

Received: January 5, 2018

Revision received: July 21, 2018

Accepted: July 22, 2018

Copyright © 2018 ESTP

www.estp.com.tr

DOI 10.12738/estp.2018.6.167 • December 2018 • 18(6) • 2677-2684

Research Article

Analysis on Current Situation and Development Trend of Garden Landscape Education

Bin Wang¹

Chang'an University

Lei Zhang²

Chang'an University

Abstract

With the acceleration of urbanization and the improvement of people's demands for the quality of life in the city, the garden landscape design industry has developed rapidly, and the garden landscape specialty has been set up in various colleges and universities as a hot specialty. However, there are still some problems in the current garden landscape education of colleges and universities, for instance, the improvement of education quality lags behind the increase in the number of students, the division of specialties results in different schools, the teaching methods are outdated, and single, and the practice is disconnected and weak. Based on the analysis of the practical problems existing in garden landscape education, this paper puts forward that the development of garden landscape education should strengthen the construction of teaching conditions, scientifically and accurately carry out specialty positioning, innovate the ideas and methods of education, and pay attention to strengthening the integration of teaching and practice.

Keywords

Garden Landscape • Current Situation of Education • Development Trend • Analysis

¹Correspondence to: Bin Wang, School of Architecture, Chang'an University, Xi'an 710061, China. Email: 1053484821@qq.com

²School of Architecture, Chang'an University, Xi'an 710061, China.

Citation: Wang, B., Zhang, L. (2018). Analysis on Current Situation and Development Trend of Garden Landscape Education. *Educational Sciences: Theory & Practice*, 18(6), 2677-2684. <http://dx.doi.org/10.12738/estp.2018.6.167>

In recent years, under the background of rapid development of social economy and accelerated progress of urbanization construction, the construction of garden landscape has been greatly developed, thus more professionals in garden landscape are needed. Colleges and universities have undertaken the important function of cultivating talents, and have started this specialty in succession to meet the needs of the society. But at present, there are still some problems in teaching conditions, teaching staff, professional training objectives and teaching methods of landscape education in colleges and universities, which need to be solved urgently. This paper mainly thinks about the current situation and future development of landscape education in order to find out the effective methods of landscape education in colleges and universities, improve the quality of landscape education in colleges and universities, and cultivate high-quality garden landscape professionals for the society.

Development status of landscape education in China

China had the concept of garden more than 3000 years ago, so we can say garden landscape has a very long history in China. The garden landscape education came into being in the 1930s. There were very few colleges and universities with this major at the very beginning and the representative schools at that time were Jinling University, Zhejiang University and Fudan University, which offered courses in gardening. The garden landscape education in the real sense should be the "gardening group" jointly established by Tsinghua University and Beijing Agricultural University in 1951, which is the beginning of garden education. But later in 1952 when the departments were adjusted, it was adjusted to Beijing Forestry College. After that, with the continuous development of garden landscape and design related specialties, more and more colleges and universities have set up garden landscape education specialty, which has been comprehensively developed, and many agricultural and forestry arts colleges have set up this specialty in succession. According to statistics, in the 1990s, about 21 colleges and universities in China set up related specialties of landscape education, and up to now, about 100 colleges and universities across the country have opened this major (Lenzholzer & Brown, 2013). It can be said that with the rapid development of society, the acceleration of urbanization and the improvement of people's spiritual and material living standards and levels, there are new opportunities for the development of landscape education, which greatly promoted the development of landscape education to some extent (Gazvoda, 2002). Colleges and universities as the base of training garden landscape education professionals set up garden landscape education according to the needs of the community, but there are still some problems in landscape education in colleges and universities (Palea, Ciobanu, & Kilyeni, 2012).

Problems in garden landscape education at present

The improvement of education quality lags behind the increase in the number of students

The grand development of the garden industry means that the society needs more and more garden landscape professionals (Fowler, 2013). Garden landscape education is an important way to train landscape professionals (Hussein & Kabai, 2015). Therefore, in order to meet the needs of the society, many colleges and universities

have set up garden landscape education specialty and begin to recruit students, so the number of students majoring in garden landscape has increased year by year. However, the expansion of the number of students on the scale also brings many challenges and difficulties to the garden landscape education, which are mainly embodied in two aspects as shown in Figure 1: on the one hand, the lack of professional teaching resources facilities cannot meet students' learning needs. Because many colleges and universities are insufficient in the resources of garden landscape education, such as limited laboratory resources and the lack of hardware such as practice base, it is difficult to meet the demand of increasing students, which affects the quality of garden landscape education to a certain extent; on the other hand, it is difficult to guarantee the teaching demand since the professional teachers are not adequately equipped. At present, the number of students has increased, but the teachers have not been adequately equipped. Especially for the new curriculum, there are not enough experienced teachers. But the existing teachers have undertaken more teaching tasks, and with greater work pressure and heavier task, they unavoidably cannot follow the heart, which may inevitably have the most direct influence on the education quality. Therefore, an outstanding problem in the current garden landscape education is that the number of students has increased, but because of insufficient professional teaching facilities, poor teaching conditions, the lack of teachers and other factors, the quality of education failed to get synchronized improvement.



Figure 1. Challenges and dilemmas of garden landscape education

The division of specialties results in different schools and makes it difficult to implement professional education

Garden landscape specialty is not an isolated subject, but a very comprehensive subject. It has a very close relationship with many subjects, such as architecture, aesthetics, engineering, and soil science (Milburn, Milburn, Brown, Mulley & Hilt, 2003). This specialty is currently set up in comprehensive universities, agricultural and forestry institutions, and art institutions as shown in Figure2.

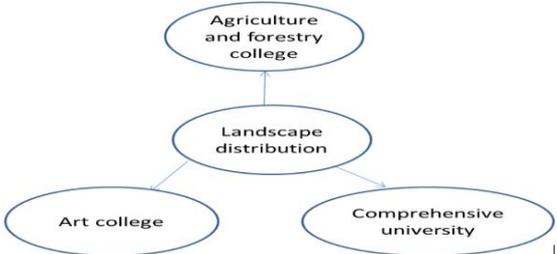


Figure 2. College of landscape architecture

However, because different colleges and universities have different background, their emphases on the setting of the professional contents are also different, which leads to the fact that different colleges and universities are still very different though they all have garden landscape specialty, showing the characteristics of schools (Ryan, 2012). For example, in the agricultural and forestry institutions and art institutions, there is also garden landscape specialty, but they focus on different contents. Agricultural and forestry institutions are more focused on the planting of garden plants, while art institutions are more focused on the design of the environment. Therefore, universities with different professional backgrounds also set up a garden landscape education specialty, but their teaching system, teaching content and curriculum settings are different. To some extent, different universities have been influenced by the original subjects, which is not conducive to students to master the comprehensive and systematic knowledge system of garden landscape specialty.

The teaching methods are single with teaching based

With the rapid development of garden landscape industry in the society, the demand for garden landscape professionals is also imminent. The teaching link is the key link and the important way to train the garden landscape professionals, while the teaching method is a key factor in teaching activity (Woll et al., 2015). At present, in the garden landscape education in colleges and universities of China, the teaching methods adopted by teachers are still the teaching methods we have always used. The only difference from traditional means is that with the development of information technology, teachers apply the multimedia teaching means to the teaching activity, with PPT, videos, pictures and others to enrich the teaching means. This teaching method has been the most commonly used way in classroom teaching, its advantage is to systematically impart knowledge to students, but it's not clear how about students absorb and really grasp. At the same time, from the perspective of teaching subjectivity, teachers play a dominant role, mainly teaching but neglecting the students' subjectivity, while students are in the state of passive acceptance, especially for the garden landscape specialty with strong application, neglecting the training of students' thinking to certain extent.

The teaching practice is weak

As a very practical specialty, garden landscape specialty should pay attention to the cultivation of students' practical ability, independent thinking and independent analysis. Therefore, practical education is indispensable (Khalilnezhad, Meiboudi & Karimzadegan, 2012). Only through practice can students absorb the knowledge they have learned, but there is still a weak practical link in the actual teaching. More prominent performance is in the setting of teaching content, e.g., the proportion of practical teaching content is smaller. In the course of teaching, teachers may emphasize on the training of the student's conception, for example, teachers will analyze cases in the teaching and students can conceive how to design a practical link. However, due to the limitation of the realistic condition, there is a shortage of hands-on links in practice.

Countermeasures for the future development of garden landscape education

Strengthen the construction of teaching conditions and guarantee the teaching quality

Strengthening the construction of teaching staff. Teachers are the guides of students' professional development, and are the key factors related to the quality of education and teaching. Therefore, in order to improve the quality of garden landscape education, we must strengthen the construction of teaching staff. First of all, colleges and universities should be equipped with a sufficient number of teachers. In particular, they should increase teachers for newly set-up or emerging specialties. For example, according to the main training direction of garden landscape specialty, teachers of relevant courses should be appropriately added to ensure that the quality of teaching can be guaranteed. Secondly, according to the needs of social development, the curriculum is optimized and adjusted, and the teachers' team is constructed according to the result of optimization and adjustment. Finally, we should strengthen the construction of teachers' team, provide teachers with sufficient scientific research exchanges and teaching training activities, and improve teachers' educational and teaching level and scientific research level, so as to better carry out scientific research and personnel training (Thompson, 2002).

Strengthen the construction of practice base to ensure the teaching needs. The garden landscape specialty is comprehensive and involves a wide range. Garden landscape design needs constant accumulation and repeated practice. It is not enough for students to have only a certain degree of professional theoretical knowledge, and a great deal of practice is needed. Therefore, for the garden landscape specialty, the laboratory and the practice teaching base are indispensable teaching facilities. They play a very important role in cultivating students' practical ability and deepening their theoretical knowledge. From the current situation of garden landscape teaching in China, many colleges and universities are scarce in laboratory and practice teaching base, for example, some colleges and universities lack the nurseries required for professional practice, which more often makes it hard to carry out practical teaching and seriously affects the teaching quality and teaching effect. Therefore, colleges and universities should enhance the construction of practical teaching base and provide the necessary condition for the practical teaching.

Define the professional objectives, and carry out scientific and accurate professional positioning

To sum up, setting up the garden landscape specialty efficiently in colleges and universities is to train the professionals of the garden landscape design required by the society, and the key herein is to meet social needs. At present, there are some graduates in garden landscape specialty who are difficult to meet the needs of their jobs after they engaged in the industry, which indicates to some extent that some colleges and universities' professional training objectives are not based on social demand, and leads to the mismatching between demand and supply. Therefore, colleges and universities should make clear the training objectives of students in garden landscape specialty, as shown in Figure 3. First, students should master more systematic knowledge of garden landscape theories, including the knowledge of related disciplines, and have a more solid theoretical system of professional basic knowledge. Second, students should master the basic theory and method of garden landscape

design, guide students to participate in various design activities actively, and pay attention to the training and cultivation of students' thinking in the teaching process. Third, it is necessary to guide students to form correct professional values.

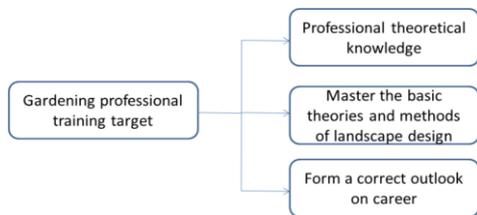


Figure 3. Gardening professional training target

Whether it is the garden landscape education specialty set up by comprehensive universities or art colleges and agricultural and forestry colleges, it is necessary to abandon the influence of the inherent subject, combine the standard of the society to the professional talents, make reasonable, scientific, and clear professional training objectives and training program, provide a clear positioning of professional education, and establish a more comprehensive and systematic curriculum system, so as to train professionals as the society required.

Innovate educational concepts and continually optimize teaching methods

Along with the development of the garden landscape industry, better requirements for the professionals in garden landscape are provided, which means the better requirements for the garden landscape teaching. The traditional concept of garden landscape education cannot meet the needs of the current social development. Therefore, in the garden landscape teaching, teachers should actively change the teaching idea, change the idea based on imparting knowledge, and avoid the practice of directly putting professional knowledge into the students' brain. Teachers also should carry out teaching in combination with the needs of social development and the characteristics of garden landscape specialty. In addition to teaching the necessary professional theoretical knowledge, what's more, teachers should inspire students' thinking, pay attention to the training of students' thinking, cultivate students' creativity and imagination, encourage students to break through the limitations of their inherent thinking, boldly imagine and create, thereby designing more characteristic works. At the same time, teachers should optimize the teaching method, guide the students to discover, create and fully display the students' subjectivity. For example, in the excellent case teaching, teachers should guide the students to make critical re-creation on the basis of deep understanding of the scheme.

Optimize the curriculum setting and strengthen the integration of teaching and practice

For the subject with strong application, practical teaching is an indispensable link. However, teachers often focus on explanations and teachings of theoretical knowledge in the practical teaching and too few practical courses are designed in curriculum setting, that's, the importance of practical teaching has not been fully understood. For the garden landscape education, its goal is to train the students to be able to carry on the garden

landscape design, require the students not only to have the solid professional theoretical knowledge, but also to have the very strong hands-on practice ability, including garden design, landscape design, architectural design, landscaping management and other practical capabilities. Therefore, we should increase the integration of teaching and practice. First of all, teachers should optimize the curriculum settings, increase the amount of practical teaching hours, highlight the cultivation of students' practical ability, and carry out rich practical teaching activities according to the teaching content. Secondly, teachers should make full use of laboratories and other teaching resources in the universities to give students the opportunity to practice exercise. Thirdly, teachers should make full use of all kinds of resources, lead students to go deep into the society, understand the present situation and needs of the garden landscape industry, and expand the students' professional vision. At last, students should be encouraged to take part in professional practice activities outside the universities, such as introducing students go to design institutes to do garden design related work and go to greening companies to carry out greening management, which can strengthen students' professional practice ability through practice activities.

Conclusions

With the acceleration of social urbanization, the social demands for garden landscape design talents rise increasingly, and the requirements for comprehensive quality and comprehensive ability level of landscape design talents in related industries are higher and higher. This brings opportunities as well as challenges to the garden landscape education in colleges and universities. The future development trend of garden landscape education in colleges and universities should meet the needs of the society and constantly change the way with the development of the society. Therefore, colleges and universities should strengthen the construction of the teaching staff, strengthen the construction of the practice base, define the professional objectives, and provide accurate professional positioning; teachers should innovate educational ideas, constantly optimize teaching methods and curriculum settings, and strengthen the integration of teaching and practice. Only in this way can we cultivate high-quality garden landscape professionals who meet the needs of the society.

References

- Fowler, M. D. (2013). Soundscape as a design strategy for landscape architectural praxis. *Design Studies, 34*(1), 111-128. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.destud.2012.06.001>
- Gazvoda, D. (2002). Characteristics of modern landscape architecture and its education. *Landscape & Urban Planning, 60*(2), 117-133. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046\(02\)00064-6](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046(02)00064-6)
- Hussein, M. K., & Kabai, R. (2015). New horizons for Malaysia's landscape education: Gate project across cultures and continents. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 174*, 179-185. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2015.01.644>
- Khalilnezhad, S. M. R., Meiboudi, H., & Karimzadegan, H. (2012). Landscape engineering education in Iran. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences, 46*, 394-398. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.05.129>
- Lenzholzer, S., & Brown, R. D. (2013). Climate-responsive landscape architecture design education. *Journal*

- of *Cleaner Production*, 61(20), 89-99. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jclepro.2012.12.038>
- Milburn, L. A. S., Brown, R. D., Mulley, S. J., & Hiltz, S. G. (2003). Assessing academic contributions in landscape architecture. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 64(3), 119-129. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046\(02\)00204-9](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046(02)00204-9)
- Palea, A., Ciobanu, G., & Kilyeni, A. (2012). Educational skills in training landscape architecture students: Developing communication skills. *Procedia - Social and Behavioral Sciences*, 46, 4672-4677. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.sbspro.2012.06.316>
- Ryan, R. L. (2012). The influence of landscape preference and environmental education on public attitudes toward wildfire management in the northeast pine barrens (USA). *Landscape and Urban Planning*, 107(1), 55-68. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.landurbplan.2012.04.010>
- Thompson, I. H. (2002). Ecology, community and delight: a trivalent approach to landscape education. *Landscape & Urban Planning*, 60(2), 81-93. [http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046\(02\)00061-0](http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/S0169-2046(02)00061-0)
- Woll, N., Hunsinger, M., Dove, J., Famiglio, L., Boker, J., & Shabahang, M. (2015). The changing landscape of surgical education: What are residency education teams and do we need them?. *Journal of Surgical Education*, 72(5), 1005-1013. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.jsurg.2015.02.005>