opportunity for the study of an internationally recognized Bachelor of Arts programme in theory and practice of Graphic Design; develop appropriate research skills; and provide opportunity for producing a sustained body of creative Graphic Design works for industrial and educational development. An analysis of the aforementioned general aims of the programme clearly indicates that it does not aim to produce Graphic Designers who only meet Ghanaian standards but well-rounded graduates that are of international repute. This is similarly evidenced in B A Graphic Design programme of many Universities in the West. A clear example is the B A (Hons) Graphic Design programme of University of Portsmouth whose aim is to emphasize research and industry-informed design practice (University of Portsmouth, 2019). This means that the B A Graphic Design programme of



University of Education, Winneba is also aimed at producing world class Graphic Designers in theory and in practice to meet the needs of the industrial and educational development of Ghana.

#### **4.1.2 Objectives of the Programme**

The study established amongst others that, the objectives of the B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education, Winneba are to assist students to:

- i. Demonstrate knowledge and understanding of Graphic Design research methods through studio practice, library skills, Information Technology, and museum/gallery study.
- ii. Develop creative, perceptual, conceptual, and practical structures which inform current Graphic Design practice.
- iii. Design with end-users as the core of design and production.
- iv. Research and develop ideas for Graphic Design work and use them to produce artworks that show critical awareness and technical skills.
- v. Organize creative knowledge, practical skills and research abilities to meet contemporary manpower needs at managerial, entrepreneurial, consultancy and extension levels in the Graphic Design industry in Ghana and the world at large.

From the stated objectives of the B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education, Winneba, it is clear that the programme is well intended to producing competent Graphic Designers who would live up to the 21<sup>st</sup> century Graphic Design practices. By and large, the objectives of the programme plainly posit that, learners would be exposed to and be guided to conduct Graphic Design related researches in the form of studio practice through assignments, end of semester projects and final year projects; acquire library literacy (skills in fishing for useful but credible literature on Graphic Design); become Information Technology inclined (the ability to effectively use ICT tools and software) and others in order to deepen their knowledge and understanding of Graphic Design research methods. Also, the programme through rigorous training, seeks to develop in students; creative skills, perceptual abilities, conceptual

and practical structures which inform current Graphic Design practice as well as adequately orient them with the ability to organize such expertise to meet contemporary manpower needs at managerial, entrepreneurial, consultancy and extension levels in the Graphic Design industry in Ghana and the world at large. The rationale of the programme is to impart on its graduates' knowledge and understanding of theory and practice of Graphic Design, research skills, competencies in professional consultancy and extension services in order to contribute to policy in Graphic Design practice and education as well as guarantee their employability in the industrial or entrepreneurial establishments in Ghana and the world at large.

#### **4.2 Job Prospects of B A Graphic Design Programme of UEW**

The B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education, Winneba (UEW) in the view of a principal respondents, contained well-tailored courses from first to final year which gear towards the attainment of the rationale of the programme. Although data gathered from the July 2012 B A. Graphic Design graduates suggest that the programme, at the time was constrained logistically, and the absence of printing press based on which students had to commute to Accra on regularly basis to print and reprint their corrected works, the programme in its present shape has witnessed remarkable transformation and development since its introduction in 2007. One of such major developmental changes of the B A Graphic Design programme as revealed by one of the principal respondents is that:

There has been much development on campus with regards to the B A Graphic Design programme. We have reviewed so many things. Right now, we are even doing three options. We have mainstream Graphic Design, we have those who are specializing in advertising only and we also have those who are doing multimedia. So, from Level 200, you choose the area you want to specialize. During their time, it was one flat Graphic Design for everybody.

Also, it was further revealed that, some of the courses of the B A Graphic Design programme have been reviewed over the years within the framework of current developments in Graphic Design. In addition, the department of Graphic Design, UEW has over the years witnessed logistical improvement such as; the acquisition of drones and a mini press for effective training and impartation of the needed skills and knowledge unto students in order to meet the job market.

With the current development, students have the advantage of printing their assignments and project works in the department unlike those days where they used to travel to Accra to print. Central to the transformation is the focus on students' career development and employability in the industrial world of work. In line with this, the study revealed some of the major job prospects of the B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education, Winneba as: Photography, Animation, Advertising, Book Design, Publishing, Graphic Design Curriculum Consultancy, Web Designing, Cartooning, Illustration, Corporate Identity and Brand, Multimedia, Packaging and TV/ Video Production. The job prospects of graphic design as revealed by the study, though inconclusive, appear to demonstrate a guaranteed employability of graduates of the programme. This corroborates deGraft-Yankson (2015, p. 6) assertion that Visual Arts graduates who identify themselves with Graphic Design could be on their way to locating themselves with professions such as "Advertising, Television/ Film, Corporate and Mass-Media".

From this, it is quite clear that the B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education provides a wide range of job prospects for its graduates. Although robust steps are continually taken to ensure that students of the programme are well prepared to take advantage of the above enlisted job prospects of the programme, the success of this is still fraught with challenges. One of the principal respondents recounted some of the challenges of the programme:

Student-lecturer ratio is a problem. The number of students that we currently have is quite huge. For Graphic Design, each student needs special attention, which is sometimes very difficult to attend to them. Then also, the issue of inadequate logistics in terms of the equipment that we use. We have some already but they are not adequate.

This implies that the existing student-lecturer ratio of the B A Graphic Design programme in the department of Graphic Design is way over the National Accreditation Board prescription of 1 lecturer per 15 students (Duku, 2012). This makes it extremely difficult for lecturers to pay special attention to each student even amidst the recent recruitment of lecturers to add up to the existing staff situation of the department as further explained by the respondents. However, the indication is that the department is working earnestly to get the challenges resolved. This includes continuous submission of budgetary allocations to the management of the university for regular procurement of consumables and other equipment as well as following up for more competent lecturers to be

recruited to beef up the staff strength of the department.

### **4.3 Link between B A Graphic Design Programme of UEW and the Industry**

The department of Graphic Design of the University of Education, Winneba has working relationships with both private and public industries in Ghana as far as the B A Graphic Design programme is concerned. Some of such industries and companies revealed by the Head of department included; Graphic Communications Group, Impact Hub Accra, Royal Crown Packaging, Buck Press Ltd and others, where Graphic Design students go for internship programme. It is compulsory for all third-year students of the BA Graphic Design programme of the University to undertake industrial attachment in any of such outfits of their choice under the direct supervision of the industrial players and the department of Graphic Design. Aside this, it has been the norm in the department that personnel with rich expertise from such reputable industries are invited as resources persons to lecture on certain vital topics. In addition, students and lecturers of B A Graphic Design programme embark on regular educational trips to both public and private industries in Ghana. The significance of the working relationship between the Department of Graphic Design of the University of Education, Winneba and the industry is founded on the fact that the students are nurtured for the job market, basically for the industries and, therefore, the need for students to have a feel of what is happening in the industries. This enabled the students to reflect on their experiences during such interactions and gained preliminary first-hand work experience while in school. In line with the link that exists between the department of Graphic Design UEW and the industry, attestations from the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates demonstrate its tremendous significance to them. Due to its significance, the student-respondents were of the view that the one-semester students' industrial attachment component of the programme should be reviewed to a full academic year for it to impact on students in toto.

### **4.4 Expectations of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design Graduates of UEW and Realities in the World of Work**

The expectations of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba after graduation were partly in variance with the realities in the world of work. The study found the expectations of most of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba to be more of desperation for quick industrial employment after their graduation. However, their expectations were not satisfactorily met as majority of them who initially

expected quick employment by industries and companies per their training ended up in the classroom as nonprofessional teachers and had to pursue Diploma in education in order to become professional teachers. Instead of the graduates being overly expectant on industrial employment only, per their training, they could have established themselves through entrepreneurship in any of the job prospects as revealed earlier. This gives them the opportunity to be self-employed and even employ other people.

#### **4.5 Employment Profiles of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design Graduates of University of Education, Winneba**

With the prelude given on the expectations of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of University of Education, Winneba after graduation and the realities in the real world of work, Table 1 presents their job profiles as collated by the study.

**Table 1:**

*Employment Profiles of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design Graduates of UEW*

<b>Job Profile</b>	<b>Number of Graduates</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Industrial employment	2	7.0
Teaching employment	21	75.0
Full scale entrepreneurship	3	11
Unemployed but seeking job	0	0.0
Others	2	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>100</b>

*Source: Fieldwork, 2019*

From the Table 1, out of the 28 graduates contacted, only two of them representing 7% were employed by the industry. Although this falls within the focus of the programme, the number is woefully unattractive. However, as many as 21 out of the 28 the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of UEW who were contacted representing 75.0% were teaching in both private and public schools in Ghana. With this development, it is clear that an aspect of

the career focus of the programme is achieved. This is because teaching is one of the job prospects (though not the central focus) of the B A Graphic Design since *Principles and Practice of Graphic Design Education* is factored into the B A Graphic Design programme. It is also important to point out that 3 of the graduates (11%) were running full scale Graphic Design entrepreneurship. Although this is commendable, the number is equally unattractive. Also, 2 of the graduates representing 7.0% were working in other establishment that had no direct link with Graphic Design. Lastly and most important observation from Table 1 is that, none of the graduates was unemployed. This goes to confirm the argument made by deGraft-Yankson (2015) that, no Visual Arts graduate should remain unemployed after school or be part of any Unemployed Graduates Association of Ghana (UGAG) unless such graduates opt to do so for personal reasons.

Generally, the current employment profiles of the July 2012 Graphic Design graduates of UEW as seen in Table 1 show a huge shift from Graphic design related employments to teaching and other employments. The case that only few of the graduates are employed by the industry or engaged in self-employment through entrepreneurship suggests that the bifocal rationale of the programme which is to train students for the industrial or entrepreneurial establishments is not fully achieved as far as the current employment profiles of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of UEW is concerned.

## **5.0 Conclusions and Recommendations**

The study found the rationale of B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education, Winneba (UEW) to have bi-focal agenda: to adequately equip its graduates with the needed expertise in Graphic Design practice and education as well as enhance the employability of its graduates in the industrial or entrepreneurial establishments. This is imbedded in the general aims and objectives of the programme. It is recommended that the rationale of the Bachelor of Arts in Graphic Design programme of UEW should be upheld since it is robust and well structured.

It was established that the job prospects of the B A Graphic Design programme of University of Education provides a wide range of job prospects for its graduates. However, the department of Graphic Design is faced with challenges such as: lecturer-student ratio is way over the National Accreditation Board prescription of 1:15 and inadequate supply of equipment and logistics thereby hindering the general skills development of students in all the job prospects

of the programme. The department, through management of the university, National Council for Tertiary Education and National Accreditation Board should ensure that government gives the needed financial clearance to the university to employ the required number of lecturers in the department. By so doing, the staff situation of the department would be beefed up in conformity with the National Accreditation Board prescription on 1 lecturer: 15 students. Also, same financial clearance is needed to ensure regular supply of equipment and logistics for students' skills development in all the job prospects of the programme.

The study also found a working relationship between the Department of Graphic Design-UEW and the industry. The relationship is generally impactful on their students though the one semester industrial attachment is short-a-period for significant learning experience to take place. Steps should be taken by the department of Graphic Design to consolidate and intensify the existing working relationship between the department and the industry. Also, the one semester industrial attachment period should be reviewed to one year to enable the students have a full year experiences with the workings of the industry since they are largely trained for industrial engagements. In case the one-year internship recommendation appears problematic, then, students should be made to embark on compulsory internship every long vacation from first to third year. This is needful because the findings of the study demonstrate that the link between the department and the industry is impactful in consolidating students' skills development and experiences.

The study equally revealed that most of the July 2012 B A Graphic Design graduates of UEW expected to gain immediate industrial employment after their graduation. As a result of their failed attempts to be employed by the industry, the current employment profiles of most of them showed a huge shift from Graphic Design related employments to teaching. Since the rationale of the programme is bi-focal in nature, that is, to prepare its graduates for either industrial employment or self-employment through entrepreneurship, the study recommends that the Department of Graphic Design, UEW should periodically provide adequate orientation and sensitization to prospective applicants including continuing students on the rationale and the job prospects of the programme as well as initiate career orientation programmes for its graduates in order to enhance their employability in any of the job prospects of the programme. This will assist prospective applicants to choose the right programme based on their interest as well as prepare the minds of those on the programme for the world of work (either to be employed by the industry or



explore the career aspect of the programme). With such sensitization, it also means that those who wish to be Graphic Design teachers would rather opt for B A Art Education and major in Graphic Design instead of B A Graphic Design which does not focus on teaching.

## References

- Aidoo, J. B. (2018). Challenges facing visual art programme of senior high schools in Ghana. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, 5(3), 136-142.
- Akyeampong, A. K. (2002). *Vocationalization of secondary education in Ghana: A case study*. World Bank: Africa Region.
- Amenuke, S. K., Dogbe, B. K., Asare, F. D. K., Ayiku, R. K. & Baffoe, A. (1991). *General knowledge in art for senior secondary schools*. London: Evans Brothers Ltd.
- Anamuah-Mensah Committee Report. (2007). *Educational reform in Ghana*. Government of Ghana: Ministry of Education, Science and Sports.
- Ansah, S. K. (2012). Reform of educational systems in Ghana: The case of polytechnic education. *Journal of Education and Practice*, 3(16), 136-141.
- deGraft-Yankson, P. (2015). Academic and career guidance in visual art. Artwatchghana, Ghana. [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.artwatchghana.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Academic-and-Career-Guidance-in-Visual-Art-.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjyy\\_KfyZntAhUmQ0EAHX9cBfEQFjAAegQIBRAB&usg=AOvVaw1NkNVMt2Uv3j9r7LOxRJR2](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://www.artwatchghana.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/Academic-and-Career-Guidance-in-Visual-Art-.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwjyy_KfyZntAhUmQ0EAHX9cBfEQFjAAegQIBRAB&usg=AOvVaw1NkNVMt2Uv3j9r7LOxRJR2)
- Duku, F. K. (2012). Pedagogic foundations of art education in Ghana. *Arts and Design Studies*, 4, 32-42.
- Eric, K. K. (2016). *Graduate unemployment crisis in Ghana: Our Ireeeh leaders must act quickly*. Researchgate. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/301564306>
- Ghana Employers Association. (2018). Annual report and financial statements. Retrieved from: <https://ghanaemployers.com.gh/wp-content/uploads/2020/06/GEA-ANNUAL-REPORT-FULL-BOOK.pdf>
- Kemevor, A. K. & Johnson, K. K. (2015). Challenges of technical and vocational education and training and educational stakeholders in the Volta region of Ghana. *International Journal of Humanities Social Sciences and Education (IJHSSE)*, 2(6), 87-98.

- Kosi, D. A., Tsadidey, S., Isaac, A. & Millicent, D. B. (2008). *Graduate unemployment in Ghana: Possible Case of poor response of university programs to the demands of the job market*. Education Research Network for West and Central Africa (ERNWACA).
- National Development Planning Commission. (2005). Growth and poverty reduction Strategy II (2006-2009). Ghana. Retrieved from: [https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ressourcesghana\\_prsp\\_june\\_2006.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwiXkqqQ1tnqAhVxCWMBHW2kAgIQFjABegQIARAC&usg=AOvVaw0V7UHocKHzZhtUEIbwH4IK&cshid=1595174039177](https://www.google.com/url?sa=t&source=web&rct=j&url=https://planipolis.iiep.unesco.org/sites/planipolis/files/ressourcesghana_prsp_june_2006.pdf&ved=2ahUKEwiXkqqQ1tnqAhVxCWMBHW2kAgIQFjABegQIARAC&usg=AOvVaw0V7UHocKHzZhtUEIbwH4IK&cshid=1595174039177)
- Shivoro, R. S., Shalyefu, R.K. & Kadhila, N. (2018). Perspectives on graduate employability attributes for management sciences graduates. *South African Journal of Higher Education*, 32 (1), 216–232.
- Tyler School of Art. (2014, April 13). *Careers in visual art*. Retrieved from: <https://tyler.temple.edu/careers-visual-arts>
- Umar, H. S. & Madugu, U. (2015). The imperative of population sampling in social science research. *Global Journal of Political and Science and Administration*, 3(3), 49-57.
- University of Portsmouth. (2019). B. A. (Hons) Graphic design. <https://www.port.ac.uk/study/courses/ba-hons-graphic-design>
- William, B. (2015). Unemployment in Ghana: A Cross sectional analysis from demand and supply perspectives. *African Journal of Economic and Management Studies*, 6(4), 1-16.

## **About the Author**

Nyamawero Navei teaches General Knowledge in Art in Tumu Senior High Technical School in the Upper West Region of Ghana. His research interest revolves around art education with the primary aim of contributing positively to theory and practice of the multifaceted Visual art disciplines pursued in both pre-tertiary and tertiary institutions in Ghana. He has to his credit, a textbook titled: An Exposé on General Knowledge in Art for Senior High School, Colleges and Universities (Vol. 1) published in 2017. He is currently a final year Master of Philosophy (Art Education) student of the University of Education, Winneba.

## Editorial Board

### Editors

Patrick Osei-Poku, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*  
Charles Frimpong, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*  
Patrique deGraft-Yankson, *University of Education, Winneba*  
Samuel Nortey, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*  
Ebenezer Kwabena Acquah, *University of Education, Winneba*  
Osuaryi Quaicoo Essel, *University of Education, Winneba*  
Mavis Osei, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*

### Associate Editors

Mantey Jectey-Nyarko, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*  
Emmanuel R. K. Amissah, *University of Education, Winneba*  
Adom Dickson, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*  
Kweku Safo-Ankama, *Takoradi Technical University*  
Kweku Bondzie-Micah, *Takoradi Technical University*  
Steve Kquofi, *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science & Technology*

### Advisory Board

Agbeyewornu K. Kemevor, *University of Education, Winneba*  
George Duut, *Bolgatanga Technical University*  
Joseph Essuman, *University of Education, Winneba*  
Cyril Kpodo, *University of Education, Winneba*

## Call for Papers

Journal of African Art Education (JAAE), the official journal of the Art Teachers' Association of Ghana, invites wide range of researches bordering on visual art education on the African continent. It attaches interest to researches that develop or deepen professionalism in art education in the African context. Topics include but not limited to instructional resources development, indigenous art education, assessment techniques, praxis of art education, aesthetics education, teaching and learning, art and development, art and environment, child art education, art and public education.

It is published quarterly online: August, November, February and May.

Send all inquiries about your article submission to:  
atagonline.org@gmail.com

For more information on submission guidelines visit: <https://www.atagonline.org/jaae/>

## Guidelines for Contributors

By submitting an article to the JAAE, authors must ensure that:

1. The submission has not been previously published, or has not been sent to another journal for consideration.
2. The manuscript follows the referencing style contained in the Publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (7th edition).
3. The submission file is in Microsoft Word document file format.

4. The text is double-spaced and uses a 12-point font of Times New Roman. It must use italics rather than bolding and underlining. All figures and tables must be placed within the appropriate part of the text.
5. The main manuscript should have no author names, except on the title page. The author should remove from the document properties and personal information by clicking on FILE, check for issues and Inspect Document (in MS Word) to leave any traces of their metadata in the manuscript.

JAAE Advisory Board's decision on each article is based on specific criteria. It is strongly recommended that you consider them before submitting your manuscript. It touches on:

### **Organisation/Quality of writing/Presentation style**

Compliance with JAAE house style of presentation

Quality of writing/grammatical soundness

Clarity of thought/argument

Appropriateness of the article to the scope of the Journal

Soundness of Abstract (Does it summarise the key findings/approach of the article?)

Length of article (should not be more than 8000 words including abstract, keywords and references)

Appropriate use of APA guidelines in formatting of article

### **Significance and currency of the article**

Soundness of problem statement

Use of relevant current literature

Suitability of theoretical/philosophical framework

Alignment of theoretical framework with research method

### **Materials & Methods**

Appropriateness of research method (research design, sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, data analysis plan)

Ethical issues addressed

### **Soundness of analysis and interpretation; Conclusions/Recommendations**

Clarity and depth of analysis and interpretation

Adequacy of interpretation and analysis

Soundness of conclusions and recommendations

### **Contribution to the knowledge & practice**

Implication(s) to art education

Contribution to practice

Contribution to knowledge

JAAE welcomes manuscript at all times.

Submit to:

Submit Your Article to JAAE

atagonline.org@gmail.com