

## PURSUING BACHELOR DEGREE OR WORK INDEPENDENCY

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### ABSTRACT

*This article was the result of research on learning process through resulting in graduates. This study aimed to find out whether or not the material delivered in lecturing in College could be beneficial as the foundation of knowledge after being graduated later. To find it, the writer took the graduate outcomes as the sample in Visual Communication Design (DKV) Study Program of Art and Design Department of Faculty of Letters (FS) of Malang State University (UM). How about the graduates of the Study Program, what the alumni do, and whether or not it has been consistent with the competence of graduates. To answer those questions, data was obtained through observation and questionnaire distributed through social media. The data was analyzed using Wilbur Schramm's Bullet Theory stating that education institutions have prepared alumni corresponding to the specialties to enter into the society. The result of research showed that the graduate outcomes of DKV FS UM had been consistent with graduate competency and specialty program, as creator personnel and design product and service employers.*

**Keywords:** Visual Communication Design, Creativity, entrepreneur, outcomes

### INTRODUCTION

The society has increasingly good economy and they begin to realize that education is the future investment. This awareness is indicated by many parents enrolling their children in College. They do not want their children graduating from Senior High School (SLTA) only but they should have bachelor degree. Graduated from College and obtaining bachelor degree for village children is a prestige despite farm labor as their parents' occupation. They feel proud of because the village youths rarely attend education or even are graduated from college.

Parents' measure and intention are sometimes not confirmed by their children who study at college only to pursue their status as college students and only entrusting other to record their presence while they are absent so that they would become eternal students. They rarely assemble and make discussion to solve some problems the lecturer assigns. They rarely assemble to speak of career, creativity, and business. How can the knowledge they acquire in college be applied to result in high selling value. Those who only pursue the successful passing do not know how to apply and to develop their knowledge into the one more beneficial to many people. This condition is influenced by the college experience for example motivation, goal choices, experiences got from family and social comparison, perception (Chaudhary & Jain, 2015:49)

Students should be creative if they do not want to be pressed by time development that looking for independent and positive thinking people constantly. Otherwise, they will be unemployed bachelors or intellectual unemployed persons. The result of National Labor Force Survey (Sakernas) conducted by Central Statistic Body (BPS) on February 2013 showed that there are 360,000 unemployed persons (Liputan6.com, May 5, 2015). In a discussion entitled *President/Vice President and New Cabinet, Employers' Expectation in*

Jakarta, it was mentioned that this figure will increase to 420,000 in 2014 (Kompas.com, October 19, 2015). On February 2015, it will increase to 520,371 (bisniskeuangan.kompas.com, May 5, 2015). We cannot blame merely the graduate alumni, but the campus as their alma mater should also be responsible, never think about the output only, but think also about the outcome. Whether or not those who have passed through graduation ceremony get job directly or open new business. Colleges sometimes do not make tracer study because it is considered as complicated and taking time. Some colleges do not care about it, while National Accreditation Body is desirable to assess the Accreditation of Study Program, among others, in this matter.

To find out its graduate quality, not only Grade Point Average (GPA) in the output is needed, but also their condition within society (outcome), whether or not they find job. If they have found job, what job they have, and whether or not their job is consistent with their specialty and competency. If their job has not been consistent with their specialty and competency, there should be a review on the curriculum applied in the College. If necessary, the scholarship required in the user community or everything required to create job opportunity or entrepreneurship should be promoted in order to be beneficial for many people.

For example, Visual Communication Design (DKV) Study Program, the graduates of which are directed to be creator of product or service in a company or to be entrepreneur. If the graduates of DKV have no job, there must be something wrong, either the students working lazily or the College delivering the working science less maximally. It should be evaluated further to make the alumni of DKV absorbable to job opportunities and not overloading the government with unemployment. For those who have found job, what job they have, and whether or not their job is consistent with their specialty and competency.

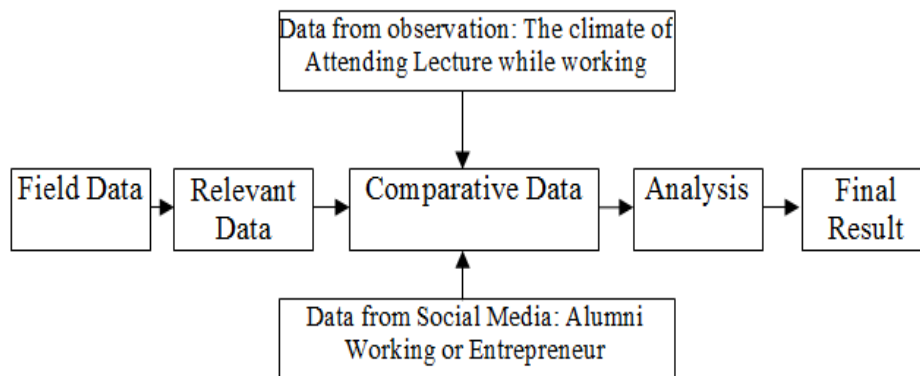
## **METHOD**

This research approach employed a survey research method, the one conducted to obtain facts from the existing phenomena to find factual information. This method served as comparative evaluation on what have been done to deal with a similar problem from which a conclusion can be drawn for the future interest (Nasir, 1988: 65). This research focused on the graduates of Visual Communication Design Study Program to know what should be provide to equip the outcomes so that they can apply their knowledge within society. This study was conducted by taking sample in Malang State University having Visual Communication Design Study Program. The sample was taken at the University because the author was the lecturer there, so that he knew actually the circumstance and the student behavior in applying and implementing the Visual Communication Design science into real world.

The procedure of data collection was carried out using direct observation technique and questionnaire distribution through social media. The data was collected based on observation during teaching-learning process, Thesis/Final Project counseling, and student behavior in running design product and service business in three colleges. Data collection through social media was carried out using questionnaire with convenience sampling technique, selecting the sample non-randomly to obtain the phenomena existing in the selected sample (Bulaeng, 2004: 153). Questionnaire data was technique of collecting data through submitting or sending question list filled in alone by the respondents (Suhartono, 1995: 65). In this research, the author employed open-ended questions to make the respondents answering them independently according to their wish but keeping on the research domain.

The theory employed in analyzing the data was Wilbur Schramm's Bullet Theory (in Effendy, 2003: 264-265) that Education Institution has prepared scholarship corresponding to

the specialty shooting its alumni onto the society. Are the alumni acceptable to the society corresponding to their aim as the design creative personnel? In data analysis there are three interrelated sub-processes: data reduction, data display, and conclusion drawing. (1) Data reduction was conducted when the results of interview and questionnaire have been available. The next stage was data summarizing, coding, theme formulation, grouping, and story presentation in written form. (2) Data display was a structured, dense information construction. This process enabled to draw on a conclusion and to take action by studying the data reduction process as the basis of interpretation. Data display focused more on structured summary and synopsis. (3) Conclusion drawing and verification in interpretation process, interpreting the meaning of displayed data (Denzin and Lincoln, 2009: 592). The analysis process in this research was carried out through some stages, as illustrated in the chart below.



## RESULT

### Observation Data

Some colleges open Visual Communication Design Study Program to yield bachelors (graduates). The output yielded is largely directed to working (creating). They choose creating because after being graduated they are expected to find job straightforwardly. The question “do the Colleges yielding such the graduates have known that their alumni have worked or been entrepreneur” needs further investigation. For example, one of colleges in Malang City, East Java, Indonesia had done it. Considering the result of *Tracer Study on Visual Communication Design Study Program of Art and Design Department of FS UM*, it can be explained that the output reached 746 persons during 2002-2015, and those taking Working (Creating) as theme of their thesis reached 697 persons (Pujiyanto et al., 2015: 85). It means that 93.43% of students have thesis with work as their finished product. It is they are the potential creator and entrepreneur of design product and service.

Colleges or universities prepare the graduates of DKV particularly to work. Their graduates are acceptable to job opportunity or can create job opportunity. What should be prepared by the college to make the alumni capable of working? The writer as the actor (lecturer) in this institution observed that to prepare its outcome into design worker, the curriculum should be prepared. Some courses like Human Resource management, production management, marketing management, creative management, entrepreneurship, and others are needed to support the quality of graduates. This study program is required to practice independently and in group really from looking for client in order to apply the knowledge its graduates to real product with selling value. To increase insight into creative scholarship and entrepreneurship, creative people are presented as their resources.

In campus environment, there have been small business communities as a tradition of DKV students. They offer their service and product through social media by means of featuring portfolio. This activity has been conducted since third semester as a means of promoting

creativity and of getting financial profit and experience. This climate has been running from generation to generation to work on service project and creative product. When the students do not join this community, they will be put aside, because they have no experience. The creativity condition in the institution runs persistently until the students graduate. The positive thing is that some alumni have been working since they have not been graduated, because they worked while studying.

### **Data of Questionnaire through Social Media**

Data screening was obtained from social media, including the one collected through E-mail and WhatsApp. The data included: (1) type of business where your work currently, (2) time take to find job since the date of graduation, (3) how to find job currently, (4) what competency acquired during studying at DKV Study Program to support the job they do currently, (5) what motivation in working, and (6) where the capital used for working come from. There are two ways of screening data through social media: E-mail and WhatsApp. E-mail data were obtained from 7 alumni and WhatsApp email were obtained from 10 alumni. The data were described below.

#### ***Data Obtained from E-mail***

The data coming through E-mail until this report was organized consisted of 7 respondents, despite hunting for outside town and foreign alumni to get additional data. Because of limited time, this report was limited to the 7 data collected. Considering the data collected, the respondent (alumni) stated that: (1) type of business in which the alumni work currently is online marketing, mass media, art and design café, exclusive contract with DC Comics of America and PT Digital Global Maxzinema (DGM) and civil servants. (2) Time taken to find job since the date of graduation, some alumni stated that they have been working: since they have not been graduated, 1 month after being graduated, and 3 months after being graduated. (3) They got information on job vacancy from Kompas daily and job vacancy test. (4) The competencies they acquired during studying at DKV Study Program supporting the job they do currently are among others creativity, programming and marketing technique, management, and public speaking training and ability and problem analysis through writing. (5) Those motivating them to work are themselves and successful ones, and (6) the business capital was obtained by collecting the previous salary, and collecting money from small business.

#### ***Data Obtained from WhatsApp***

Data coming through WhatsApp until this report was organized consisted of 10 respondents. Data exploration was still conducted while looking for the addresses of alumni in outside town and abroad to search for information about the condition the profession with which they are preoccupied. The deadline of research was October 2015, so the interim data employed 10 collected respondents. Considering the data collected from WhatsApp, the respondents stated that: (1) times taken to find job since the date of graduation were have been working since they have not been graduated, found job straightforwardly, and less than 1 month after being graduated, (2) they got their current job by applying for through test, partner, information from fellow alumni, and by opening new job opportunity, (3) the competencies they acquired during studying at DKV Study Program supporting the job they do currently are, among others, software and technology mastery, communication science, marketing knowledge, and entrepreneurship knowledge, (4) the status of job currently is employee or some of them open their own business, (5) those motivating them to work are themselves, senior generation, and

family environment, and (6) the business capital was obtained from their own capital and from the bank.

## DISCUSSION

The research analysis was carried out comparatively by combining the result of observation and the questionnaire through social media. The graduates of Visual Communication Design Study Program of Letters Faculty of Malang State University do not take time to find job, because most of them have got it before they have been graduated. Only some alumni find job about 6 months after being graduated. This condition is the achievement in the term of job seeking, but they, on the average, take 10 semesters to complete their study. This study duration is one of factors making them working before graduated or studying while working. They always are required to comply with the deadlines of work project and of lecturer's assignment, so that they have not been able to manage their time well thereby they sometimes left their lecturer assignment leading to their failure in current semester and they should repeat it in the next semester. It makes the study duration so long in Visual Communication Design Study Program of Letters Faculty of Malang State University.

Alumni develop their profession in wide areas including some cities in Indonesia, and even abroad such as Malaysia, Singapore, Dubai, Australia and England. They work not only at national level but also at international one. Sometimes the alumni work on some job for foreign (international) company done home, such as order from DC Comics of America done in Tulung Agung, East Java, Animation Game ordered by Dubai done in Semarang, Central Java, and etc.

Most alumni work corresponding to their specialty such as theme/title of designing thesis. They work in service area such as entrepreneur or working as animator, videographer, advertiser, designer, public relations, and offset. Most of them work as employees, for example Ardian Syaf as an Exclusive Illustrator of DC Comics America, Hanif Marjuni as journalistic photographer of Bola Tabloid and etc. Some alumni create job opportunity (entrepreneurship) because they want to hire many people, for example: Achmad Rofiq as Animator and the founder of PT Digital Global Maxinema (DGM) in Jakarta and has expanded to Singapore, Vitria Ulfa as designer of "Azza Moslem Wear" in Pekalongan, and etc whose businesses are still in small-to-middle scale. The job rather different from their competency is lecturer or teacher. They work as lecturer because of current condition in which many universities open Visual Communication Design Study Program so that they need human resource as lecturers. Some of them work as teacher because when they were graduated many Vocational Middle Schools (SMK) open multimedia, graphic design, and animation specialties.



Ardian Syaf, Alumni of Visual Communication Design Study Program of Letters Faculty of Malang State University (UM), and his go-international work

Considering the profession the alumni of Alumni of Visual Communication Design Study Program of Malang State University are preoccupied with, it can be stated that they have successfully brought the name of their institution/alma-mater, for example Ardian Syaf and Achmad Rofiq. Ardian Syaf, contracted by DC Comics America, has produced a variety of superhero comics such as Superman/Batman numbers 68-71, Green Lantern Corps numbers 49-52, Brightest Day numbers 0-25, and Batgirl number 1 currently. His income is very fantastic, up to US\$ 300 per page. He has gotten Hugo nomination for Best Graphic Story. Hugo Award for the Best Graphic Story given annually for scientific fiction or fantasy story told in the form of graphs and published in English or translated into English in previous calendar year. Meanwhile, Achmad Rofiq has ever been the first champion of Japan ASIAGRAPH in 2008, the best Animation Director in Indonesian Movie Festival (FFI) in 2009, the first champion of Hellofest “Pentil-Pentol” in 2005, finalist of INAICTA in 2009, the first champion of Bank Mandiri Young Entrepreneur in 2010, Best Movie Europe on Screen in 2011, and Citra Cup of FFI “Sang Supporter” in 2013. And finally he produced animation movie “Kukurockyou” in collaboration with Kompas Gramedia. Other alumni must have followed their track creating national and international work, but they have not given any information about their job until this research report was written.

Considering the data returned to research team, it could be found that learning outcome of the alumni of Visual Communication Design Study Program of Letters Faculty of Malang State University has been largely consistent with their competency and specialty. It can be seen from the coming data of alumni as animator, photographer, videographer, advertiser, public relations, and offset. Some of them deviate from graduate competency, as the teacher. During studying, the graduate’s competency was directed on becoming worker/entrepreneur in design product/service and research, but in reality some of them become teacher, and teaching the content they have studied in Visual Communication Design Study Program.

Industry world always develop as the time development and need demands. Product/service industry currently requires quality and creativity. Many similar products/services produced by competitor companies become the challenge in business realm. For the products/service produced to be pioneer in the market, Human Resource is required as the starting point to run a business. Therefore, alumni state that scholarship is desirable in supporting profession (work realm) currently including English communication, computer software skill, creativity spirit, and entrepreneurship spirit, and having concept in creating. Such the scholarship can be given to the students studying in Visual Communication Design Study Program of Letters Faculty of Malang State University thereby producing significant outcomes in industry world.

## **CONCLUSION**

A successful education institution is the one that has delivered scholarship (knowledge) corresponding to the Study Program with Standard Graduate Competency and Learning Outcomes. In Visual Communication Design Study Program, the students have been accustomed to apply and to implement their knowledge into real practice, such as working on design project based on client’s demand. Such the condition will always be brought with them until they have been graduated and then worked in the company or created their own job opportunity. To support job, knowledge on being creative, being entrepreneur, personal communication and technology should be delivered in order to be credible human resource in design field.

Many competitor colleges open similar Study Program; therefore in this occasion, some alumni give following recommendation for the progress of Visual Communication Design Study Program: (1) improving human resource, there should be further study to Doctorate (S3) level corresponding to Study Program, (2) improving infrastructure, increasing rooms and improving facility particularly practice room (studio), (3) improving teaching-learning process, there should be a hot lecturing material corresponding to time development and demand, such as concept of creating, communication, creativity, and entrepreneurship, (4) improving cooperation, the cooperation with industry in order to find out better the real knowledge in industry world, and cooperation with SMA/SMK (Senior High/Vocational Middle Schools) to screen the high-achieving prospect student input.

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