

**AN INVESTIGATION INTO THE PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOURS OF GRAPHIC
DESIGNERS IN THE SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRY.**

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HONOURS: GRAPHIC DESIGN

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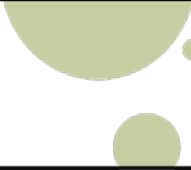
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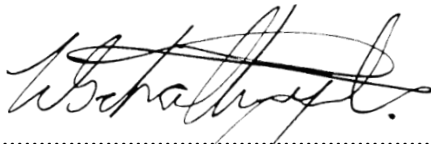
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I, Wilmarie Cornelius declare that the research paper submitted for the qualification Honours in Graphic Design, at the Independent Institute of Education (IIE) is my own work and it is original work that has not been previously submitted to any other institution of higher education. I further declare that all sources cited or quoted are indicated and acknowledged by means of a comprehensive list of references, and that I:

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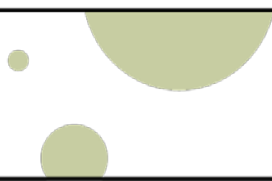


TABLE OF CONTENTS

ABSTRACT	x
LIST OF TERMINOLOGY	xi
<u>CHAPTER 1: PROPOSAL AND ORIENTATION OF STUDY</u>	12
1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY	12
1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES	13
1.2.1 Problem statement	13
1.2.2 Motivation of relevance of study	14
1.2.3 Research questions	14
1.2.4 Aims and Objectives	14
1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY	15
1.3.1 Research paradigm, approach and design	15
1.3.2 Population sample	15
1.3.3 Data collection method	16
1.3.4 Data analyses	16
1.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	17
1.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS	17
1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY	17
1.7 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY	18
1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH PAPER	18
<u>CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE STUDY</u>	22
2.1 INTRODUCTION	22
2.2 FUNDAMENTALS OF DESIGN AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS	22
2.3 THE IDEAL PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL VS THE REAL GRAPHIC DESIGNER	24
2.4 PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL INSTITUTES IN GRAPHIC DESIGN	24
2.5 CONCLUSION	28

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY	29
3.1 INTRODUCTION	29
3.2 DESIGN OF THE STUDY	29
3.2.1 Research approach and paradigm	29
3.2.2 Research design	30
3.3 SAMPLE SELECTION	31
3.4 DATA COLLECTION	32
3.4.1 Data collection tool	32
3.4.2 Method of collection	33
3.4.3 Data analysis	33
3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS	34
3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS	35
3.7 CHAPTER SUMMARY	36
 CHAPTER 4: DATA ANALYSIS, FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION	 38
4.1 INTRODUCTION	38
4.2 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS	38
4.2.1 Demographics of participants	38
4.2.2 Training and higher education on professional and ethical behaviour	39
4.2.3 Relation between experience and participants involvement in the industry	43
4.2.4 Professional and ethical behaviours amongst participants	44
4.3 CHAPTER SUMMERY	51
 CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS	 52
5.1 INTRODUCTION	52
5.2 CONCLUSIONS	52
5.2.1 What is the ideal set of guidelines for professional and ethical behaviour for graphic designers?	52
5.2.2 What is the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry?	53

5.2.3	What framework of recommendations can be derived from this study on how to address the possible variation between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry?	54
5.3	CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD	58
5.4	FURTHER RESEARCH CRITIQUE OF THIS STUDY	58
5.5	CONCLUSION	59
REFERENCES		61



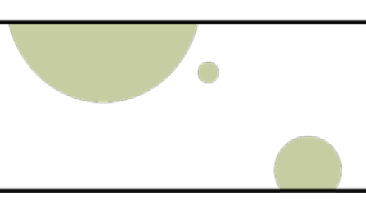
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 4.1: Respondents age groups	39
Figure 4.2 Institutions qualification rate	41
Figure 4.3 Professional and ethical behaviours taught in higher education	42
Figure 4.4 Comparison between industry ethical exposure and years involved in the industry.	44
Figure 4.5 Applied ethical behaviours in a project	45
Figure 4.6 Times a day spend on ethics	45
Figure 4.7 Response around being professionally and ethically sound as a graphic designer	46
Figure 4.8 List of options that were available for participant to choose from	48
Figure 4.9 Participants indication of what they belief are professional and ethical behaviour	50
Figure 4.10 Participants indication of what professional and ethical behaviours they practice	51



LIST OF TABLES

Table 1.1 Alignment and summary of research paper	19
Table 1.2 Summary of available code of conducts	26
Table 4.1 Response by age of highest qualification in graphic design	39
Table 4.2 A Comparison between participant's years worked in the industry to field exposure	43



LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) ([s.a.]),
American Graphic Design Awards (AGDA) ([s.a.])
Design Educators form of South Africa (DEFSa) ([s.a.])
Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ([s.a.])
International Council of Design (ico-D, 2011),
Chartered Society of Designers (CSD, [s.a.])
Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC, 2012)



LIST OF APPENDIXES

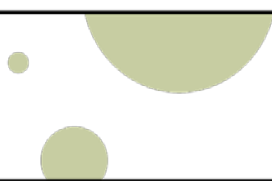
APPENDIX 1: CONSENT FORM AND ONLINE QUESTIONNAIRE	lxvii
APPENDIX 2: ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER	lxxv



ABSTRACT

Designers have an important role to play regarding how communication is promoted around products and services. Design is often a difficult term to define especially because its elements are fractured across various disciplines. Graphic design is the practice of producing and planning knowledge carefully in a way that is understandable on any intellectual level. Professional and ethical codes of conduct guide graphic designers during decision-making within difficult situations. Unfortunately, in some instances (such as in South Africa) such a code of conduct is not available. The aim of this research is to investigate the possible variation between the prescribed/ideal professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers listed in literature in contrast with actual behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry. The methodology of this research consists of an online mixed method questionnaire. The findings indicated that a difference exists between the prescribed/ideal professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers and those that are practised in industry. In conclusion, a framework of recommendations is derived from the findings and interpretations of the data collected. This can be used to guide graphic designers in the South African industry during decision-making within difficult situations with regards to professional and ethical behaviour.

Keywords: graphic design, professional and ethical behaviours, South African graphic design industry



LIST OF TERMINOLOGY

Professional and ethical behaviours:

In the context of the research to follow, professional and ethical behaviour is obsessed with legalities, integrity and morality (Kane, 2010). Professional and ethical behaviour can be seen as a moral compass that a graphic designer practicing in the field should abide by to make sure that graphic designers act in the best interest of all stakeholders (Kane, 2010).

Graphic Design:

This term can be defined as a discipline that takes complex concepts and ideas, usually consisting of text and imagery, which systematically plots and develops them into visually engaging structures in which any intended audience can understand no matter their social, demographic or background. Graphic design is usually recognised in forms of print, electronic or other media (Ambrose & Harris, 2009).

1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND TO THE STUDY

The summary of professional and ethical behaviours of five institutions lists the following as the broad areas for graphic designers, namely: responsibilities towards the profession, responsibilities towards the community, responsibilities towards the clients/employers and responsibilities towards other designers (Burger, 2017). In most instances, these types of associations adhere to only one of the four broad areas of professional and ethical guidelines, thus leaving a grey area in design ethics regarding the design profession, especially for graphic designers in South Africa.

Self-expression in the disciplines of arts, design, and creativity are admired and appreciated since the practitioner is of utmost importance. The discipline of graphic design, also referred to as communication design, is further described as an art or a practice of planning, projecting and producing ideas of understandings of knowledge (Cezzar, 2015). In other words, taking broad complicated ideas or theory and simplifying it to ensure understanding at various levels of literacy. Such a complex discipline involves a lot of commotion, critique and perceptions revolving generalist essence as can be observed from the code of conducts from various institutions that provide professional and ethical behaviour guidelines to graphic designers such as The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA) ([s.a.]), American Graphic Design Awards (AGDA) ([s.a.]) and Design Educators form of South Africa (DEFSA) ([s.a.]), to only name a few.

An institute that responds to South Africa's need for design capability is the SABS Design Institute ([s.a.]) whose main focuses are on research, development and innovation. Another is The Association for Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ([s.a.]), the official representative body for South African's communication profession. However, ASA ([s.a.]) only represents the country's creative agencies, not necessarily the individual graphic designer, as with SABS Design Institute ([s.a.]). Lastly, the Department of Communication South Africa (2017) also lacks an ethical code of

conduct for the profession of graphic design. Thus, proving that there is a lack of institutes in South Africa that support or maintain ethics in the field of graphic design.

Moreover, the reality and ideal of professional and ethical conduct of graphic designers are often worlds apart. Roberts (2007), supports this view in an online article [*b]eing good*, where Roberts (2007), elaborates on her life venture of becoming as she calls it, '*being good*' and explains that she soon came to the realisation that she herself had no idea what was good, bad, right or wrong anymore after being in the industry for a while. For the past few years operating in the field of graphic design, I myself experienced confusion on what is professional and ethical behaviour and observed that the ideal ethical designer is far from the actual designer who works and deals in the industry of design each and every day. David Berman (2009) wrote a book on *do good design*, where he shows examples and executions of designers who did not follow any ethical standards or just ignored it. Berman (2009), states in his book that we as designers decide how to work, with whatever the restrictions or limitations the commercial world throws at us, we as the designers can create and decide on our own process. I agree with Berman's statement and believe that there is truth to his words, designers hold the final say on the process of how a message reaches an audience or individual.

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT, RESEARCH QUESTIONS AND OBJECTIVES

1.2.1 Problem statement

South African design associations such as ASA ([s.a.]) often lack general professional and ethical guidelines in their code of conducts which graphic designers need to abide by. In most instances, these associations adhere to only one of the four broad areas of professional and ethical guidelines as indicated in the introduction and background of this study. This results in possible variation between the prescribed or ideal professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers, and the behaviours of graphic designers in the South African industry daily (thus the reality).

1.2.2 Motivation of relevance of study

The investigation into a possible variation between the South African graphic design industry (the reality) and the ideal guidelines of the literature can highlight serious professional and ethical behaviours which South African graphic designers, companies and freelancers need to address in order to ensure that they meet responsibility towards the profession, community, clients/employers and other designers.

1.2.3 Research questions

What is the possible variation between the prescribed/ideal professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers listed in literature in contrast with actual behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry?

The secondary research questions of this study are:

- What is the ideal set of guidelines for professional and ethical behaviour for graphic designers?
- What is the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry?
- What framework of recommendations can be derived from this study on how to address the possible variation between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry?

1.2.4 Aims and Objectives

To investigate the possible variation between the prescribed/ideal professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers listed in literature in contrast with actual behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry.

The objectives of this study are:

- To explore the literature to identify the ideal set of guidelines for professional and ethical behaviour for graphic designers (literature review – Chapter 2).
- To investigate the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry (methodology – Chapters 3 and 4).

- To derive a framework of recommendations on how the possible variation between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry can be addressed (conclusion – Chapter 5).

1.3 OVERVIEW OF THE RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

1.3.1 Research paradigm, approach and design

The study will follow a mixed method research approach within the Pragmatic paradigm to establish and assess the general professional and ethical standards for the profession of graphic design in South Africa, through the use of a mixed method data collection and analysis.

According to Kumar (2011), most methods of data collection can either be used in qualitative or quantitative research, depending on the restrictions, structure, depth and freedom that a researcher has during the research process. Quantitative research focuses on the collection of qualitative data which can be analysed using statistics or other mediums of measurement (Crouch & Pearce, 2012). Heyvaer, Maes and Onghena (2011), suggest that mixed methods are a mix of quantitative and qualitative approaches that are well maintained in one system. According to Morgan (2014), Pragmatism can be seen as philosophical paradigm for social sciences. Goldkuhl (2004), also adds that the Pragmatic paradigm acknowledges an overemphasis of abstract interpretations. Keeping in mind that the study will include the input of individual graphic designers, it is necessary to take into account that each participant may experience the data analysis tool in the data collection section differently (Du Plooy-Cilliers & Bezuidenhout, 2015).

1.3.2 Population sample

The population sample will consist out of South African graphic designers. The inclusion criteria are that participants need to have at least a graphic design diploma. I will use a snowball sampling method. Kumar (2011), describes the snowball sampling technique as a process of selecting a sample using networks. This technique can start with a few individuals in a group that are selected within

the criteria, from here each individual can be asked to refer or identify other members that may fit the criteria of this study to participate (Kumar, 2011).

Furthermore, the snowball method will mean that I will be able to reach participants outside my own frame of reference (Cohen, Manion and Marrison, 2011) which will enable me to reach a larger population of graphic designers with the aim to obtain at least fifty responses. Participants will be asked to nominate at least five more possible graphic designers that also fit this study's criteria, in order for me to reach a set goal. On a final note, I am aiming for fifty participants specifically because of the time available for the analysis that is unfortunately limited (Cohen *et al*, 2007).

1.3.3 Data collection method

I will use an online mixed method questionnaire that will showcase a combination of multiple choice, explanatory open-ended questions. The questionnaire is specifically divided into three sections, namely: demographics, the general ethics and the education in professional ethics respectfully.

The online platform best suited for this study's survey is Google forms ([s.a]) since it is a very easy platform to use and allows the user (or researcher) to design, send and analyse results. In turn it makes it easy for prospective participants to participate in the study. Google forms ([s.a]) allow users (or researchers) to email potential participants from the platform. Email invitations are sent out to prospective participants within my network group after which a snowball sampling method is used. Participants that receive the link are reminded to complete and forward the questionnaire every second day until the quota of fifty participants are reached or until the deadline for data collection.

1.3.4 Data analyses

By using a mixed method approach, qualitative and quantitative data analyses method as per Kumar's guidelines (2011), I will be able to analyse, describe and interpret the accumulated data in order to establish frequencies, patterns and occurrences of the ethical and professional behaviours of South African graphic

designers working in industry. The qualitative questions act as an explanatory component to several of the quantitative questions in the questionnaire. This enriches my data since the individual comments from potential participants may showcase the reality of professional and ethical behaviours used within the graphic design industry in South African.

1.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

In research, it is important to consider ethical behaviour because it can severely influence stakeholders around research (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2015). The ethical considerations of this study are only briefly discussed in this section. A detailed description of this study's ethical consideration is available in section 3.5 of Chapter 3.

For the purpose of this study, only participants older than eighteen and younger than 65 are allowed to participate in order to eliminate vulnerable population groups (Strydom, 2015). It is of utmost importance to look at ethics when working with social sciences since the individual's rights need to be taken into account and the researcher must make sure that they do not offend anyone as well as leak or lose data under any circumstance (Strydom, 2015). With these arguments in mind, all entries amongst participants are anonymous and will not be disclosed to anyone. Once all data is collected, the files will be password protected on a local drive. Lastly, should participants no longer want to participate, they may choose to do so at any stage of the questionnaire or study.

1.5 TRUSTWORTHINESS

In retrospect, the study will follow a mixed method approach, this means both qualitative and quantitative questions are asked within the questionnaire. Mabuza Govender, Ogunbanjo and Mash (2014), suggest that there is a clear difference in terminology when describing both qualitative and quantitative. Qualitative trustworthiness can be characterized as credible, transferable, dependable and confirmable (Mabuza *et al*, 2014), whereas Quantitative concerns itself with reliability, validity and bias (Sajimandani, 1996). A detailed overview of the trustworthiness measure I employed in this study is available in section 3.6 of Chapter 3.

1.6 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The limitations of this study vary from the normal limitations of research (e.g. time constraints) to more specific limitations which are discussed in this paragraph. Firstly, although this study is a mix of quantitative and qualitative methods, the findings may not be generalisable in the light of the small sample of participants used. Secondly, the use of an online data collection has various internet and email limitations (*cf.* Thayer-Har, Dykema, Elver, Schaeffer and Stevenson, 2010). Thirdly, a limited network of available participants within my inclusion criteria forced me to use a snowball sampling method which added to the time constraints of the study. Fourthly, personal time constraints to complete this research project simultaneously with full-time employment, was an underestimated challenge. However, as evident from this research project, the student prevailed through these limitations noted.

1.7 ANTICIPATED CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY

By critically assessing available professional and ethical bodies in order to establish a possible improvement in the available codes of ethics I will be able to set out a framework of recommendations to improve the professional and ethical conduct of graphic designers in the South African industry.

1.8 STRUCTURE OF THE RESEARCH PAPER

Table 1.1 is a summary of this research paper and highlights the alignment between the research questions, objectives and methodology.

Table 1.1 Alignment and summary of research paper

Research Questions	Aim & Objectives	Research Method & Data Collection	Data analyses	CH
Orientation of the study				1
Primary Question What is the possible variation between the prescribed/ideal professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers listed in literature in contrast with actual behaviour of these graphic designers in the South African industry?	Aim To investigate the possible variation between the prescribed/ideal professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers listed in literature in contrast with actual behaviour of these designers in the South African industry.	Research Method Mixed methods research approach	Data Analyses Quantitative and qualitative data analyses	
Question 1 What is the ideal set of guidelines for professional and ethical behaviour for graphic designers?	Objective 1 To explore the literature to identify the ideal set of guidelines for professional and ethical behaviour for graphic designers (literature review – Chapter 2).	Content analysis	Literature review	2
Research Questions	Aim & Objectives	Research Method	Data analyses	CH

		& Data Collection		
Question 2 What is the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry?	Objective 2 To investigate the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry (methodology – Chapters 3 and 4).	Mixed methods research approach by means of an online questionnaire.	Quantitative and qualitative data analyses	3, 4
Question 3 What framework of recommendations can be derived from this study on how to address the possible variation between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry?	Objective 3 To provide a framework of recommendations on how the possible variation between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry can be addressed (conclusion – Chapter 5).			5

Outline of Chapters

Chapter 1: Proposal and orientation of the study

Chapter 2: Literature study

Chapter 3: Research methodology

Chapter 4: Findings and Discussions of the Empirical Investigation

Chapter 5: Conclusion, limitations and implications

2.1 INTRODUCTION

The following chapter outlines a broad spectrum of sources that are relevant to this study. This chapter explains the need for investigating the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry, by highlighting the professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers according to the literature.

2.2 FUNDAMENTALS OF DESIGN AND PROFESSIONAL ETHICS

Graphic design or communication design has been around for centuries. Drucker and McVarish (2013) explain in their book *[g]raphic design history: a critical guide* that design or early graphic communication can be seen in cave paintings and other designs around 35, 000 BCE. Meggs (1992) notes that clay slabs were also one of the first writing methods on which people drew and it was left in the sun to dry. According to Meggs (1992), the use of graphics and symbols can be seen through more than one historical civilization, one of which we are familiar with is the Egyptians. McVarish (2013) supports this argument by identifying that there is also consistent evidence that these prehistoric artists shared a socially recognisable system of symbols in order to communicate with one another. This systematic use of signs is the basis of communication (Drucker and McVaish, 2013).

This common trend of using symbols and markings to communicate did not disappear; in fact, it evolved over time and can still be found as the basis of communication design even in today's modern society (Meggs, 1992). Berman (2009) suggests that no one can grasp how powerful of a mechanism design is better than the professionals that deal with it. This means that graphic designers have the capability to influence change positively (Berman, 2009). This following quote by Berman (2009. p.147-149) highlights this change: “*say no by designing a better yes*”. From the moment we open our eyes to the moment we close them again at night, design is all around us, in the form of the logo on the toothpaste, the label on the hairspray we use to style our hair, the animated character on the Cereal’s box we have for breakfast, the label of the clothes you wear for the specific day etc. Not even to mention the design aspects on our

cellular phones which we use almost every minute of every day (e.g. the brand of the cellular phone and all the applications we use). Design is so embedded into our daily lives that our dreams even sometimes involve specific products and logos.

I believe that the main concern around ethics in design is whether or not you as a designer are willing to say no to a client when faced with moral dilemmas that are not in line with your own beliefs or the standards set out by institutes like The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA, 2010), American Graphic Design Awards (AGDA, [s.a.]), International Council of Design (ico-D, 2011), Chartered Society of Designers (CSD, [s.a.]), the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC, 2012) and the Association for Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ([s.a.]). Berman (2009) supports this statement with his radical innovation and believes that designers should realize their power and realise that they can improve the lives of many, instead of using design to only boost sales, no matter the consequence, outcome, or negative impact it may have on the end user.

Design is the foundation of marketing, this means that designers have a very big impact on how communication is being used to promote products or services (Berman, 2009). De Lange (2015) raises the concern that there is no code of conduct for South African graphic designers to follow when facing harmful design as such. According to Kane (2010), legislation around graphic design appears black and white in most instances. However, Kane (2010) argues that this is in fact not the case when investigating in depth, greater issues arise regarding ethical design that legislation does not necessarily cover. Furthermore, designers or marketers of unethical designed products are driven by profit and do not necessarily care about the wellbeing of the end user (De Lange, 2015). Ultimately De Lange (2015) emphasises that marketers don't have to lie about their products, merely construct and carefully plan their content, imagery and message in such a way that the end user may see it as truthful or honest, although it really is not.

This type of behaviour of carefully constructing information in such a way that it seems truthful and trustworthy is frowned upon by many, even considering it unethical in the design community of South Africa as well as other design communities around the world.

2.3 THE IDEAL PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL VS THE REAL GRAPHIC DESIGNER

Job Mail (2017) describes a graphic designer as an important part of the marketing and communication process. Similarly, Careers 24's ([s.a]) describe a graphic designer as someone who creates original visual concepts in order to communicate inspire or captivate consumers. This is in line with Berman's (2009) exploration of what a graphic designer looks like in the profession of graphic design. Berman (2009) explains his excitement towards the profession of graphic design, but also came to the hard realisation that the ideal graphic designer might not even be close to the reality. Roberts (2007) wrote about her own life as a graphic designer, stepping out of college with the whole world in her hands. However, her excitement was soon crushed after she came to the realisation that she herself had no idea what was good, bad, right or wrong anymore after being in the industry for a while. Roberts (2007) and Berman (2009) testimonies highlight the need for an investigation into the ethical and professional behaviours of graphic designers, since there may possibly be a difference between what is taught and stipulated (i.e. the ideal) and what is applied in industry (i.e. the reality).

Furthermore, Job Mail (2017) describes the job of a graphic designer as a venture filled with creative adventures that will excite and intrigue you as designer throughout your journey. As a graphic designer I embarked on many creative adventures that stimulate and intrigued me not only as a designer but also as a curious person. This may be the case for most designers who find themselves in the creative high pressured yet exciting industry of design. However, without proper guidance in the design industry, designers might find themselves in unethical situations which they may not even be aware of.

2.4 PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL INSTITUTES IN GRAPHIC DESIGN

With reference to professional and ethical behaviour, there are a number of institutes around the world that oversee professional ethics such as The American Institute of Graphic Arts (AIGA, 2010), American Graphic Design Awards (AGDA, [s.a.]), International Council of Design (ico-D, 2011), Chartered Society of Designers (CSD, [s.a.]) and the Society of Graphic Designers of Canada (GDC, 2012) to only name a few. In South Africa, The Association for Advertising Standards Authority (ASA) ([s.a.]) is one of the main representative bodies of ethical conduct, however ASA ([s.a.]) only benefit agencies, not

the individual graphic designer. This raises concern about professional ethics in the design industry for South Africa.

Due to the lack of institutes that deal solely with ethical standards in South Africa, designers are left with little or limited guidelines to follow when it comes to '*good design*' (Berman, 2009). However, in a comparison between international representative bodies such as the five mentioned above, one can easily determine what the standard and possible shortcomings of these ethical codes are. Table 1.2 consist of an analogy between five well established ethical graphic design institutes and what they offer regarding code of conducts.

AGDA's ([s.a.]) has a very easy to understand layout that covers all the bases of design standards. For the purpose of this analysis in Table 1.2, AGDA ([s.a.]) is the basis of comparison, setting the standard of ethical behaviour.

Table 1.2 Summary of available code of conducts

	AGDA, [s.a]	ico-D, 2011	CSD, [s.a]	AIGA, 2010	GDC, 2012
A	<i>A brief description on the purpose of the code</i>	X	X	X	X
1.	<i>Responsibilities towards the community</i>	X	X	X	X
1.1	Environment	X	X	X	X
1.2	Conflict of interest	X	X		
1.3	Professional conduct	X	X	X	X
1.4	Design standards and support of named council	X	X		X
2.	<i>Responsibilities to the client</i>	X	X	X	X
2.1	Client's best interest	X	X	X	X
2.2	Conflict of interest	X	X	X	X
2.3	Confidentiality	X	X	X	X
3.	<i>Responsibilities to other designers</i>	X	X	X	X
3.1	Predatory pricing (free pitching)	X	X	X	X
3.2	Existing commissions	X	X	X	X
3.3	Plagiarism and breach of copyright	X	X	X	X

	AGDA, [s.a]	ico-D, 2011	CSD, [s.a]	AIGA, 2010	GDC, 2012
3.4	Criticism of another designer's work	X	X	X	X
4.	<i>Commissions</i>	X	X		x
4.1	Presentations for securing commission	X	X		
4.2	Accepting a commission	X	X		X
4.3	Subcontracting	X	X		
5.	<i>Fees</i>	X	X	X	X
5.1	Fees and charges	X	X	X	
5.2	Free pitching	X	X	X	
5.3	Fee reductions and non-paying commissions	X	X	X	
5.4	Financial interests in a project other than declared fees	X	X	X	
5.5	Selection of another designer	X	X	X	
6.	<i>Design competitions</i>	X	X	X	X
7.	<i>Self-promotion and publicity</i>	X	X	X	X
7.1	Content	X	X	X	X
7.2	Credit	X	X	X	X

After a comprehensive analysis seen in Table 1.2, it is clear that AGDA ([s.a.]), ico-D (2011) and CSD ([s.a.]) are the only institutions that are in line with one another, whereas AIGA, (2010) and GDC (2012) have some definitions not covered in their code of conducts. This may either be because it was not added to the conduct or too unclear to decipher due to bad layout and formatting. The one main finding I derived from with the comparison between the various institutions is that all of the listed institutes offer designers a membership.

2.5 CONCLUSION

After looking at communication design and where it originates from, it is clear that design has been around for thousands of years (Drucker & McVarish, 2013). Communication design is no new concept, yet professional and ethical standards around graphic design in South Africa seems to lack a common set of standards, rules, ethics or code of conducts to support the individual graphic designer. Although having a diploma or degree in graphic design exposes most new designers to some form of standards or professional ethics, in most cases we see that the ideal designer, which in this case refers to an individual who has the proper training in the field, does not come close to what we see in the design industry.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter highlights a detailed account of the research design and methodology of this study in an attempt to contribute to the trustworthiness of this research. Furthermore, it also attempts to address the second research questions of this study, namely: What is the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry? The design of the study (see 3.2), sample selection (see 3.3), data collection (see 3.4), ethical considerations (see 3.5) and the trustworthy measures employed (see 3.6) are discussed in the sections to follow.

3.2 DESIGN OF THE STUDY

3.2.1 *Research approach and paradigm*

The pragmatic paradigm, as described by Morgan (2014), can be seen as a philosophical view of the social sciences. Pragmatics also recognises an overemphasis of abstract interpretations (Goldkuhl (2004). Keeping in mind that the study will include the input of individual graphic designers in the South African industry, it is necessary to take into account that each participant may have a different view of what it is to be an ethical graphic designer (Goldkuhl, 2004).

According to Kumar (2011), most methods of data collection can either be used in qualitative or quantitative research, depending on the restrictions, structure, depth and freedom that a researcher has during the research process. Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al* (2015) explain the difference between qualitative and quantitative studies in the way that the research problem is formulated. Kumar (2011) characterises qualitative studies as exploring and understanding phenomena's by using abstract, categorical and subjective measurements. According to Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al* (2015), Qualitative data is explanatory and gives the researcher the freedom to use random population sampling in order to draw up a conclusion that reflects a generalized pattern of behaviour amongst a broader population. Quantitative data on the other hand is obsessed with

quality information and is able to generate understanding into specific problems or ideas through the use of systematic data (MacDonald & Headlam, 2009).

Kumar (2011) suggests an alternative method that can be used when working with human subjects that combines the two methods of qualitative and quantitative into the mixed method approach. Heyvaert *et al* (2011), highlights that the mixed method approach is the best method to use when working with human subjects because it combines the best of both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Furthermore, the mixed method approach gives the researcher the opportunity to combine findings in a systematic manner especially when the nature of the study demands it (Heyvaer *et al*, 2011).

3.2.2 Research design

Bickman & Rog (2009) describe the term *research design* as an outline or a blueprint of the study at hand. As highlighted in section 1.1 in Chapter 1, the South African design industry has a general lack of professional and ethical guidelines which results in a variation between the ideal and real behaviours of designers in our country. Therefore, this section documents this research project in four steps.

Firstly, I started the research journey by conducting a comprehensive analysis around the available representative bodies of professional and ethical behaviours for South African and other countries with reference to the graphic design. The review of the literature in Chapter 2, indicated that several representative bodies for graphic designers exist in other countries such as; AIGA (2010), AGDA ([s.a.]), ico-D (2011), CSD ([s.a.]) and the GDC (2012). The only professional body in South Africa, as mentioned before in Chapter 2 is ASA ([s.a.]). They however, do not benefit the individual, graphic designer, instead, ASA ([s.a.]) only caters for institutes.

Secondly, I had to establish what the ideal set of guidelines is for the graphic design profession in South Africa. In the light of globalization, it is needed to take into account what such guidelines consist of from international sources (Smith, 2009). Globalisation is rapidly taking effect and can roughly be defined as a series of processes that caused humans across the globe to be connected through media, technology and economic

occurrences (Smith, 2009). Steps 1 and 2 were done in an attempt to address the first objective of this study.

Thirdly, after the content analysis of establishing what professional and ethical behaviours reflect out of the available representative bodies across the globe, I was able to compile a mixed-method questionnaire to investigate the reality of the professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry in an attempt to address the second objective of this study (see Appendix 2).

Finally, recommendations are made from the research gathered in chapters two, three and four, to formulate and address a framework of recommendations on how the possible variations between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers in the South African may be improved.

3.3 SAMPLE SELECTION

When considering professional and ethical behaviours within the graphic design practice of South Africa, it is important to establish if professional and ethical behaviours were at least taught within higher education, where new innovative designers start their careers. With this in mind, the population sample will consist of graphic designers that practice in the South Africa industry that at best has a diploma in graphic design. This also entails that participants at this level will be eighteen years or older.

With regards to the sample method, I will be using a snowball sampling (Kumar, 2011). A snowball sampling method can simply be characterised as sample selection using networks (Kumar, 2011). Furthermore, Cohen *et al* (2007) suggests that snowball sampling can start off with a few individuals that meet the minimum criteria who gets asked to spread or nominate other graphic designers with their network to join in on the survey. This means that I will be able to get richer content because participants aren't necessarily connected to me and come from different industries within the design community of South Africa.

I aims to gather at least fifty participants from across South Africa to establish the possible difference between the real graphic designer versus the ideal designer. This

will enable me to get a broad spectrum around the general professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers within the South African industry.

3.4 DATA COLLECTION

3.4.1 *Data collection tool*

The data collection tool that is used for this study is a mixed method questionnaire. I generated the questionnaire out of the common themes found amongst the results namely: Responsibilities towards the community, responsibilities to the client, responsibilities to other designers, commissions, fees, design competitions and promotions and publicity. The full questionnaire can be reviewed Appendix 1.

From there the questions are set up in a way that determines the qualification, age, school graduated from and in what semester/year did they handle ethical behaviours, if any. There is also a section included to establish what ethical behaviours participants associated with professional and ethical behaviour and lastly to establish what behaviours they practice in their daily jobs.

The questionnaire is divided in three sections along with an informed consent form that needs to be agreed upon before a participant can continue with the online questionnaire.

Section A is designed to establish an individual's demographic overview; age, what the highest level of qualification in design is, at what institute they obtained their qualification, how long has the participant worked in the industry and in what industry of design did they learn of ethical behaviours.

Section B revolves around general questions regarding ethical and professional behaviours and includes the following questions; where did the participant gain their knowledge around ethical behaviours? What is the participants definition of being professional and ethically sound? Which of the following behaviours does the participant regard as professional and ethical behaviours? Which of these behaviours do you as participant implement in an everyday work environment within the organisation? The last two questions I allowed individuals the opportunity to select more than one option as they see fit.

Section C is about exposure to professional and ethical behaviours in a training or learning environment. Here the questions look as follow: In which year was ethical behaviours included [or] was it an informal discussion throughout the duration of class? In which module was ethical behaviours included? How much time was spent on the aspect? Did the participant have to apply these behaviours to a project/brief in a work environment? With this question I gave the individual the chance to explain a specific brief in which I asked them to describe the brief in which ethical behaviour was considered before the individual commenced with the project. The last question of this section I asked the participants how many times a day they find themselves dealing with issues around ethical design.

3.4.2 Method of collection

The central theme of the questionnaire is to establish a possible difference between the ideal and real graphic designer within the South African industry, as mentioned in Chapter 2. With the questionnaire set up in Google forms ([s.a]), it is easy to send out directly from within the platform.

The questionnaire will be sent out to different designers within my personal frame of reference, colleagues, lecturers, former classmates and other acquaintances via email from within Google forms ([s.a]). Next, all the above-mentioned associates will be asked to either forward the questionnaire or nominate potential participants to also take part in the questionnaire.

Additionally, I will send out friendly reminders every second day to all stakeholders that were approached in the first place and remind them politely to please fill in and send on or nominate possible participants for this study.

3.4.3 Data analysis

In the light of the mixed method approach of this study, the data analyses consist both qualitative and quantitative data analysis methods. Qualitative data analysis involves the systematic analysis to understand social patterns in society (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2015). Qualitative data also promotes the understanding of specific ideas through the use of open end questions in the questionnaire (MacDonald & Headlam,

2009) (see Appendix 1). The qualitative open-ended responses of the participants were interpreted, coded, and grouped to form themes in accordance with the steps of Schurink, Fouché and De Vos (2015) and are discussed in section 4.2 in Chapter 4. The findings of the qualitative data are displayed in the form of mind-maps in Chapter 4 to showcase a possible difference between the actual and the ideal professional and ethical graphic designer.

In contrast with qualitative, yet equally important, is a quantitative analysis that looks at analysing statistical data through the use of multiple choice questions (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2015). The quantitative data analysis provides descriptive statistics such as frequencies. The data collected from the multiple-choice sections of the questionnaire is presented in the form of tables and graphs in section 4.2 in Chapter 4 (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2015).

The best way to analyse primary data is to use a computer application because it saves time and effort when working with several entries (Kumar, 2011). Therefore, I employed Microsoft Excel to assist with the quantitative data analysis as well as to document the qualitative data.

3.5 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Strydom (2015) notes that researchers need to incorporate ethical considerations in their research within the social sciences since it normally involves human participants. Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al* (2015), in support of Strydom (2015), explains that it is important for the researcher to consider a personal code of conduct or a set of standards to live by when conducting research in the social sciences. Researchers that oblige to ethical considerations create a sense of integrity, credibility and foster a relationship of trust between the researcher and his/her participants. Furthermore, research should not negatively affect any potential stakeholders in their work or personal live, through the research conducted (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2015). Ethical considerations which are employed in this research are highlighted below.

- Anonymity, confidentiality and privacy of participants were ensured by means of the following activities. The online survey programme used, Google Forms, did not capture any personal details of the participants nor did the questionnaire include any such questions (see ethical clearance from the institution in Appendix 2).
- Ethical clearance was obtained before the start of data collection (see Appendix 1). This eliminated any harm (physical or psychological) to any participant.
- Informed consent was given by all participants prior to completing the data collection tool (see Appendix 2). The informed consent letter was written in a clear and understandable language in order to assist prospective participants with their decision to participate or not to participate in this research. Kumar (2011) notes that informed consent allows the participant to make sure that the research is relevant to them (i.e. that they fit within the inclusion criteria).
- Participants volunteered to participate and could withdraw from the research at any point or time as stipulated in the informed consent letter.
- No compensation was given to any participant as stipulated in the informed consent letter.
- At-risk groups were eliminated from the sample population by means of the inclusion criteria of this study (see section 3.3).
- The electronic data is password protected and only myself and my supervisor have access to these files.

3.6 TRUSTWORTHINESS

Strydom (2015) suggests that it is important to consider ethical obligations in the sense that it's the researchers responsibility to ensure that the study goes smoothly at all times and that none of the stakeholders ever feel they are being misled in any way through means of the study itself, questionnaire or outcome of the study. With this statement in mind, the questionnaire mentioned will firstly have an Inform Participant consent form that explains the nature and goals of the study. This means that potential participants will know what they are taking part in before doing so. In line with the research design of this study, both quantitative and qualitative trustworthiness aspects are discussed in this section. In both cases I attempts to describe how I addressed all

the applicable trustworthiness aspects in accordance with the definitions of these measures by Schurink *et al* (2015).

Cohen *et al* (2007) states that there are four major terms to take into account with qualitative data analysis, which are credibility, transferability, dependability and confirmability. In order to ensure credibility to the qualitative data provided the setting in which the data was collected (see 3.4.2 The data was analysed, interpreted and presented in accordance with section 3.4.3, and attempted to select participants with maximum variation in mind through by sampling method (see 3.3). The transferability trustworthiness measure was not really addressed since there is a limited scope of this research study. I attempted to document the research process in this document in a logical and well written manner to address the dependability of this research. I tried to address the confirmability aspect, in other words by objectivity, by means of always questioning my interpretation of the qualitative data from the open ended-questions.

The trustworthiness measures for quantitative data are validity, reliability and objectivity (Schurink *et al*, 2015). Validity can be categorised into internal and external trustworthiness measures. Validity can be established in quantitative research if the research tool measures what it is supposed to measure (see section 3.4.1 for the description of the data collection tool). The literature review of this study (see Chapter 2) informed the content of the data collection tool and my supervisor continuously checked for misinterpretation of question in the data collection tool in order to address the validity aspect. I attempted to reduce drop-out amongst non-respondents by sending them electronic reminders to complete the questionnaire in an attempt to increase participation numbers as well as to counter invalidity and promote reliability. Once again, I tried to ensure objectivity by constantly using a supervisor as a sound board and critical reader.

3.5 CHAPTER SUMMARY

In short, chapter three highlights the framework of this research paper and establishes the way in which all components of the intended investigation will proceed. To recap, this study will follow a mixed method approach (Kumar, 2012) within the pragmatic paradigm (Goldkuhl, 2004) in order to establish a possible difference between the

professional and ethical graphic designer from within the graphic design South African industry. This chapter also illustrates the intended data collection method which is an online questionnaire and the data analysis method of qualitative and quantitative mechanisms (Du Plooy-Cilliers *et al*, 2015).

4.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter focuses on the analysis, interpretation and discussion of the findings of the data collected from the data collection tool (see Appendix 1). The data analysis mainly focussed on frequencies and explanatory questions in line with the mixed method approach of this study. The overall aim of the data analysis is to compare the answers of the participants, in other words the reality of professional and ethical behaviours, with the theoretical framework in Chapter 2 which highlights the ideal professional and ethical behaviours. This comparison aims to answer the third research question.

4.2 PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.2.1 *Demographics of participants*

This data analysis is based on forty graphic designer participants working in the South African industry (n = 40). Unfortunately, one participant (n = 1) was excluded from the data analysis since he/she did not meet the inclusion criteria of this research (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3). Informed consent was obtained from all participants (data is available should the moderators need it).

The majority age group represented are between twenty-six and thirty-five years of age (23 of 39 participants; 59.00%). In addition, eighteen to twenty-five participants exhibit almost half of the majority age group (14 of 39 participants; 35.90%). The minority age group represented are between ages thirty-six and forty-five (1 response; 2.60%) and one single entry of sixty-five (1 response; 2.60%) as seen in Figure 4.1.

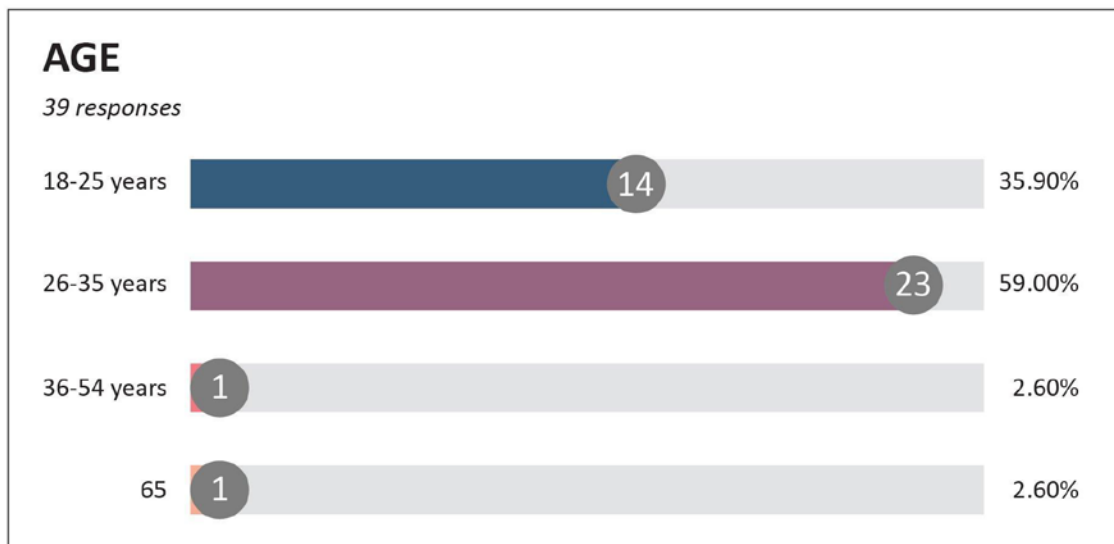


Figure 4.1: Respondents age groups

4.2.2 Training and higher education on professional and ethical behaviour

The following section documents the higher education qualifications of the participants (n = 39), in order to highlight designers' place of exposure to professional and ethical behaviours (e.g. industry or higher education).

With the minimum criteria in mind, (see sections 1.3.2 and 3.3 in Chapters 1 and 3 respectively), Table 4.1 indicates that the highest-ranking qualification obtained is a doctorate (2.60%). The lowest qualification was a diploma (30.80%) followed by bachelor's degree (48.70%). This highlights that most of the graphic design participants that participated in this study obtained the minimum requirement for becoming a graphic designer (n = 39). This is meaningful to point out merely because these graphic designers represent the field within South Africa's design industry.

Table 4.1 Response by age of highest qualification in graphic design

	Diploma	Bachelors	Honours	Masters	Doctorate
18 - 25 years	4	7	3	0	0
26 - 35 years	7	12	2	2	0
36 - 45 years	0	0	0	0	1
65 years	1	0	0	0	0
%	30.80%	48.70%	12.80%	5.10%	2.60%

By using a snowball sampling method according to the definition of Cohen, Manion and Marrison (2011) and Kumar (2011) (see section 3.3 in Chapter 3), I was able to get a variety of individuals across different fragments of the graphic design discipline to participate in this study. Figure 4.3 portrays the higher education qualifications of the participants according to the awarding institutions (Appendix 1). As is evident from Figure 4.3, participants' awarding institutions varied amongst fourteen higher education institutions across South Africa.

In brief, figure 4.2 shows that more participants received qualification from Tshwane University of Technology (n=8, 21.10%). Results show that three institutes have the same amount of qualifications obtained by participants, Open Window, University of Pretoria, Vega and CTU (n=4, 10.50%). Unfortunately, less responses came from institutes like Central University of Technology, DUT City Campus (n=2; 5.40%), Centurion academy, Design School South Africa, East London Management and Unicollege Krugersdorp (n=1; 2.60%).

One participant (2.6% of the overall participants) attended both the Johannesburg College of Art and Damelin. Although the individual has various educational backgrounds, the entry is set out separately, because it technically counts as one entry.

Moreover, it is important to consider that figure 4.2 also shows that there are more participants with a four-year degree (n=13; 35.10%) and three-year degrees (n=10; 27.00%) than any of the other categories. Furthermore, participants with three-year diplomas (n=5; 13.50%) and two-year diplomas (n=4; 10.80%) fall in second. Two participants only marked two years (n=2; 5.40%), unfortunately it is not clear if it was a certificate or a diploma but it will not affect the outcome of this study. These two entries at least indicated that they do have some sort of qualification (Appendix 2). Lastly the scarcest qualification from recorded participants are one-year diplomas, doctorate and NQF Level 9 Master's degree (n=1; 2.70%).

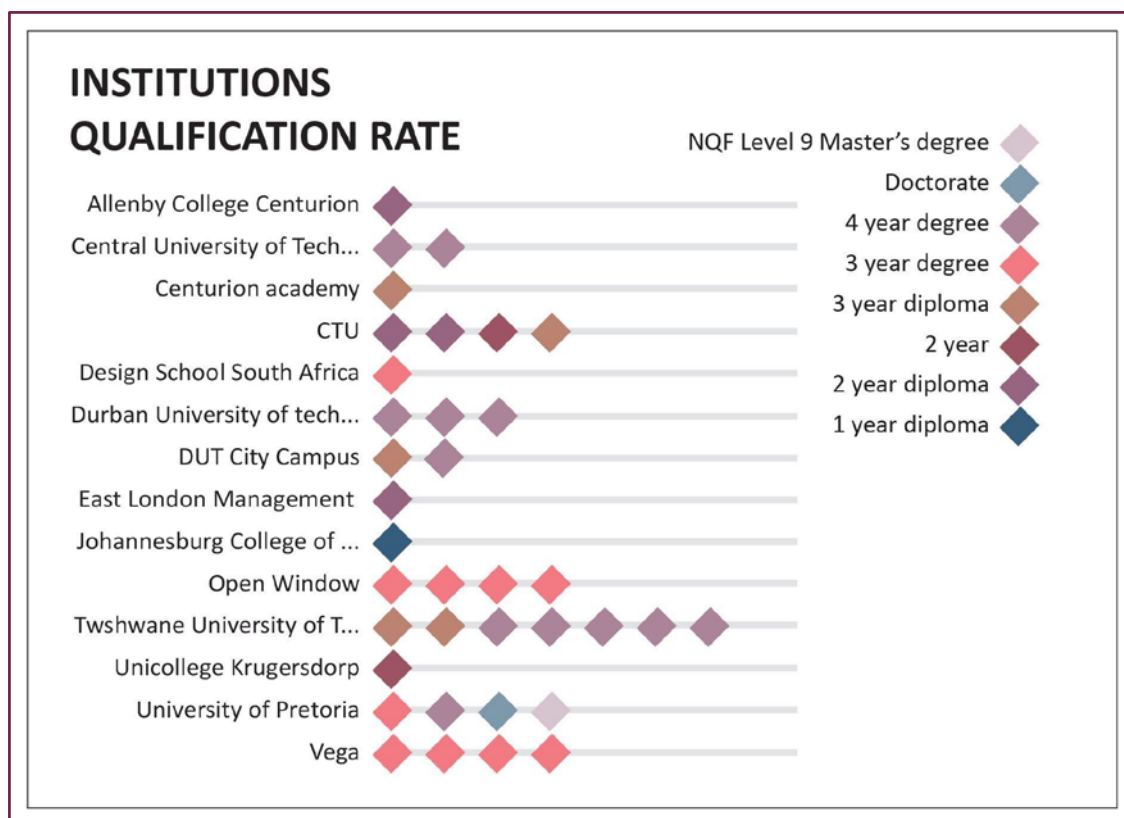


Figure 4.2 Institutions qualification rate

Attention to ethical education is of utmost importance. Chemela-Jones (2015) characterizes ethics as empathetic, thoughtful and as individuals that serve in society's needs. According to Chemela-Jones (2015) although Schools started implementing ethical modules into the syllabus, it is still only serves as an informal discussion.

Considering Chemela-Jones (2015) argument, it is clear to see that little or no time was in some cases spent on the matter of professional and ethical design. There are many individual entries that show most participants had some sort of recollection of where during the period of their studies, ethical education was in fact introduced or at least discussed (Figure 4.3). The inconsistency of responses however, leads me to believe that either institutes renamed the subjects wherein which professional ethics get discussed in during previous years, or the difference may be between institutes. Furthermore, there are also a significant number of individuals who said they can't remember or left the field completely open as seen in figure 4.3. What is also remarkable to note is that a few respondents commented that they experienced

informal discussions throughout the course of their studies in some of the modules they handled, this stands in line with Chemela-Jones' (2015) point made earlier that ethical behaviour is at this stage handled through the method of informal discussions.

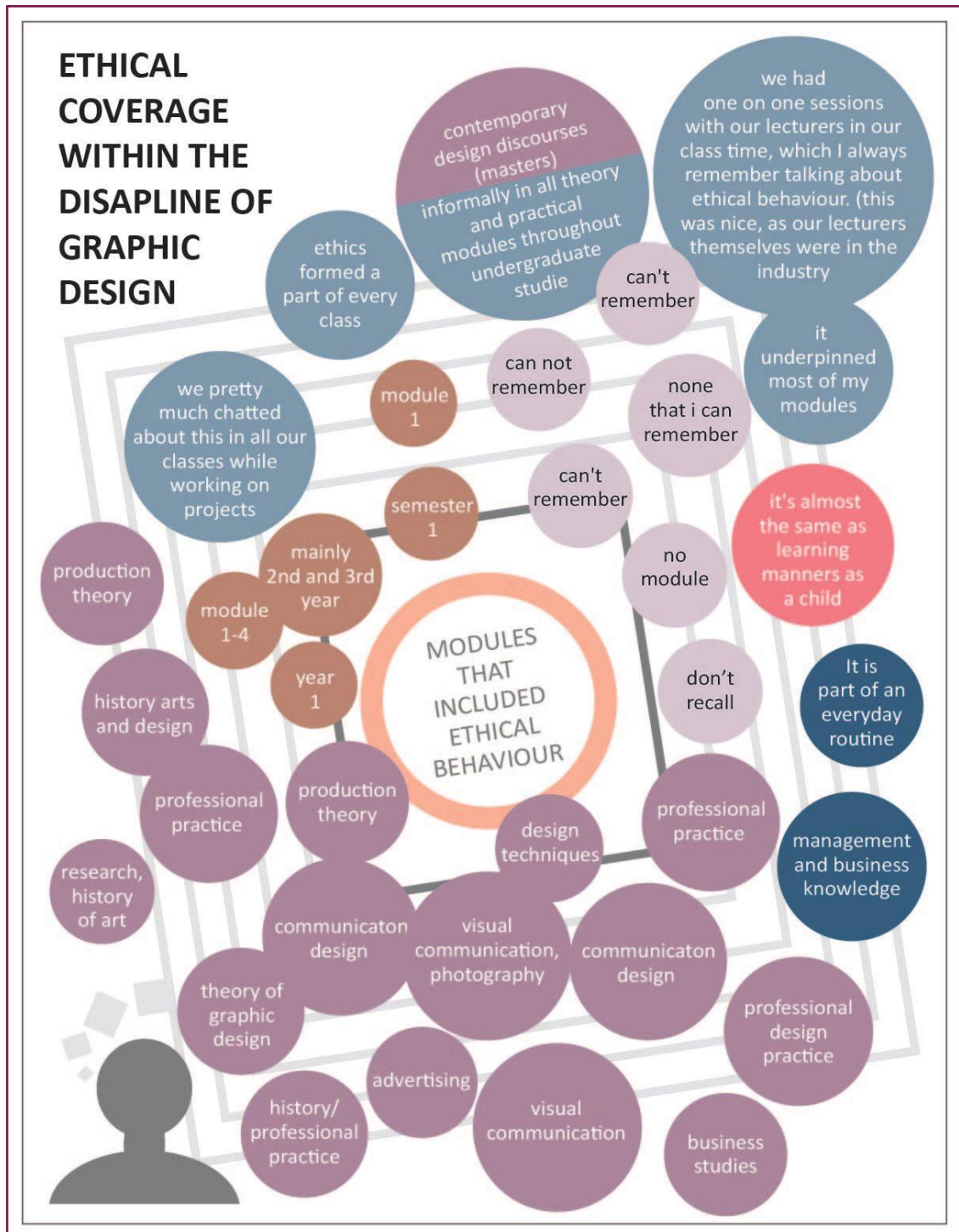


Figure 4.3 Professional and ethical behaviours taught in higher education

35 Responses

4.2.3 Relation between experience and participants involvement in the industry

Considering the fact that all participants included in this study indicated that they did obtain a qualification within the discipline of graphic design, the following section is intended to establish where participants have the most influence in the South African industry. Table 4.2 shows the significant relationship between work experience and participants' involvement in the field.

There is a clear indication in Figure 4.2 that advertising, marketing and publishing are the leading fields of exposure of graphic designers if the participants' years of experience in the graphic design industry is ignored. On the other hand, there is also tight relation when participants years involved in the South African graphic designer's industry are compared against specific fields of design such as; advertising (n = ?; 31.20%) and marketing (n = ?; 26.90%) being two of the main categories participants performed in. What's interesting here (Table 4.1) is to observe that designers that fall between six to ten years, three to five years and one to two years exposure in the field, have covered a wider variety of fractions within the discipline than designers that are have more than fifteen years of experience. Participants with more experience in the field tend to settle or stay in the environment they are in (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2 A Comparison between participants' years worked in the industry to field exposure.

	1 - 2 years	3 - 5 years	6 - 10 years	15 years	20 years	30 years
Advertising	6	12	10	1	0	0
Marketing	4	8	11	1	0	1
Publishing	2	5	5	0	0	1
Layout	3	3	5	1	0	0
Packaging	3	1	2	1	0	0
Education	0	0	2	0	0	0
Web design	0	0	0	0	0	0
UX/UI	1	1	1	0	0	0
Total:	19	30	36	4	0	2

Figure 4.4 merely illustrates the many fractured fields within the discipline of design. It is important to note that overall, more graphic designers from this study were exposed to advertising (n=29; 31.20%) and marketing (n=25; 26.90%) during the course of working in the industry. Whereas publishing (n=13; 14.00%) and layout (n=12; 12.90%) only shows half the respondents rate compared with the categories advertising and marketing, with the lower graphic design related industries are, packaging (n=12; 7.50%), education (n=2; 2.20%), web design (n=; 2.20%) and UX/UI (3 selected categories, 3.20%).

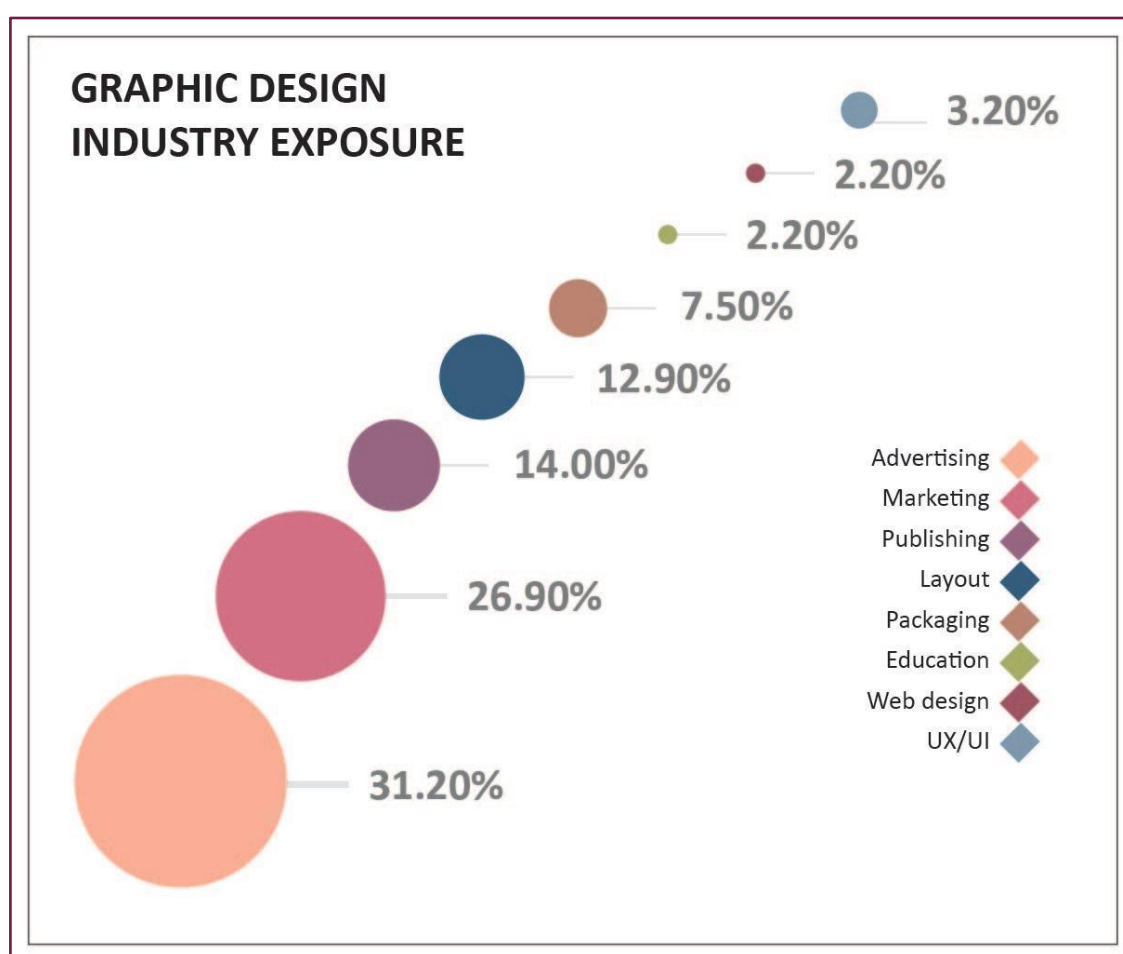


Figure 4.4 Comparison between industry ethical exposure and years involved in the industry.

4.2.4 Professional and ethical behaviours amongst participants practicing in the field

Considering the time spent on ethical behaviour at higher education, it is interesting to observe that when participants were asked if they have to apply ethical behaviour to a project or brief in a work environment (Figure 4.5), the majority responded with yes (n=26; 66.70%) although a surprising number said no (n=13; 66.70%). It is clear to

see that more participants deal with professional ethics, compared to those who don't. Figure 4.6 illustrates that six to ten years' experience (n=12; 46.20%) deal with more professional and ethical behaviour issues than three to five years (10 respondents, 38.50%) and one to two years' experience (4 respondents, 15.40%).

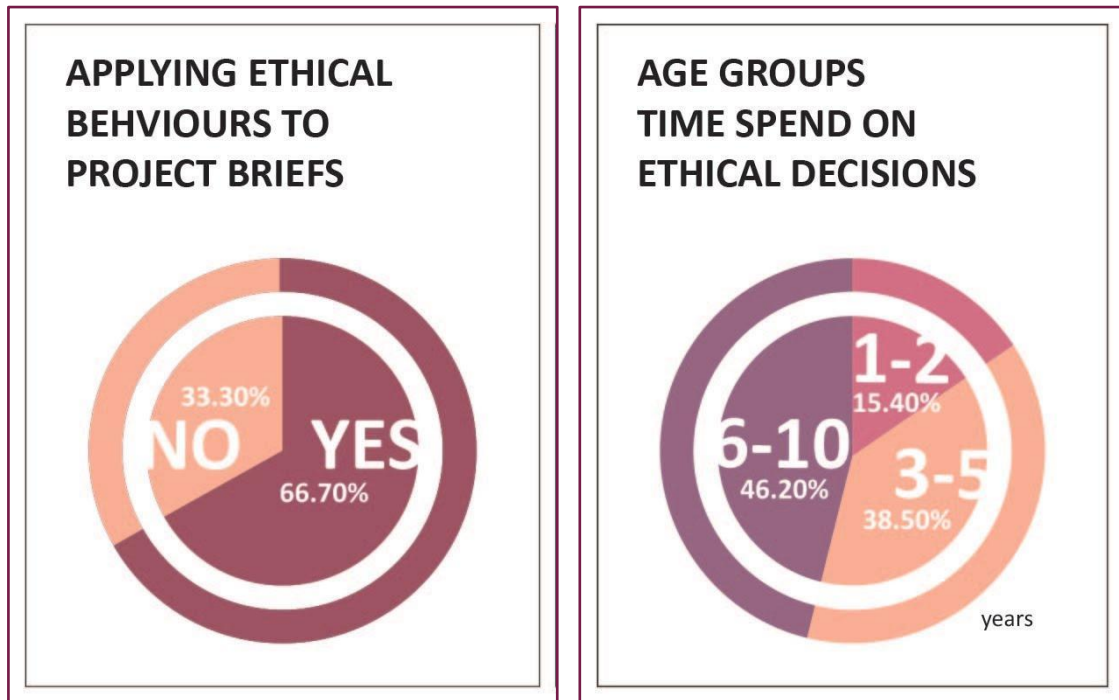
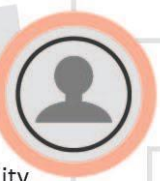


Figure 4.5 Applied ethical behaviours in a project Figure 4.6 Times a day spend on ethics

'Confidentiality', 'trustworthy', 'consistency', 'communicates clearly', 'integrity', 'straightforwardly' and 'original' are some of the words used by participants to describe professional and ethical behaviours (Figure 4.7). Overall, I believe that participants that took part in this study have a clear understanding of what professional ethics are. It seems that there are underlying themes amongst the thirty-nine respondents that resemble the same guidelines brought forth in chapter one that are responsibilities towards the profession, responsibilities towards the community, responsibilities towards the client's/employer's and responsibilities towards other designers (Burger, 2017).

DEFINITION OF BEING PROFESSIONALLY AND ETHICALLY SOUND



concerned with copyright and originality

- Honoring copyright and the usage of copyrighted material. Creating creative solutions that is not offensive or belittling an individual, group or company.
- To me this means respecting other designers' work; by not directly copying work or trying to steal work. It also means respecting myself enough to decline projects that would require me to copy work, but rather providing client with an unique design while using their preferred, reference artwork. I also maintain a proper work ethic, even in the jargon and manner I present myself. I charge competitive and market related prices; that isn't prejudice towards a specific client.
- To create original work. Inform clients when they are potentially copying another brand.
- Always strive to be original and also be respectful of others living situations or cultures.
- Being original and crediting any other person's work where applicable
- Transparency in working with stakeholders and clearly defining responsibilities when creating sustainable design solutions.
- Meet clients needs at affordable cost, and never commit plagiarism

emotional

As industry who assembles together images, typography, or motion graphics to create a piece of design

- Ensuring that design work is always ethically sound.
- being involved in a project/campaign that is in line with your morals
- To protect both the worker and client from poor business practices.
- The way one c[on]duct their work without being compromised
- Concentrate on the art of graphic design and never force your own likes onto the client
- Respecting other people's work(dont copy)

characteristics

- work as a team if it is designers or your printer or even your client. Do not copy others work look at others work for inspiration and create your own. know your advertising rules.
- Creating content that is in the best interest of your client, which is original, not plagiarized or properly referenced
- Being able to design according to your clients needs, without going against your b[e]liefs. Not cop[y]ing another designers work an[d] giving yourself the credit.

ethically sound

- To be considerate of the social, economical and, legal implications of your work.
- A gr[a]phic designer should not only design for her or [himself],he should be c[a]utious who is designing for looking at ethical reason...
- Being honest an[d] fair.
- Integrity
- Confidentiality, trustworthy.
- Don't take critic personally and be open to learn!
- Consistency (in design and dealing with clients), punctual, good administrative ability
- Being someone that is not only reliable but also trus[t]worthy and honest. Transparency and communication is key.
- Professionally and ethically sound graphic design communicates clearly, straightforwardly and with integrity, while upholding the human dignity of all stakeholders (designer, the signified, client and end-user) equally.
- Professionally and ethically sound, is being on time, being considerate of your co-workers.
- Being fair, treating everyone equally and most importantly choosing to work in an environment that honors the before mentioned points.

concerned with other designers, clients and environment

- Respecting other designers' work while completing your client's work to your best capabilities
- To adhere to client needs whilst staying true to your design brand and the clients brand as a whole
- Taking all stakeholders into regard when making decisions. Stakeholders include the client, the organisation you are working for, the community/public and the environment.
- Creating designs that do not offend others but rather tell a story to which that anyone can relate. It is about uplifting people and considering what impact a design might have or will have on people and the environment.
- Being fully aware of people[']s way of living and those that are socially disadvantaged
- To consider ethics before each job taken and to consider others, environment and society before starting with new projects.
- Being sensitive to cultural, social and political behaviour. Crediting work.
- Being competent, efficient, masterly and qualified. Also to not take anything too personal in this industry and to not get too emotional. We are placed in an industry where we need to think and feel like users do, making this last point very hard to achieve
- To keep smiling even though you don't agree

Figure 4.7 Response around being professionally and ethically sound as a graphic designer

Furthermore, figure 4.7 shows us that more participants are concerned with copyright and originality than being ethically sound, although it can be seen as one in the same for the purpose of this study, I divided it into different categories to illustrate that for the participants that took part in this study, there is a difference when morals are involved. There is also a clear indication that participants are concerned with other designers, clients and the environment which are in line with the analysis of the ethical codes of conduct from five institutes discussed in chapter two. In addition, the compiled questions are based on a summary of the ethical codes provided by these five institutes and what they consider as being ethically sound.

In section B of the questionnaire (Appendix 1), a list of options were given to participants to choose from what they consider as being ethically sound and what they as individual graphic designers practice in a daily work environment (Figure 4.8). The setup of these questions was to see if what they think is ethically sound is in line with what participants practice in their own work environment.



Figure 4.8 List of options that were available for participant to choose from

Figure 4.9 shows participants had a clear idea of what professional ethics are. The most agreed upon category amongst participants are: 'I always explain my quotations to my clients in detail and include a full breakdown of pricing' (n=33, 84.60%). Furthermore, other behaviours that ranked second are; 'I design towards my clients' best interest and I always decline a project that involves copying a logo of an existing brand' (n=32, 82.10%).

Some unethical behaviours were also ticked by participants (Figure 4.9), they include; 'I often compete in projects with other designers where only one designer gets commission, 'I often charge/quote a client or a prospective client more if I know they are difficult customers. And 'I accept multiple clients at once, even if I do not have the capacity'. (1 selected, 2.60%). The question; 'I promote another designer's work as my own' (4 selected, 10.30%), 'I work on other designers' projects if given to me by a client' (9 selected, 23.10%) and 'I release design projects to my clients before I have received payment' (8 selected, 20.50%).

The fact that the data collected from thirty-nine participants shown in figure 4.9 indicate that there are some participants that believe some unethical professional and ethical behaviours are true is quite alarming. As mentioned earlier, all participants had to adhere to a minimum requirement of at least a graphic design diploma as mentioned in chapter one and three under data collection. In addition, a higher score was expected from thirty-nine respondents that took part in this study if ethical behaviour was discussed at higher education.

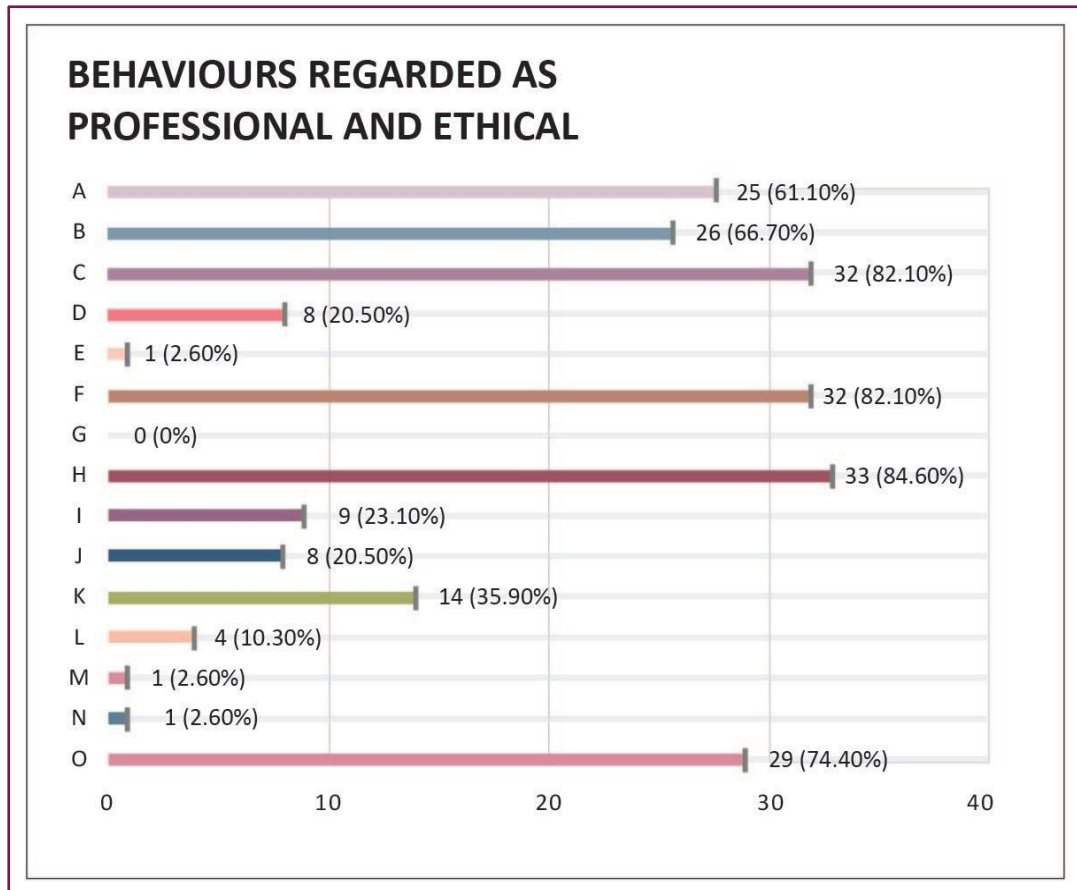


Figure 4.9 Participants indication of what they believe is professional and ethical behaviour

With the analysis of what professional and ethical behaviours designers actually practice in the field, it is not surprising that there are so many unethical behaviours that get practiced in the industry when we look back and consider the literature review in chapter one. 'I work on other designers' projects if given to me by a client' (15 selected, 38.50%) is one of the highest selected fields from the options given in figure 4.8. Moreover other options such as; 'I release design projects to my clients before I have received payment' (9 selected, 23.10%), 'I often charge/quote a client or a prospective client more if I know they are difficult customers' (6 selected, 15.40%), 'I accept multiple clients at once, even if I do not have the capacity' (5 selected, 12.80%) and 'I promote another designer's work as my own' (2 selected, 5.10%).

The common pattern that can be highlighted here is that it seems only when a designer feels it is a project that may cause them as the designer financial stress they will act unethically. It can be observed by the results from figure 4.10.

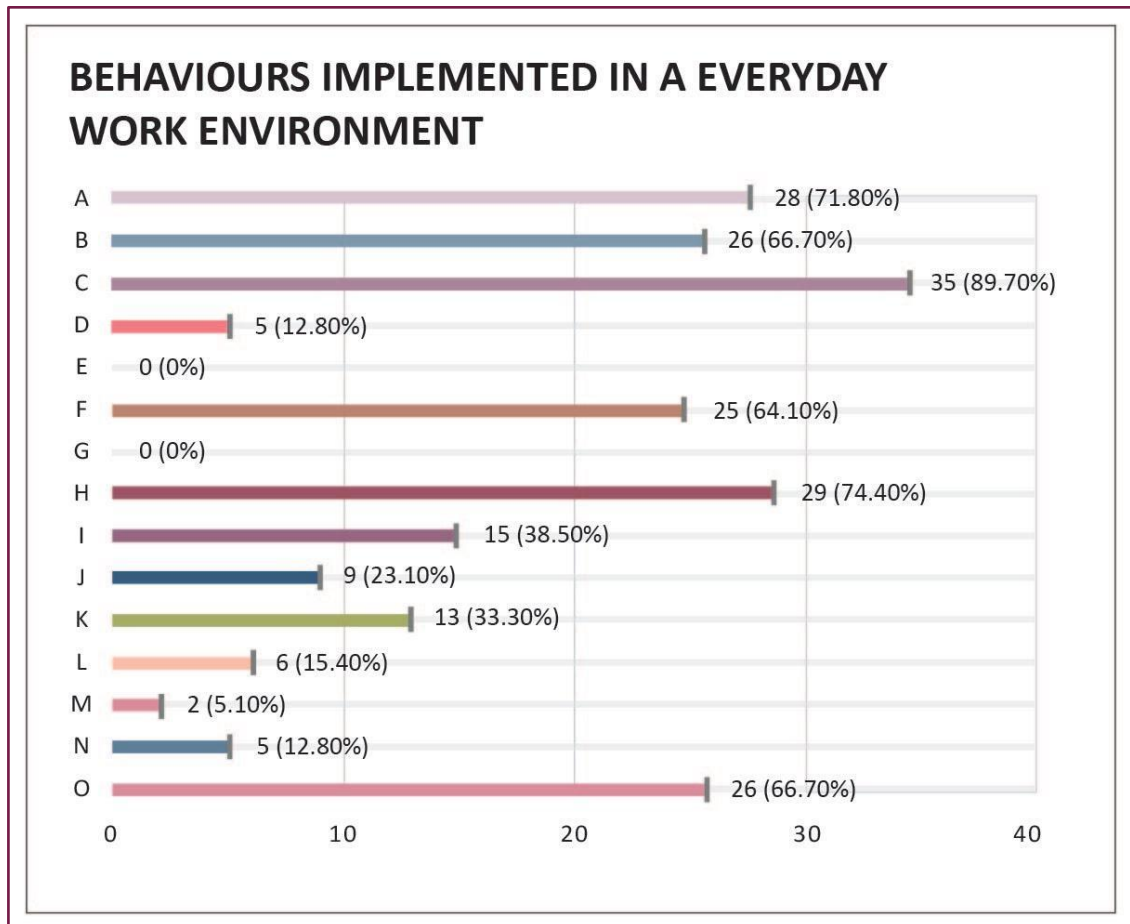


Figure 4.10 Participants indication of what professional and ethical behaviours they practice

4.3 CHAPTER SUMMARY

Based on the findings of this questionnaire (Appendix 1), it can be argued that out of the thirty-nine participants that took part in this study, the majority strive to be professionally and ethically sound as graphic designers, however the data collected also shows that when financial stress or harm to the designer comes into play, designers tend to not consider ethics or look the other way. Finally, Table 4.1 indicated that individuals that have worked in the industry for under ten years have had a significant amount of exposure to all fields within the graphic design industry. Generalised categories as illustrated in chapter two might simply not be enough and

makes attempting to fill the grey areas in the professional and ethical codes, discussed in chapter two, much more needed, especially for South Africa who at this stage has a lack in representatives for professional and ethical behaviour.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of this chapter is to outline this research project by focussing on the three research questions stated in section 1.2.4 in Chapter 1. Apart from the research questions, this chapter also notes the contribution/s of this research to the discipline, the limitations of the study as well as recommendations for future research.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

This section is discussed in accordance with the three research questions of this study in the sub-sections to follow.

5.2.1 What is the ideal set of guidelines for professional and ethical behaviour for graphic designers?

The content analysis into the ideal set of professional and ethical guidelines for South African graphic designers has shown a substantial lack of representative bodies in the field. The only representative found for South Africa is the ASA ([s.a]), which unfortunately only caters for agencies and not the individual designer. Furthermore, the investigation showed that there are however international representatives bodies available such as the AGDA ([S.A.]), ico-D (2011), CSD ([s.a]), AIGA (2010) and GDC (2012) (Found in section 2.4 of Chapter 2).

The code laid out, that was the clearest and easiest to understand or interpret was AGDA'S ([s.a]) code, which was used as a guideline to investigate if other codes were in line with the AGDA's standards set out. The analysis shows that there was some lack of coverage or explanation on some of the topics in the codes which brings me to the conclusion that there is room for improvement on the codes available.

5.2.2 What is the reality of professional and ethical behaviour of graphic design in the South African industry?

With an investigation into the professional and ethical behaviours of graphic designers in the South Africa (Chapter 2), I could identify the following possible variations between the ideal and real professional and ethical graphic designer within the South African industry. The key aspects recognised in Chapter 4 are that participants that took part in this study have a general idea of what a professional and ethical designer looks like, which is in line with the comprehensive analysis found in Chapter 2. However, there is a substantial number of participants that seem to have very little exposure to professional and ethical behaviour, whether it was not taught in higher education or whether the participant has not ever dealt with any ethical issues is unfortunately unclear.

Moreover, participants from younger age groups seem to have more exposure to different fields of the graphic design discipline than age groups over thirty-five. This statement strengthens the need of having a detailed ethical code that covers all fields of design. It is also clear in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.5) that 66.70% of participants that took part in this study deal with ethical dilemmas daily. and age groups with longer exposure in the field of design have more ethical issues to deal with than less experienced designers (Chapter 4, figure 4.6).

When looking at what participants defined as ethical behaviour in Chapter 4 (4.2.4, Figure 1.7) I found that most participants understood the concept, but did not touch all the aspects of what an ethical designer looks like in accordance with the analysis of Chapter 2. Thus, the conclusion is made that there is a compelling issue regarding ethics in design which is that the codes set out in Chapter 2 might be inconclusive and lack a detailed ethical standard to follow for graphic designers, especially towards the South African industry. Kane (2010) supports this statement and remarked that legislation regarding graphic design seems straightforward, however in most instances this is not the case.

Another essential point illustrated in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.10) is of graphic designers understanding of what a professional and ethical designer is in comparison with the actual professional and ethical behaviour within a daily work environment (Figure 4.10). The answers derived in section 4.2.4 (Chapter 4) shows that most designers from this study indicated that they do consider a lot of aspects when it comes to professional and ethical behaviour. However, the inconsistency of participants knowing what the behaviour should be (Figure 4.9) and what they as designers practice is highly concerning, considering that all participants in this study indicated that they had some sort of informal higher educational training around the matter of professional and ethical behaviour.

5.2.3 *What framework of recommendations can be derived from this study on how to address the possible variation between the ideal and actual professional and ethical behaviour of graphic designers in the South African industry?*

One of the most important aspects that was identified in Chapter 2, is that there is no substantial representative body in South Africa for the individual graphic designer practicing in the industry to adhere by. Thus, leading me to the first recommendation, that seems obvious, South Africa needs such a representative to support, motivate and guide graphic designers in South Africa to practice professional and ethical behaviours in the best interest of the community, clients/employer's and other designers (Burger, 2017).

With the comprehensive analysis from Chapter 2 and 4, it is clear to see that there is room for improvement on certain aspects of the codes available. Keeping in mind that there is no code or representative that cater for individual graphic designers in South Africa, it is best to recommend potential changes that may aid in creating a code for South Africa or potentially help to identify possible updates that international codes may implement to serve and guide designers that abide by these codes in a much more systematic way.

In general, I finds that most codes available lack a constructive and systematic layout which aids in the lack of understanding. Also, the codes mentioned in Chapter 2 need more clarity on what they mean with certain aspects within the code. I find that the

codes might be too loosely written and can add to open interpretation and confusion which is not at all what the purpose of the code are.

For the purpose of answering the final research objective set out in Chapter 1 (section 1.2.4) I will be using the AGDA ([s.a]) code as framework to make suggestions and recommendations on. I am using this code merely because it is the only code that is laid out in an organized layout with understandable content and covers most aspects within design as per Burgers' (2017) outline of basic groups of standards.

- Responsibilities towards the community

Based on the findings in Chapter 4 (section 4.2.4: Figure 4.9 and 4.10) participants from this study indicated that they understand and deal with ethical issues around considerations towards the community quite frequently.

Recommendation: With a clear indication that participants understand responsibilities towards the community, the only recommendation to make here is that the codes available should elaborate more on who and what forms part of a community they refer to. If the inclusion criteria is only the graphic design community or the community that a graphic designer finds themselves in where it be work or social.

- Responsibilities towards the client

What is very interesting to note here is that most participants of this study indicated that the client is of utmost importance when dealing with design (Chapter 4, Figure 4.7 and 4.10). This is in line with what the available codes acknowledge as ethical behaviour towards the client. However, it may be noted that there is no solution or rule per se when dealing with difficult clients or non-paying clients.

Recommendation: When it comes to working with clients, it is important to note that not everyone's morals are in line with the designer's reality. The recommendation here will be around establishing and elaborating how to

ethically handle different types of clients, whether it be a long lasting or a once of client. I agree with the statement that design should be in the client's best interest however, it cannot be if it is at the expense of the designer or financial constraints of the professional and ethical designer. Thus, explaining the topic further into how to handle different types of clients will certainly help aid in a better understanding of responsibilities towards the client.

- Responsibilities towards other designers

The most noticeable aspect visible in Figure 4.10 (Chapter 4) is that participants of this study do not partake in free pitching. However, participants indicated that to be an ethical sound designer, it is expectable to work on another designer's work (n =8 20.50%) and indicated that they practice this unethical behaviour in a day to day work environment (n =5; 12.80%).

Recommendation: For this section, I believe it is important to indicate under what circumstances it is acceptable to work on other designers work such as a designer working in a company's art department where previous designers that have created work and now you, as a new designer to the company, has to update or continue the work. It should be stipulated what counts as ethical behaviour if the designs are property of the company itself.

- Commissions

I regard this section of the codes presented as explained and set out enough or at least that of the AGDA ([s.a]), ico-D (2011) CSD ([s.a]) and AIGA (2010). It is remarkable to note that Chapter 4 (Figures 4.9 and 4.10) shows that participants had no trouble understanding this matter and I believe the codes here are set out to reflect how commissions should be handled accordingly.

- Fees

It is fascinating to note that there are designers that charge clients more if they feel the client will potentially be difficult to work with (n =6; 15.40%). What is more remarkable is that there were participants that stated this

behaviour forms part of what it takes to be a professional and ethical sound graphic designer (n =2; 5.10%), which in reality is definitely not the case. Furthermore, participants also indicated that it is acceptable to release artwork before payment (n =8; 20.50%). There is also a significant number of participants that indicated that they themselves take part in this behaviour of releasing artwork prior to payment ((n =9; 23.10%). When working with fees and pricing it is always quite tedious since more than one stakeholder, perspective and idea is involved. The only way in which a designer can protect their own work and make sure that clients hold up their end of the contract is to only release artwork after full payment has been made.

Recommendation: The fees sections in these codes are not clear whether it is acceptable to overcharge clients with the idea that they might potentially be difficult. With this in mind, I suggest explaining and elaborating on why this is such an important aspect. I also believe that this section should be set out to be more industry specific where a designer from any design fraction can make sense of how fees should be handled to adhere to the clients, environment, and other designer's best interest.

- Design Competition

This part of the codes available are covered but not in detail, in the case of AGDA ([s.a]) it only states that the board of the AGDA ([s.a]) should sign off on any competition before a member may participate.

Recommendation: I suggest a more detailed explanation around completions and why in some instances design competitions might be demeaning to the profession and have a close connection in free pitching where designer's ideas are used with no compensation. Thus, warning them about the implications competitors may have in comparison with what they as designers will get out of the arrangement.

- Self-promotion and publicity

In accordance to self-promotion, it is important to note that in a way the client here is the individual designer and should then adhere to the same rules and principles set out for the responsibility towards the client.

Recommendation: As mentioned above, the same rules should apply for self-promotion as that of responsibilities towards the client. Furthermore, this section is once again only converting some aspects around self-promotion and can be elaborated on why it is so important as to promote only your own work.

On a final note, I recommend a section to be included into the available international codes and a potential code for South Africa. A section covering the graphic designer which covers taking care of one self within the criteria of the outline of the code. This section should include handling clients, setting up pricing structures and further assistance should the designer need it.

5.3 CONTRIBUTION TO THE FIELD

With the comprehensive analysis from Chapter 2 and 4 in mind, it is important to note that most participants that took part in this study strive to be ethically aligned (Figure 4.8). However, as Berman (2009) suggests it is not always clear what is ethical and what is unethical without proper training. With the findings in Chapter 4, it is clear that there is still a lack in ethics even if most designers that took part in this study received proper training or at least exposure to professional ethics. I believe it's in the lack of detail within these codes that cause grey areas within the practice. Thus, pointing out the lack of ethical representative bodies in the field of graphic design and the lack of detailed codes within the discipline. Furthermore, after the analysis in Chapter 2 and 4, I am of the opinion that there is room for improvement within the codes of conducts available.

On a final note, the five institutes discussed in Chapter 2 might look like they cover all aspects of professional and ethical behaviour. However, this is not the case, it might be due to a lack in clarity that participants and other designers might not understand what is expected of an ideal ethical graphic designer.

5.4 FURTHER RESEARCH CRITIQUE OF THIS STUDY

After examining the possible differences between the ideal and the real ethical graphic designer it is evident to note that there is room for improvement. Due to the small sample used, the findings could not be generalised, however further study could be done to establish if the opinions of the participants that took part in this study is of a general concern. Furthermore, I believe that finding the cause of the problem or where exactly it starts might be a step in the right direction in filling in the grey areas that this study points out.

According to Kumar (2011) limitations of a study may include anything from securing permissions to any obstruction of planning or executing research. As mentioned before, limitations might occur when using an online questionnaire, because of slow or no internet, email might end up in spam and other variables connected to internet usage (Thayer-Har *et al*, 2010).

Another limitation or obstacle that occurred, involved editing and updating of the online questionnaire after it was sent to participants, luckily in this case there were no individuals that had filled out the questionnaire yet.

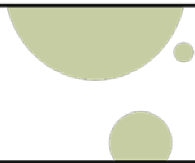
Lastly, I expected to reach at least fifty graphic designers within the South African design industry to get a bigger sample, however due to personal time restrictions I was unable to get to fifty individual participants and now have thirty nine out of fifty over a time period of sixteen days. With this said, the population sample is too small to generalize finding even if mixed methods were used.

Other limitations include the clarification of several questions that had to be clarified on Google forms ([s.a]) after it was sent out. Luckily no participants submitted any information before this occurrence. Also, something that can be seen as positive or negative about Google forms ([s.a]) is that the researcher won't be able to see who has filled in the form or not, this will definitely benefit ethical consideration however it will be impossible to pinpoint which individuals that have received the form, have not filled it in.

5.5 CONCLUSION

In reflection, this study followed the methodology (Chapter 1 and 3) accordingly in order to describe the ideal ethical and professional graphic designer set out by five ethical institutes codes of conduct (Chapter 2). Furthermore, the study followed a mixed method approach within the Pragmatic paradigm, meaning that the opinions set out in Chapter 4 could be analysed and interpreted to identify possible differences within the ethical standards of graphic designers who practice in the field.

Moreover, this study concluded that there is a potential difference between the real and ethical graphic designer. With these grey areas in mind, I believe that these grey areas occur because of a lack of detail within these codes. On this point, not only does South Africa lack representative bodies, the country may also need a guide for graphic designers practicing in South African industry to abide by.



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QUESTIONNAIRE SENT TO DESIGNERS IN THE GRAPHIC DESIGN INDUSTRY OF SOUTH AFRICAN INDUSTRY IN AN ATTEMPT TO ESTABLISH PROFESSIONAL AND ETHICAL BEHAVIOUR AMONGST PARTICIPANTS.

INFORMED PARTICIPANT CONSENT FORM

You are invited to participate in an interview conducted by Wilmarie Cornelius, under the supervision of Mrs Yolandi Burger who is a part-time supervisor in the Graphic Design program at Vega School Pretoria Campus.

The information in this consent form is provided to assist you in deciding whether you would like to participate in this study. This online survey aims to identify professional and ethical behaviours within the South African graphic design industry. You were selected to participate because you hold at least a diploma in graphic design and are a practising graphic designer. However, you will not be eligible to partake in the questionnaire if you are younger than 18 years. By partaking in this questionnaire, you agree that the information you provide may be used for research purposes, including dissemination through peer-reviewed publications and conference proceedings. It is anticipated that the analysed information collected will be used to identify professional and ethical behaviours which graphic designers need to foster in the South African industry.

If you choose to participate in this questionnaire it will take up no more than 15 minutes of your time. We do not foresee that you will experience any negative consequences by completing the questionnaire. You will also not benefit from your participation as an individual. Your inclusion in this study is purely voluntary. If you do not wish to participate in this study, you have every right not to do so. Even if you agree to participate in this study,

you may withdraw at any time without having to provide an explanation for your decision. ALL information gathered in this study will be held in strict confidence and only the researcher and her supervisor will have access to the original data. Results will only be retained for as long as required for the research purpose and will thereafter be depersonalised and presented in such a way that you will not be identifiable.

It is important that you fully understand what is involved if you agree to participate in this study. If you have any questions that you feel are not addressed or explained fully in this consent form, please do not hesitate to ask me for more information. You should not agree to participate unless you are completely comfortable.

CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN THIS STUDY

The content and meaning of this information have been explained to me. I have been given the opportunity to ask questions and am satisfied that they have been adequately addressed. I understand that I am under no obligation to participate in this study and that I can withdraw from this study at any stage without having to provide an explanation for my withdrawal. I hereby volunteer to take part in this study.

(*Required fields)

***I hereby voluntarily agree to participate in the above-mentioned research project and declare that I am 18 years or older and that I have read and understand all the information and conditions pertaining to this survey.**

☐ I agree

☐ I disagree

SECTION A – DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONS

***Age**

☐ 18 - 25 years

☐ 26 - 35 years

☐ 36 - 45 years

☐ Other...

***At what Institution did you obtain your qualification from?**

☐ Vega

☐ Open Window

☐ University of Pretoria

☐ Inscape

☐ Tshwane University of Technology

☐ University of Johannesburg

☐ North West University

☐ University of Stellenbosch

☐ Other...

***What type of qualification was it?**

☐ 3-year diploma

☐ 3-year degree

☐ 4-year degree

☐ Other...

***How long have you been working in the industry?**

☐ 1 - 2 years

☐ 3 - 5 years

☐ 6 - 10 years

☐ Other...

***In what industry of design did you learn of ethical behaviours? (Select all that apply)**

☐ Advertising

- ☐ Layout
- ☐ Marketing
- ☐ Publishing
- ☐ Packaging
- ☐ Other...

SECTION B - GENERAL QUESTIONS

***Where did you gain your knowledge about the ethical and professional behaviours required of you as a graphic designer?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ Education
- ☐ Industry
- ☐ Trial and Error
- ☐ Reading up
- ☐ Mentor
- ☐ Other...

***Which of the following behaviours do you regard as either professional or ethical behaviours required of you as a graphic designer?** (Select all that apply)

- ☐ I conduct my work in such a manner to ensure that no or little harm comes to the environment.
- ☐ I do not knowingly accept projects that potentially have a conflict of interest.
- ☐ I design towards my clients' best interest.
- ☐ I always inform the previous designer, who worked on the project before I accept any commission.
- ☐ I often compete in projects with other designers where only one designer gets commission.

- ☐ I always decline a project that involves copying a logo of an existing brand.
- ☐ I inform prospective clients about their current designer's personal problems in an attempt to earn the project.
- ☐ I always explain my quotations to my clients in detail and include a full breakdown of pricing.
- ☐ I work on other designers' projects if given to me by a client.
- ☐ I release design projects to my clients before I have received payment.
- ☐ I always inform my clients that I am outsourcing a part of the project they assigned/commissioned to me.
- ☐ I often charge/quote a client or a prospective client more if I know they are difficult customers.
- ☐ I promote another designer's work as my own.
- ☐ I accept multiple clients at once, even if I do not have the capacity.
- ☐ I bill my clients according to the amount of time I worked on their projects.

***Which of these behaviours do you implement in an everyday work environment within the organisation you as graphic designer represent? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ I conduct my work in such a manner to ensure that no or little harm comes to the environment.
- ☐ I do not knowingly accept projects that potentially have a conflict of interest.
- ☐ I design towards my clients' best interest.
- ☐ I always inform the previous designer, who worked on the project before I accept any commission.
- ☐ I often compete in projects with other designers where only one designer gets commission.
- ☐ I always decline a project that involves copying a logo of an existing brand.

- ☐ I inform prospective clients about their current designer's personal problems in an attempt to earn the project.
- ☐ I always explain my quotations to my clients in detail and include a full breakdown of pricing.
- ☐ I work on other designers' projects if given to me by a client.
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- ☐ I always inform my clients that I am outsourcing a part of the project they assigned/commissioned to me.
- ☐ I often charge/quote a client or a prospective client more if I know they are difficult customers.
- ☐ I promote another designer's work as my own.
- ☐ I accept multiple clients at once, even if I do not have the capacity.
- ☐ I bill my clients according to the amount of time I worked on their projects.

SECTION C – QUESTIONS REGARDING TRAINING/LEARNING OF ETHICAL AND PROFESSIONAL BEHAVIOURS

(If ethical and professional behaviours included in the programme/qualification you studied, please answer the following questions).

***In which year was ethical behaviour included? OR was it an informal discussion throughout the duration of class? (Select all that apply)**

- ☐ Year 1
- ☐ Year 2
- ☐ Year 3
- ☐ Year 4
- ☐ Informal discussion
- ☐ None

In which module was ethical behaviour included?

Start writing here...

How much time was spent on this aspect?

☐ 1 - 2 hours

☐ 5 - 8 hours

☐ 2 - 5 days

☐ 1 week

☐ 2 weeks

☐ 3 - 4 weeks

☐ None

☐ Other...

***Did you have to apply these behaviours to a project/brief in a work environment?**

☐ YES

☐ NO

If yes, can you please describe the brief and what you were required to do?

Start writing here...

***How many times a day do you find yourself dealing with issues around ethical design?**

☐ 1 - 2 times

☐ 3 - 4 times

☐ 5 - 6 times

☐ 7 - 8 times

☐ 9 - 10 times

☐ Other...

Thank you for participating in this study.

The primary researcher Wilmarie Cornelius and study leader Mrs Yolandi Burger can be contacted during office hours at:

Wilmarie Cornelius: +27 (0)72 243 5092 | willascornelius@gmail.com

Yolandi Burger: +27 (0)79 849 5931 | yolandibur@gmail.com.

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

26/02/2018

Dear Wilmarie Cornelius

ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER

Your research proposal and ethical considerations were reviewed by your supervisor and moderated by the campus research panel.

☒ Your research methods posed concerns (see below):
Please discuss with your supervisor how your research design will address this issue.

The concerns included:

Your fieldwork may only proceed once your supervisor has signed off on your final questionnaire.

Please confirm this in writing.

I agree to the changes: *Wilmarie Cornelius* Signature: _____

In the event of you deciding to change your research methodology in any way, kindly consult your supervisor to ensure all ethical considerations are adhered to and pose no risk to any participant or party involved. A revised ethical clearance letter will be issued.

We wish you all the best with your research!

Supervisor Name: Yolandi Burger

Supervisor Signature: _____

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator Name: Ria van Zyl

Campus Postgraduate Coordinator Signature: _____



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HONOURS



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