Inspirational Thinking Process within Branding Courses at University of Technology and Applied Sciences

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Abstract

In the world of competition and development, new brands appear everyday with catchy names and unique branding designs, presenting imagery throughout design realms. Many individuals and designers are allowed to access an extensive range of informational and visual elements to communicate with people from different backgrounds around the world. Despite the advantages of modern designs of different products and services. However, this has encountered some issues in assessing design imitations and the level of innovation and creativity in each project specially for juniors' designers and design students. This research paper is highlighting a problem of stealing branding ideas and the difficulties that design students at University of Technology and Applied Sciences face while trying to inspire new ideas for their projects. Furthermore, it presents some challenges that teachers have when evaluating students' works and discovering that the design has been copied. Moreover, the paper will show the role of instructors in helping their learners to inspire and make unparalleled design ideas, taking one of the fundamental branding courses at university as a case study. Also, by conducting different exercises as steps for inspiring and finalizing a project of branding to come up with a distinctive concept. At the end of this study, some tips about how to be up to date with the design development field to avoid unconscious imitation will be discussed.

Keywords: Inspiration; Concept Imitation; Design Teachers & Students; Intellectual Property; Generating Ideas; Warming up & Inspirational Activities.

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1. Introduction

In a world saturated with imagery, the act of innovating new ideas and designs have become complicated. Some designers start borrowing ideas and images constantly as a form of imitation, and many designers strive to come up with a new and unique concept without having a similar idea by chance. In other words, there are some situations where unconsciously, the design comes to be very comparable to an excited one. According to P. Zeiler we are always imitating, and this behavior comes innately to us ever since birth [1]. All these points discern that some designers, especially design students, are not well aware of the word inspiration, expressly; they don't know how to inspire an idea or go through its stages properly. Although, good designers must find out several ways of thinking to create their own designs and avoid stealing others' ideas, techniques, styles while designing [2]. S.Kaufman said that [2] today designers are recommended to go through an inspirational process deeply in order to be influenced or motivated by other designs, designers, art movements, or objects in contrast with 20 years ago. However, when explaining inspiration; it is more about innovating an idea and implementing it on a high level and to be as with the stimulated design or designer, as it is very involved in different life aspects. Based on V. C. Oleynick, T. Thrash, M. Lefew, P. Kieffaber study inspiration is more about encouraging to produce smart ideas, rather than being an exporter of creative ideas [3]. In addition, the objectives of being inspired are helping the individual to be more self-satisfied and self-centered. This Research paper is going to focus on how design instructors at University of Technology and Applied Sciences are struggling with guiding students while working on design projects pointedly, branding projects; and how to follow the right ways of mapping out and inspiring their project's ideas without being forged. As well, preparing design students to think up a new design concept passing through warming up and inspirational activities to avoid consciousness and unconsciousness copying from other designers. An interview has conducted with Dr. Yaqoob, who is a professor at the university; to provide the paper with more information about the importance of warming up at the beginning of any class in any major. And with Huda Al Sukati a graphic design lecturer at the same university, to share her experience in teaching branding courses and the issues she has faced with students' assignments. Moreover, making a survey to collect learners' points of view about inspiration meaning and how they usually inspire an idea for their design project. At the same time, the survey will collect students' feedback about the warming up and inspirational exercises and how they have motivated them to generate ideas. Another point that will be discussed is tips to be inspired and to be up to date with the design world to avoid unintentionally copying. This paper is going to help teachers at first, by giving them a way for tracking all of students' design progress, knowing the source of students' ideas and how they have developed them to avoid concept's stealing. The implemented exercises could also benefit students as they will be able to get graduated steps of thinking and create a unique idea for their project.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Understanding the Terms of Inspiration and Imitation

Inspiration: The word inspiration is used in different fields of studies background, for instance; in psychology and literary [3]. It helps to develop a new and unparalleled service, product, or idea, in addition; it drives to innovate suggestions or thoughts into reality [3]. Inspiration is the act of generating creative ideas after being

enthusiastic from something or someone has been seen. It usually happens by forming a source of ideas and getting mentally influenced to start something with personal stimulated thoughts [4].

Design thinking process is absolutely affected with various sources of inspiration, these sources are the foundation to push the mind to generate new design concepts. Additionally, the progress of coming up with a unique concept totally depends on capturing, collecting, and rebuilding design elements that were taken from other designs or objects. As it is quoted '' A good designer is inspired by everything'' [5].

The individual gets to learn more about new experiments through the inspiration stages, the new realization transcends to obtain imaginable concepts and expressions in real life [3]. Inspiration is not about visualizing features of affected objects or artifacts, but it is the idea of thinking differently and to capture something's practicality and durability to represent it in an innovative way [2, 3]. It is mentioned that inspiration based on its source which could be individuals, cultures, or other designs, and once the designers have been affected they start to study and understand about the specific style in order to bring and depict the concept newly [2]. Furthermore, there are two main stages of inspiration that are 'inspired by' and 'inspired to'. Inspired by is a passive case where admiring and respecting the core of the motived thing is taking a place, by way of explanation; the first level of inspiration to the creation process starts when the designers are attracted to something. Inspired to is an active step where motivating to investigate about the stimuli object is acting, in other words; the designers bring the idea to reality with different and new features [2, 3]. At the same time, creativity is driven by motivation according to the inspiration state, which encourages to generate creative ideas in order to have unique designs and products. The creative idea is probably ingraining the sense of open minding in individuals, as long as; inspiration is triggered to make continuous creative ideas. The origin of creative ideas is not totally depending on strong will, however; it may happen by chance [6]. According to L. Rook [7] creativity is the knowledge about unmatched products and concepts, moreover; it is known as a composition of authenticity and functionality [7]. Besides, both creativity and innovation are harmonious with inspiration, as inspiration fosters designers or different groups in societies to energize impossible thoughts and actualize them to reality that leads to innovation [2]. Whereas, innovation means the introduction of new things with new ideas, it is the act of establishment, creation and implementation of fresh thoughts in order to apply advanced processes of renewing something and bringing it up to date [8]. S.Kaufman assumed that since inspiration and innovation have been united together for many years, as well as the standard of innovation hinges on recent inspiration sources.

Imitation: is the act of copying or simulating something, specifically; in design it means stealing or mimicking an excited piece of art or design concept and using it as a new idea [8]. Throughout the art movements, such as; Renaissance and Baroque era, it was a challenge for beginner artists to imitate the masters to achieve their level of drawing and painting [9]. However, many professional designers nowadays consider it as an external inspiration resource. L. Rook argued that investigating this case and scouting the potential of imitation could be helpful for creativity [7]. In fact, the result of many studies shows that some designers have been affected by visual research on their design thinking process, because of that they unconsciously produce works with lack of ingenuity [7]. Built on Ideomotor theory" the visual image of a perceived action is part of its own motor representation". There are two ways to exemplify other works which are perceptual and intentional induction.

Perceptual induction is the act of exact implementation of what the individual sees, in contrast; intentional induction refers to fulfilling a high-level outcome expectation from the observed action [10]. P. Zeiler said [9] inspiration should be used in the correct way in order to have balance between innovation and imitation, in the same article; it is declared by T.S. Eliot "that instead of looking at how unique a piece of art (or poem) is, we need rather to look at how the artist has added tradition and incorporated past techniques ". Copying a technique is totally different from learning about it and applying it in an inventive way. "Good artists copy, great artists steal" Pablo Picasso said, designers and artists who take risk to duplicate from other works must understand that the originality returns to its source. Anyway, to steal like an artist, it needs to inspire an idea and present it in the way that does not show any similarity to its root [9].

2.2 Understanding the Terms of Branding & Intellectual Property

Branding: is the visual image made in purpose of defining the image of a business, a product or individual. It is about building a memorized icon that could play a role in marketing and shaping a product's reputation in the eye of viewers. According to W. Kenton "a brand is an intangible asset that helps people identify a specific company and its products". This is especially true when companies need to set themselves apart from others who provide similar products on the market" [11]. Briefly, according to M. Ianenko, M. Stepanov, and L. Mironova said the idea of branding is brand identity which presents and reflects the brand strategy, values, and personality, and what it tries to be in the market and deliver to the target market [12]. In another publication, Branding is built in stages firstly by selecting brand name and its strategy, then creating a strong brand visualization for any kind of business in the market, in order to; stick it in customers' memory for a long time. In addition, it is an ongoing process which cares about the brand appearance in past and current time, likewise in the future. Brand identity design should interact with the target market's feelings and minds [13].

Intellectual property: A set of protected intangible assets that are invented and owned by a person or a company. Those creations include all artistic works, designs, symbols, images and literary works, such as; novels, poems and written papers. The World Intellectual Property Organization has divided intellectual property into two categories: Industrial Property (patents for inventions, trademarks, industrial designs, and geographical indication) and Copyright (novels, poems and plays), films, music, artistic works (drawings, paintings, photographs and sculptures) and architectural design [14]. Even though the internet is playing a big role to increase many businesses' popularity with less charges, some intellectual property has been stolen or copied. Also, many brands in different parts of the world are threatened to have their own distinguished logo concepts, products or services. Intellectual Property is very important to protect patents, copyright and trademark, it serves a company to get acknowledgement and profit from what it has innovated and created [13].

3. Study Objectives

This research study is performed to resolve different points:

- Observe different ways that students use for inspiring ideas.
- Emphasize the importance of intellectual property for students and avoiding mimicking other designs.

- Implementing warming up and inspirational exercises on students and helping them to inspire and generate a unique design concept.

- Studying the results of warming up exercises, and how it has affected students' creativity.

- Define and give steps for creating a new design concept without stealing others' sources.

4. Materials & Methods:

The information of this study has been collected from primary and secondary research resources. Beginning with observing design students' works as we are teachers in the design department at the university. We have found that many or most of the students' designs are not purely their own ideas. For that reason, we decided in this research paper to establish some exercises to be examined among graphic design students while designing a logo for their brand projects in Graphic Design Studies course. The reason why we have chosen this course, is that; it is the first course that design students get to learn how to build a brand and create its logo design. The first exercise will be like a sort of warm up exercise (**Self Affirmation exercise**), this might help in thoughts' refreshments. The second activity is called (**2 in 1 exercise**), students will be asked to try and combine two different photos into one sketch. After finishing these exercises of warming up, students are given some inspirational activities that are related to their topic of the project. Starting with (**imagination transition Exercise),** learners are asked to use their moodboard to start looking, concentrating at the image and imagining what ideas come to them. The next exercise (**Topic circulation exercise)** is concerned with making a student's initial sketches about their topic narrowed into a space of a circle, this might help students to get rid of stored ideas in their mind. Moving to (**Iconism Exercise),** where students will need to go back to their moodboard and minimize each object in different ways. The final exercise is called (**Icon+Icon= Symbol),** students will try to combine different shapes of their previous results into one final symbol which will be the logo. Interviewing two academics with different major backgrounds at the same university, as a second primary research tool. The first interview was with Huda Al Sukati, a Graphic Design lecturer to share her experience while teaching branding courses and how she deals with copied logo design received from students as their own work. The second interview was with Dr. Yaqoop Al Ghatrifi assistant professor whose PHD thesis was about Developing Academic Teachers from University of Reading, UK. He has worked on a research paper about warming up activities in class for that reason he was nominated to conduct the interview with him. The third primary research resource is a survey which targeted design students who are enrolled in Graphic Design Studies course. The survey aimed to know how often students inspire an idea and reflect it on their own work. In addition, the challenges that faced them while trying to create a unique design concept for their projects. Moreover, student's evaluation of warming up and inspirational exercises and their benefits on generating concepts for learners' designs. Other information is collected from different e-books like Steal Like an Artist, Thinkertoys: Handbook of Creative - Thinking Techniques, Best Practices Preventing Visual Plagiarism, and Branding and Extroversion Handbook; A Guide for SMES. Published papers from ResearchGate Journal, Design Education Forum of Southern Africa, Web of Conferences, and Journal of Science and Technology of the Arts are used as secondary research resources. Furthermore, different online articles from invision; Inside Design, Creative Common, Busting Mythology, investopedia, wordpress.com, Jim's marketing blog, Teachers' Professional Development, and Master Thesis.

5. Design Teachers and Suspicion in Students' Works

Many academics around the world strive to control students, avoiding them from visual thieving. However, as spreading different free online applications and platforms which provide unlimited ideas that help learners to copy from them. Most of the time, students alleged that they are the owners of the stolen design concept, wherefore; teachers must raise honesty in students [15]. This issue unfortunately has increased, and it has been talked over in different media, for instance; social media.

As lectures at University of Technology and Applied Sciences and during the time of teaching graphic design courses, which are assigned with the concept of creating and inspiring ideas for different design projects, for example; branding, digital illustration, editorial design, and packaging design. Originality and the level of inspiration are big and elusive issues encountered by design teachers, while assessing students' works. Sometimes it becomes very difficult to know whether that work is copied from internet engines or any other sources like Instagram. Huda Al Sukati is a graphic design lecturer, and she has shared her experience in dealing with issues that she has faced regarding Intellectual Property and students' works. She complained about the biggest problem we face with students is that they use the ideas and works of others, and they do not realize that this is considered plagiarism. Another point she talked about is that many students still do not have Intellectual Property awareness. Instead of inspiring ideas, they copy the ideas and modify them in a simple way, thinking that this work will be owned by them in the future. Huda added that she figured out some logos had been copied, by searching and investigating all logos designed by students whether they have a similar or identical logo through specialized sites.

During investigating the problem and trying to know reasons why a student might get a copied or imitated project, many points considered as causes for visual cheating were found:

- Firstly, lack of design and drawing skills and knowledge.
- Secondly, students do not know how to inspire an idea in order to build on their design concept; Ferguson stated that design never comes from vacuum, each design concept should have its inspiration root which from it has developed and presented in a new way.
- The third reason, choosing the unsuitable topic for their project, which leads to slow down the working stages.
- Another point to be added, students are not following teachers' instructions and they do not set schedules for their work stages [15].

While assessing students' work, instructors spend time on searching and exploring every project, just to make sure that there are no similar projects. There were lots of times where a copied project was discovered after evaluating students' works. This has increased the uncertainty regarding all projects; it causes distrust towards learners. Teachers can recognize if the design concept has been developed with students or has been taken from other sources, by checking out their work progress, knowing students' level of creativity, during their class attendance and working under instructors' surveillance [15].

Regarding to Huda to avoid happening this problem, she tries to discover mistakes that the student made from the first steps. If she notices copies of existing logo ideas, she directs the student. Additionally, she tries to give an opportunity to modify and change, however; if the time does not allow for work development, she discuss with the students to not doing it again and them a low mark.

In other words, students must document their project tasks and development until they reach the final outcome in one file. The documentation should include research, brainstorming, ideas filtration, design growth, and final assessment of their artifact. It is recommended for each learner to record design progress in a sketchbook, or separate pages then putting them in one folder as a visual diary. This documentation works as evidence for project originality, although; most of the students do not consider a visual diary as a chance to enhance their knowledge based on the given assignment. As some of them copy information, images, ideas from the internet with small changes, clinging to Bennett's old statement ''graphic designers are non-readers and - writers'' [16].

The following image is an example of a copied brand design in Graphic Design course, the left side design is one of the student's work for the course, while the right side is where the idea has been taken.

Figure 1: Student Work.   **Figure 2:** Existing Design.

Accordingly, this research paper might be a guide source for all the design instructors. It could help in giving students instructions before starting their projects. It will guide them to start from scratch to generate a unique design without others and getting crashed with intellectual properties.

6. Effectiveness of Warming Up at Classroom

6.1 Warming Up Effectiveness in General

Warming up activities have been considered as one way of improving teaching and enhancing delivering information in different learning styles. Research papers, books and journals mentioned using warming up as a suggested methodology for classes like English and Art as well. M. Michalko has described warming up in his book of Thinkertoys by arguing that "If we toss seeds on hard-packed ground, the chances of them taking root and producing healthy plants is slim. However, if we plough and till the ground mix it up, break it apart, and make it less solid and more loose-chances are that most of our seeds will find a way to grow in the loose soil." He added that warming up is a way of helping relaxation and releasing stress that open minds to seed and grow

smoothly in the right way [17].

Different researchers have defined warming up as a motivating starting point that helps in getting student's attention, putting aside distracting thoughts at the beginning of the lecture, and making learners work efficiently in their classes. R. Velandia considered that starting with warming up activities which are related to the topic of the lecture, leads students to move step by step to their developed ideas. In his activities of warming up specialized for students learning languages, R. Velandia stated that those exercises make students interested in what is coming for the class. They help in enthusiastic them and make them interested in making expectations for the next stage of the class [18]. Thus, they make them focus on the task and prepare them to think creatively on the exact topic of the class. Warming up could be one essential practice that gives rise to build on learners' appetite and actively creates a sense of positive attitudes and more curiosity towards learning as they get involved in the process of learning [19]. R. Velandia has put different aspects to be considered in a warm up activity. Those principles are stated in his research as the following: Being short, related to the topic, useful to continue the class, being as interesting and enjoyable activity, prepare students for a period of concentration, help students to begin to work, and focus student's attention and finally, these activities should go at the beginning of the class [18].

 In this research paper, Dr. Yaqoop Al Ghatrifi, Assistant professor at University of technology and Applied sciences; and a PHD holder in developing academic teaching has been interviewed. He has written down different publications on teachers' cognition and professional development. Dr. Yaqoob has worked on research, based on equated experience while training teachers. He noticed that they are struggling to just get the leaner ideas into their classrooms. He is trying to gather information and analyze data on his research of teacher cognitions and specialist research, emphasizing the importance of warming up as a way of evoking the learners' motivation. He simply defined the warm up stage as starting from the known and ending up with unknown things. He argued that warm up should be applied to all classes because all learners have the right to get their ideas incorporated. They have the right to get their experiences involved. Al Ghatrifi added that warm up is a power of controlling the class because students will never feel neglected as warm up activities involve them, for that they stay connected to the lesson until the end. According to Dr. Yaqoob, negotiating information and knowledge is very important in every classroom, so when teachers don't warm up, it becomes like pouring the knowledge into the learner's mind.

To add more, Al Ghatrifi talked about the gains he observed after practicing warming up with students, he argued that learners will get motivated and they like the teacher, subject and want to contribute. Moreover, they get questions and exercises that they know, and so they get encouraged to do these exercises because they show their knowledge and experience. Also, they become ready to understand and complete all other tasks during the class. Finally, he concluded that warming up is a way of getting things introduced and taught, no matter what time you spend to finish warm up exercise, it is your key to get your class tasks faster and easier to finish.

6.2 Effectiveness of Exercises to Generate A Design Concept

Warming up activities in design are those exercises used to prepare students for classes or a specific project.

They might be short drawings that take minutes to highlight a way of starting an idea of designing something. Those sketchy exercises might be used as a way of improving perceptual abilities while learning design and art. M. D. Keefer has stated in research thesis (Understanding the Role and Purpose of Warm-Up Activities in Art Education) which was conducted and prepared to get results from three teachers teaching art in art plus academy in Austin, that "Art teachers have the opportunity to provide their students with activities, such as warm-ups, that can aid in student's perceptual abilities as they learn to draw." [20]. According to H. Savas, warm up activities are helping students "succeeding in a task or activity, perfecting skills, overcoming challenges, acquiring competency, having new experiences, feeling involved, and interacting with other people" [21]. M. D. Keefer emphasized that it is important for art educators to seek a successful environment for their classes to invoke students' participation and learning [20]. Lauren, who is one of the teachers who were interviewed by M. D. Keefer to refer to their experience with warm up activities with students at art academy said that "there're a million reasons why the warm-ups work well'. He argues that warming up activities would help in getting active mentally and reducing physical loosening up then translating tasks to the right side of the brain. In consequence, this practice will help in improving their drawing [20].

Another teacher at the art academy spoked about her personal opening of warming up exercises as a technical task that usually needs practice. She described the process of working on a warm up task as "trying to work out any problems before you actually get to the canvas" [20]. Dr. Yaqoop Al Ghatrifi emphasized that it is very important to apply warm up activities in design courses because it is prompting the learner's known experience and leading them to unknown things that you are going to learn until the end of the class. Moreover, students will be faster in building everything new to them. He added that all exercises of warming up could enhance design students' thinking to start working on their own task. At the end of the interview, Dr. Yaqoop Al Ghatrifi said that spreading the culture of warming up in design is an important task that should start by one or group of members. It is the role of activating good and enthusiastic thinking, and it could help students to get their own ways of inspiring ideas.

Different research papers have introduced different ways of improving thinking and incubating different new ideas. One of the most effective ways of generating inspiration is by taking a notebook everywhere and start jotting down all of the thoughts that come by observing shapes or photos that come in front of the person. Recording might include breaking down and studying talented peers' work to build a library of different thoughts that help in inspiring your own solutions. [1] Using the hand as one way to give directions to the brain could be a way of imagination and procreation.

In past decades, artists used the method of copying as a statistical way of getting a new skill. They started by exploring the piece and understanding how it was created and which media was used to accomplish it. According to Ryerson university, this is a useful method of gaining different sensibilities regarding materials and compositions. This results in a technical exercise that helps in learning something, but it is still not an innovative work [22].

You might need to start by copying things to do some practice until you reach your own style of making the final work. In Steal Like an Artist book, the author states that we actually learn by copying "We learn to write

by copying down the alphabet [1]. Musicians learn to play by practicing scales. Painters learn to paint by reproducing masterpieces". He emphasizes that this way is a role of practicing and making emulated ideas goes further than the imitated ones. P. Zeiler has also demonstrated that, a good theft: "honor, study, steal from many, credit, transform, remix". On the other hand, Bad theft: "degrade, skim, steal from one, plagiarize, imitate, rip off" [1]. With all the practices that could help in increasing creativity, there should be a strong self-reinforcement that influences the brain to cultivate the belief that you are a creative person. Conforming to, M. Michalko in his book, we are the ones who choose to be positive and actively generate ideas in a unique way. Thus, it is the way we think, things are coming accordingly [17].

Based on different secondary resources, this research paper has established some exercises to be examined among graphic design students while designing a logo for their branding projects. The first exercise will be a sort of warm up exercise (**Self Affirmation Exercise**), this might help in brain revive. The idea of this exercise came from the concept founded inside the conducted research by S.Kaufman, where they reported that inspired people are those with high levels of self- esteem and are usually believing in their abilities. They are concentrating on positive ideas and neglecting any thoughts that might kill their inspiration [2]. So, this exercise; students were given four minutes during class to list down the negative thoughts that limit their successes and creativity as a designer. On the other side, they were asked to write down the solutions to overcome their weak points and fears.

The following table is an example of learners responding to the activity during the lecture;

Table 1: Frist Exercise Responding's.

| Negative Thoughts	Positive thoughts
Lack of self confidence in design	I could be a great designer when I think positively about myself. I should change my incorrect image of myself. I would not be in this University if I am not confident enough.
Fear of making mistakes	Nothing would always stay perfect. There should be some mistakes to get better results. Mistakes are always ways of reaching goals.
Slow in finishing design projects	All I need is to concentrate and manage time.
Difficulties in getting new ideas for projects	I should refute all of my self-doubting thoughts. New ideas will come directly when I change my thinking.

The second exercise is (**2 in 1 Exercise**), six images for different objects were listed and students were asked to combine two different objects to create one new thing or product in four minutes. From our opinion as instructors at University of Technology and Applied Sciences, this kind of warming up activity could help students to energize their brain muscles and way of thinking. This activity is going to help students to make unique design ideas.

Below are the images were given to students to merge two of them together, in order to come up with new thing;

Figure 3: 2 in 1 Exercise's Images.

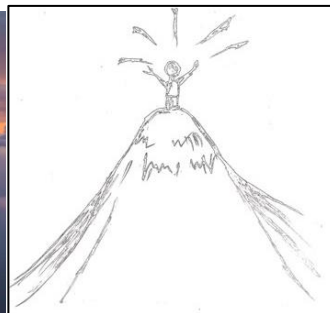The following sketches are student's combination ideas;
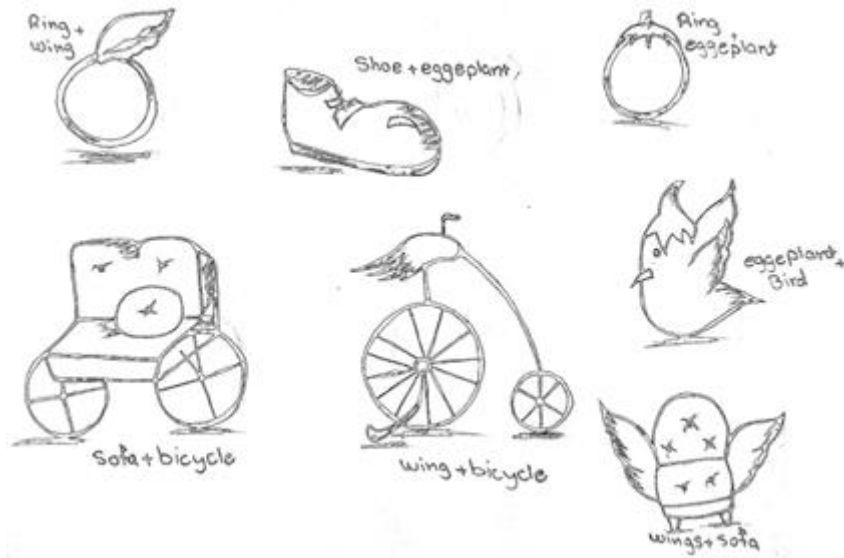
Figure 4: Student's Imagination.

After finishing these two exercises of warming up, students are given some inspirational exercises that are related to their project topic. Starting with (**Imagination Transition Exercise),** students were given four minutes and asked them to be relaxed and comfortable and focus on the details and colors on the given image. After that, they started imagining and drawing what they have felt or thought about the image.
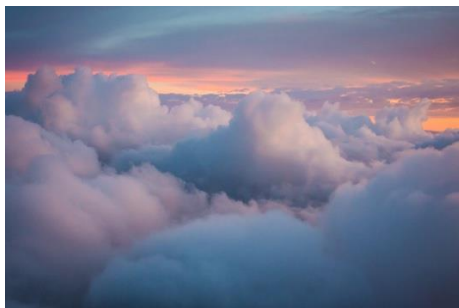
Figure 5: The given image.   **Figure 6:** Student's feeling.

The second exercise (**Topic Circulation Exercise)** is concerned with making student's logo sketches about a

specific topic narrowed into space of circles, this is going to help students to wash their mind from stored usual ideas.

Student's initial ideas from Topic Circulation Exercise;
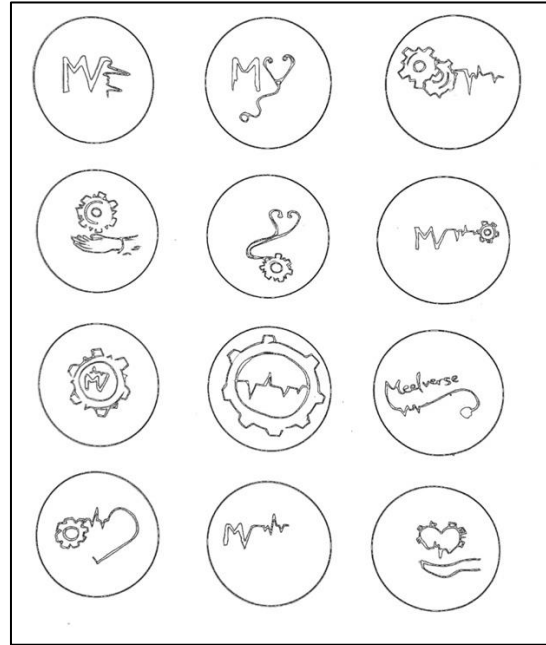
Figure 7: Student's Ideas.

(**Iconism Exercise),** students were asked to take each object from moodboard, then simplify them gradually until reaching the simplest shape and object should be recognizable.
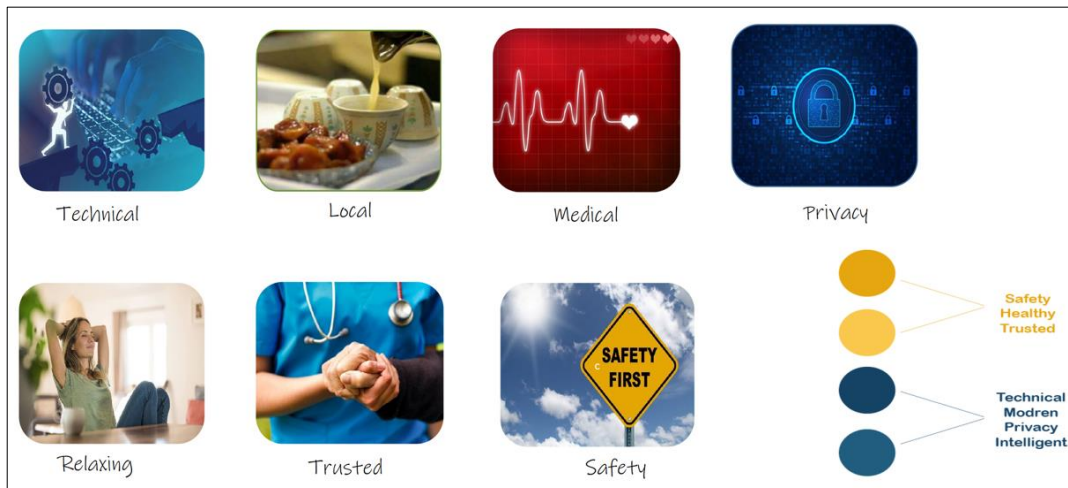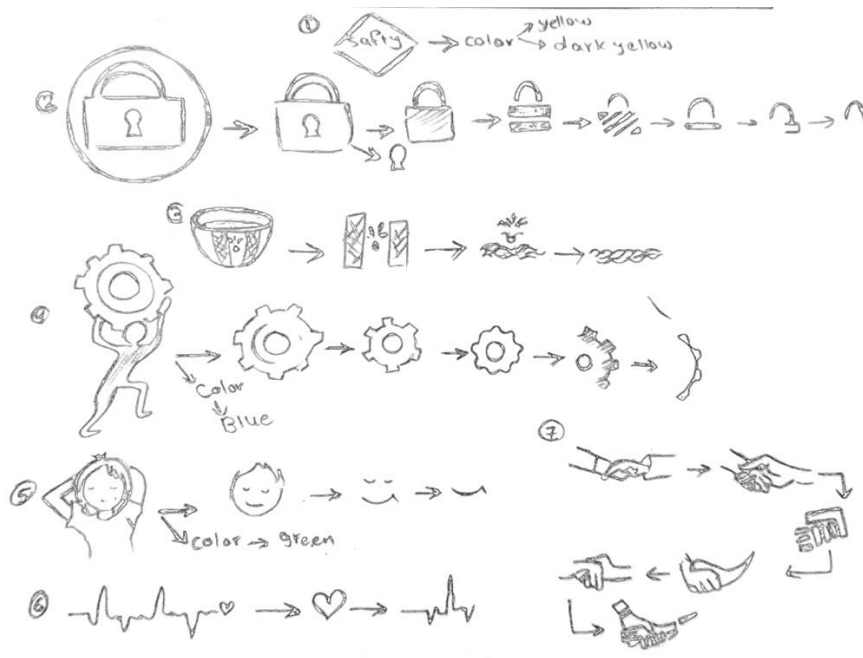

Figure 8: An example of student's moodboard about proposed Omani hospital based on metaverse, artificial intelligence, and blockchain to treat various chronic diseases in Oman.

Figure 9: Student's Simplification stages for objects from moodboard.

The final exercise is called (**Icon+Icon= symbol).** Students will try to combine different shapes of their previous results into one final symbol. It is expected by the end of all of these exercises that students will be able to generate at least five to six sketches for their branding project.

The following is student's task completion;
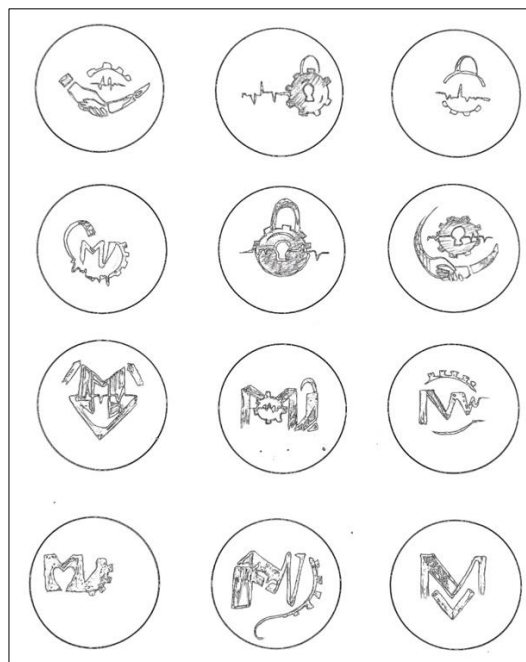
Figure 10: Final Design outcomes after completion of the exercises.

Figure 11: Student's Final Design.

7. Exercises Results

After finishing exercises, a survey was distributed among tested students to get their feedback about inspirational and warming up activities. Additionally, to know how students explain the word inspiration and how regularly they inspire a concept for their design. Furthermore, to measure the level of benefit gained from the conducted exercises.

The first part of the questions related to warming up activities and the following results were found. Well over 60 % of students strongly agreed that starting their class with warming up exercises would make them enthusiastic for the class, while around 35 % disagreed. All the students noticed that warming up exercises helped them to think deeply during a specific time. Self-Affirmation Exercise, which is one of the suggested methods for pushing ideas and it was found that approximately 35 % of students strongly agreed that this exercise refreshed their thinking in a positive way before starting to sketch their ideas for their branding project, as well as about 35 % agreed and just under 30% were not sure. Nearly 64% of students agreed that the second type of warming up exercise (2 in 1 Exercise) assisted them to think differently and come up with creative and new design concepts and only roughly 20 % of them strongly agreed. Students commented on this exercise and said that they noticed that their progress in making their sketches for their project became easier and organized as they got to know how and where to start thinking. They added that the tip served them to organize their thoughts and produce a step-by-step result for a final sketch, also stimulated the mind to produce more and unique ideas. Overall, 50 % of them strongly agreed, and the other 50 % agreed that they found themselves more confident to start thinking and creating ideas for their brand design at the end of the exercises.

The second part of the survey concentrated on the inspirational exercises which were given to students. It started by asking them to explain the word inspiration from their point of view. Most of them defined the word by thinking and creating a new and unique idea. Most of them said that they usually inspired their ideas for design projects by starting on searching for similar projects to be able to start thinking on how to bring their own ideas. In addition, they replied that they are facing some challenges while working on their design projects. They expressed their experience that the most difficult part of starting a project is creating a new and different idea from what is already existing and during an avowed time by the instructor. Regarding how often students can find some design concepts similar to their works, about 50% of the students have been in this situation. Overall,

just under 60 % of the students strongly agreed and around 35 % agreed that warming up and inspirational exercises encouraged them in finding their own idea for their branding project. In contrast, only 5% of them disagreed. The last survey question was asking students how warming up and inspirational exercises helped them to inspire ideas without infringing intellectual properties of other designers well under 70% of them noticed they have reached a great level of creativity and 30 % were in moderate level.

8. Tips to be Inspired and Updated with Design World

Designers must train their creative muscles in order to be stronger, active, and ready to generate new design concepts when they are involved in any design project [23]. Furthermore, many designers prefer to have good connections with other designers to share their experiences, new design skills and techniques and use them as inspiration sources [5].

There are many tips that most designers follow to be awarded with new developments in different design fields:

- Look at other works and study about them; create a small library that contains samples of design projects which you admire about them, and you would like to do something close to their style. In other words, ''Surround yourself with great design'' save any good designs or inspiring objects that you can refer to once you need them [23].
- Read about unspecific topics and look for case studies, design about anything that you are enthusiastic to create something closer to it. F. Dennis said, "Find that thing you'd LOVE to design—and go do it." [23].
- Set time for everyday small sketches and free drawing about whatever comes to mind. It may sound like a simple thing, but it helps to save or document your feelings and thoughts when they once spark [24].
- Carry passion in visualizing your thoughts, opinions, stories, and experiences, as a designer to talk with other people. Convert your ideas into interactive things that you are really mad about [24].
- Challenge yourself by getting out of your design style boundary and get to work with various design elements which will let you find new inspiration sources. For instance, it is recommended to focus on one style or design skill to be expert on it; however, it is good to have a chance to explore other skills and combine them with your design style to come up with something new and creative [24].

Old designs include a lot of design elements and messages, which let the designer go deeper in these designs and try to understand the reasons for implementing those elements in one object and the way of building them together.

The designers may save those elements and refer to them as inspiration sources in how they can create complex designs. Anyway, it is not necessary to have a complicated design in order to be memorable, but by breaking down these parts and turning them into simple units is going to make them easier to be noticed [5].

9. Conclusion

To sum up, branding design is occupying a vital role in life. Due to the exceeding development, design realms are presenting huge imagery content and allows all designers and searchers to access different visual elements presented by other native creators around the world. This has led to different issues among beginners in design and students of design in universities, starting with difficulties in generating original ideas and finishing with shocked lecturers who find imitated visual designs during teaching branding and other courses at University of Technology and Applied Sciences. To overcome the case of cheating concepts and infringing the intellectual properties among visual designs and specifically brand designs, warming up inspirational activities were implemented as a suggested method to guide students into a gradual and examined approach of generating unique ideas for their projects. Then this research paper has examined the suggested exercises by providing a questionnaire to the students to know their opinion and the extent to which they benefit from the offered tasks, and it was found that more than 50% of the class were happy about the results they have reached. Moreover, as we are teachers at the university, we have compared some of the students' work from previous years with the final work results from applying of warming up and inspirational exercises and we have recognized a remarkable development. Another point that has been discussed is some key secrets to be inspired and attached with what is appearing every day in the design field. At the end, "Inspiration is a flame you need to fuel." and it is not easy [23].

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10. Appendix

10.1 Interview Questions with Dr. Yaqoop Al Ghatrifi

We are working on a research paper talking about a distinct inspirational thinking within branding courses at University of Technology and Applied Sciences.

We chose you to expand our knowledge on warming up activities to use that as a reference for different ways of inspiring ideas.

- Give us a Brief about you?
- A Small introduction about your research paper on Warming up please?
- Do you think that starting a class with warming up exercises should be applied to all kinds of classes and all majors?
- Do you think that warming up could help students in art and design during the process of generating ideas in their projects?
- Final recommendation for all teachers who do not use warming up in teaching.

10.2 Interview Questions with Huda Al Sukati

The information provided in this interview will be used as primary research resource, the objectives of this research are:

1- Observe different ways that students use for inspiring ideas.

2- Define and Give tips or steps for students about how to create a new design concept without stealing.

3- Implementing warming up and inspirational exercises on students helping them to inspire and generate a unique design concept.

4- Studying the results of warming up exercises, and how it has affected students' creativity.

5- Emphasize the importance of intellectual property for students and avoiding mimicking other designs.

- As you are a Graphic Design Instructor, and while teaching Branding courses; What are the issues that you have faced regarding Intellectual Property and students' works?
- Have you ever figured out that the logo has been copied?
- If yes, how you have recognized that the design has been stolen?
- After evaluating the work, you have discovered that the logo is imitated. How do you deal with this situation?
- Do you think that there are steps to follow while giving students instructions to start thinking and inspiring their own branding project? What are they?

10.3 Warming up & Inspirational Exercises

Exercise 1

Self-Affirmation

List down the negative thoughts that limit your successes or to be dare and creative designer, then write the positive thoughts which will help you to overcome these fears.

Tips:

- Write the negative thoughts on the left side as points.
- In the right side write the positive thoughts.

Time: 4 min

Negative Thoughts   **Positive Thoughts**

Exercise 2

2 in 1

Combine any two objects together to come up with a new idea & object.

Tips:

- Select any two objects from the following.
- Combine and draw them as a new concept.
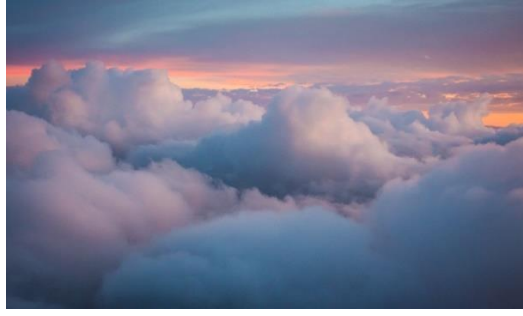
Time: 4 min

Figure 12

 Exercise 3

Imagination Transition

Look at the picture, be relaxed and comfortable & focus on the details and colors. Draw what you have feel or thought about the image. Your experience may be presented as lines or shapes.

Tips:

- Stare on the image until the timer goes off.
- After the image has turn away.
- Draw your feelings.

Time: 4 min

Figure 13

Exercise 4

Topic Circulation

Fill up the empty circles with sketches with different initial ideas about your topic.

Time: 15 min

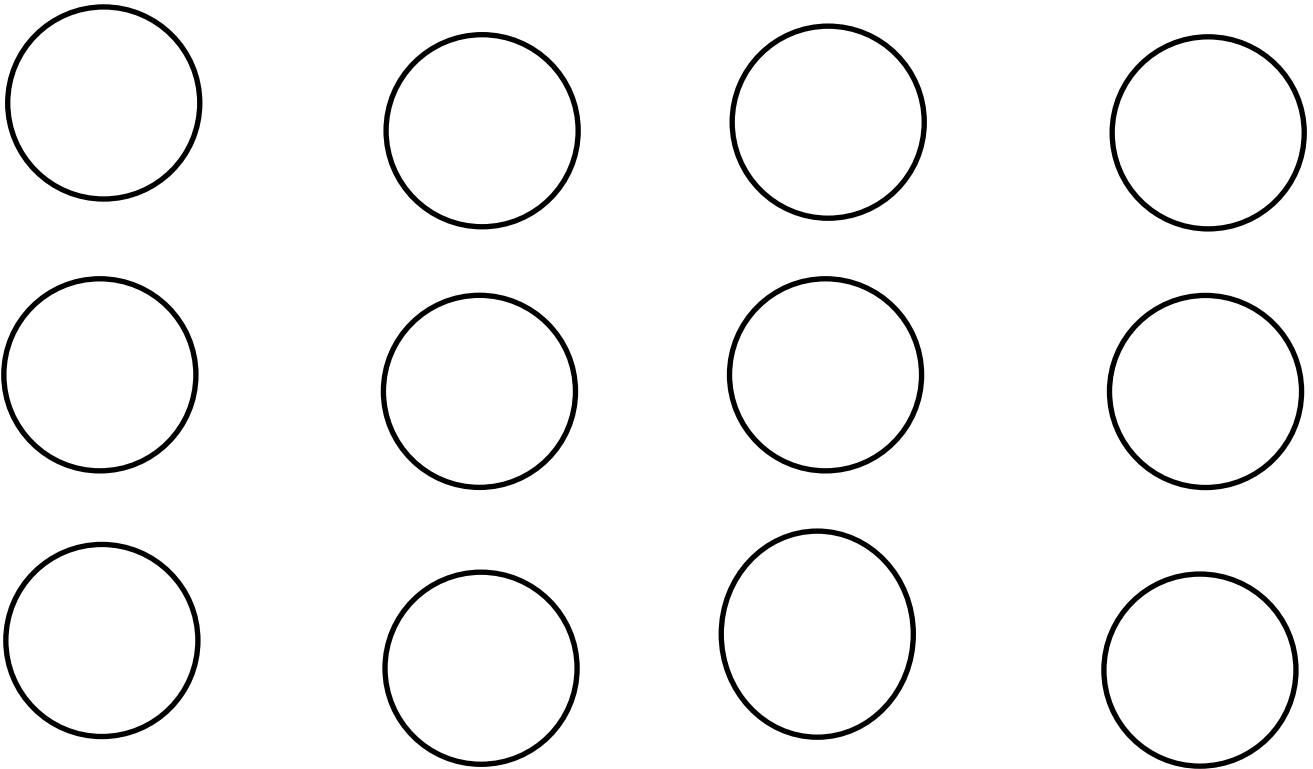**Figure 14**

Exercise 5

Iconism

From your moodboard, start to symbolize and minimize your objects in different stages and styles.

Time: 20 min

Exercise 6

Icon + Icon = Symbol

From exercise 5 select any two or three icons and combine them to create your logo design.

Figure 15

11.4 Survey questions to the students after completing the exercises

The aim of this survey is to measure the extent to which students benefit from activities of warming up and inspirational exercises.

Section 1

Warming UP Exercises

This section is related to (Self-Affirmation exercise) and (2 in 1 exercise)

- I think that starting a class with warming up exercises could prepare me for a good and enthusiastic class?

> Strongly Agree   Agree   Maybe   Disagree

- After finishing Warming up Exercises, I think that warming up helped me to think deeply in a specific time?

> Strongly Agree   Agree   Maybe   Disagree

- I think that warming up (Self-Affirmation exercise) refreshed my thinking in a positive way before starting sketching my ideas for the branding project?

> Strongly Agree   Agree   Maybe   Disagree

- I think that warming up (2 in 1 exercise) helped me to think differently and come up with creative and new design concepts?

> Strongly Agree   Agree   Maybe   Disagree

If strongly agree or agree explain how?

- After warming up exercises, I found that I got more self-confidence to start thinking and creating ideas for my brand design.

> Strongly Agree   Agree   Maybe   Disagree

Section 2

Inspirational Exercises

This section is related to all inspirational exercises (Imagination Transition, Topic Circulation, Iconism & Icon + Icon = Symbol).

- How do you explain the word Inspiration?
- How do usually inspire an idea for any design project?
- What are the challenges that often face you while working on your design projects?
- Have you found any similar design concept with any of your previous works?

> Yes   No

- To which level you think that warming up and inspirational exercises helped you in finding your own idea for branding project.

Great level   Moderate level   Low level

- To which level you think that warming up and inspirational exercises helped you to inspire ideas without infringing intellectual properties of other designers?

Great level   Moderate level   Low level