



The Integration of Chinese Traditional Aesthetic Education and Global Mindedness of Students at a Selected University in Henan, China

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Abstract: This study investigates the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and its relationship with the level of global-mindedness among university students. The research assesses multiple dimensions of aesthetic education, including sense of beauty, satisfaction of mind-heart, satisfaction of intellectual intuition, integration of parts into a total system, symbolism, and simplicity, alongside the key components of global-mindedness, such as acceptance of different cultures, care for world problems, interconnectedness and peace, and world citizenship. A mixed-methods approach was utilized, combining quantitative and qualitative analyses to evaluate respondents' perceptions and explore the connections between these constructs.

This study underscores the importance of integrating traditional aesthetic education with contemporary global themes, such as sustainability, intercultural competence, and social justice, to enhance students' readiness for a rapidly changing, interconnected world. Recommendations include expanding experiential learning opportunities, fostering interdisciplinary collaboration, and contextualizing traditional aesthetics within global education frameworks to maximize their relevance and impact. These findings contribute to the broader discourse on education reform and the cultivation of culturally rooted, globally minded citizens.

Keywords: Chinese Traditional Aesthetic Education, Global-Mindedness, University Students, Sense of Beauty, Intellectual Intuition, Symbolism, Cultural Acceptance

Introduction

China is a country with a rich history and culture that has been shaped by Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism (Yao, 2000). These philosophical traditions have had a profound impact on Chinese aesthetics, which emphasizes harmony, balance, and nature (Xu, 2002). In recent decades, China has undergone rapid economic and social development, and this has led to an increased interest in global education (Marginson, 2011). As a result, universities in China are now enrolling more and more international students (Li, 2014). This presents a unique opportunity to explore the integration of traditional Chinese aesthetic culture with the global mindedness of students.

A distinctive viewpoint on beauty and art is offered by traditional Chinese aesthetics, which is rooted in philosophy and boasts a lengthy historical lineage. The fundamental principles are frequently based on Confucianism and Daoism, highlighting the importance of harmony (Rychin et al., 2019), introspection (Yang & Jiyong, 2022), and a bond with the natural world (Tang & Jing, 2022). Traditional art traditions often exalt brushwork, calligraphy, and topics derived from the natural environment (Yang & Jiyong, 2022). This emphasis on the natural environment goes beyond just portraying it; it embodies a concept of harmonious coexistence with nature (Tang & Jing, 2022). Through traditional art forms such as landscape painting and flower arranging, Chinese artists strive to capture the essence of nature and convey a sense of tranquility and balance. The intricate ink brushwork and meticulous attention to detail in these artworks reflect the deep connection between humans and the natural world in Chinese culture. By immersing themselves in the beauty of nature through art, practitioners of traditional Chinese art seek to cultivate a sense of inner peace and spiritual enlightenment. This approach to art not only serves as a creative expression but also as a pathway to personal growth and self-discovery. The cultural legacy of China forms the foundation of traditional Chinese aesthetic education, which includes a diverse range of disciplines and activities (Chen, 2008). Long-standing customs that reflect the values, convictions, and inventive representations of Chinese culture have influenced the educational system. The core of traditional Chinese aesthetic education is in the recognition and admiration of harmony, equilibrium, and elegance in many creative forms such as literature, painting, calligraphy, music, and architecture (Yang, 2022).

Thus, the Chinese educational system believes that traditional aesthetic education prepares students to identify themselves globally. In addition, by appreciating their own traditions, they become more likely to widen their minds in a global perspective. This belief is reflected in the efforts made to incorporate traditional Chinese art and aesthetics into the school curriculum, ensuring that students have the opportunity to learn about and appreciate their cultural heritage. By instilling a sense of pride and understanding of their own traditions, students are better equipped to engage with the world around them and contribute positively to a global society. Ultimately, the preservation and promotion of traditional Chinese art



not only enriches the lives of individuals, but also fosters a sense of unity and connection among people of different backgrounds and beliefs.

Developing a global perspective in pupils is essential in the present era of globalization. This trait comprises the cultivation of intercultural knowledge, skills, and attitudes to navigate a globally integrated society. Universities have a crucial responsibility in providing students with the information, skills, and attitudes they need to succeed in this intricate environment.

This study aims to investigate how traditional Chinese aesthetic culture is being integrated into the curriculum at a selected university in Henan, China. The study will also explore the attitudes of students towards traditional Chinese aesthetic culture and how it is shaping their global mindedness.

Literature Review

This research investigates how the selected university in Henan integrates traditional Chinese aesthetic culture with the development of global mindedness in its students. The study aims to explore how incorporating traditional Chinese art forms, such as calligraphy and painting, into the curriculum enhances students' understanding of different cultures and perspectives. By examining the university's approach to promoting global mindedness through the lens of Chinese aesthetics, this research seeks to provide valuable insights into effective strategies for fostering intercultural competence in higher education settings. Ultimately, the findings of this study could provide practical insights for developing innovative educational practices that bridge the gap between local cultural traditions and global awareness.

As a teacher, the researcher is motivated by a desire to enhance students' ability to navigate an increasingly interconnected world with sensitivity and respect for diverse viewpoints. By incorporating Chinese aesthetics into the curriculum, students will not only gain a deeper understanding of a rich cultural tradition but also develop the communication and collaboration skills needed to effectively engage across cultural boundaries. Ultimately, the goal is to empower students to become global citizens who can effectively address complex global challenges with creativity and empathy, contributing to a more interconnected and understanding world.

By examining these aspects, this research aims to contribute to a deeper understanding of how educational institutions can bridge the gap between cultural heritage and global citizenship. The findings can inform not only the selected university in Henan but also other institutions seeking to cultivate well-rounded individuals who are both grounded in their cultural traditions and prepared to engage with the wider world.

Statement of problems

This study examines the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education into higher education at a university in Henan, China, aiming to identify potential disparities and areas for improvement. Therefore, it sought to answer the following questions:

1. What is the profile of the respondents in terms of:

1.1. Sex;

1.2. Grade;

1.3. Program?

2. What is the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education in the selected university:

3. Is there a significant difference in the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education in the selected university when profile is used as test factor?

4. What is level of global mindedness of university students:

5. Is there a significant difference in the level of global mindedness of university students when profile is used as test factor?

6. Is there a correlation between degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education of the university and level of global mindedness of the students?

7. Drawing on the findings of the study, what university engagement initiative can be proposed?

Significance of the Study

The study aims to investigate the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and its impact on the global-mindedness of students at a selected university in Henan, China. This addresses the significance of incorporating cultural elements into higher education curricula and examines how such integration influences students' perceptions, attitudes, and behaviors towards global issues.

Future Researchers. The study adds to the body of knowledge in the fields of education, cultural studies, and global citizenship. Researchers and scholars can build upon the findings to further explore related topics, develop theoretical frameworks, and conduct empirical investigations, thereby advancing understanding and informing future research directions in these areas.

Description of the Study Area:

In this study, a quantitative comparative correlational research design was employed to investigate the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and global-mindedness among university students in Henan, China. This research design was chosen for its ability to systematically examine relationships between variables, compare groups, and identify correlations, thereby providing valuable insights into the research questions and objectives.

The use of a comparative design was essential to assess differences in the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and levels of global-mindedness across different demographic groups within the university student

population. By comparing variables such as sex, grade, and program, this design enabled the identification of potential disparities and variations in cultural integration and global awareness among students with diverse backgrounds and characteristics.

Additionally, a correlational approach was employed to explore the relationship between the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and the level of global-mindedness among university students. This involved assessing the strength and direction of associations between variables such as sense of beauty, satisfaction of mind-heart, and world citizenship, providing insights into the interconnectedness of cultural education and global perspectives.

The adoption of a quantitative research design was justified by the need for systematic data collection and rigorous statistical analysis to examine the research questions objectively. By employing standardized measures and statistical techniques, this design allowed for the generation of quantitative data that could be analyzed to identify patterns, trends, and associations with a high degree of reliability and validity.

Furthermore, a comparative correlational design proved to be particularly well-suited for this study as it facilitated the exploration of complex relationships between multiple variables while also enabling comparisons between different groups or conditions. This design provided a comprehensive approach to investigating the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and global-mindedness, offering valuable insights for educational institutions, policymakers, and researchers who sought to promote cultural awareness and global citizenship among university students.

Locale of the Study

The study was carried out at a university in Henan Province. The University is a comprehensive public full-time general college approved by the Henan Provincial people's government and registered by the Ministry of Education. The university was founded in 1981. As of September 2023, the university has two campuses, the north and the south, with a campus area of 1.139 million square meters, a construction area of 498,900 square meters, teaching equipment worth 154 million yuan, and a library collection of more than 1.6 million volumes; It has 15 teaching departments, offering 56 specialties; There are 801 faculty members and more than 20,000 students at all levels, including 10,363 full-time college students.

Participants

For this study, a random sampling technique was employed to select participants from the student population of the selected a university in Henan, China. With a total student population of 20,000, the sample size was determined using a margin of error and confidence level appropriate for the research design. Based on calculations, a sample size of 377 students was selected to participate in the study.

Participants were recruited from various grade levels and academic programs within the university to ensure representation across different demographic groups. Inclusion criteria required participants to be enrolled as full-time students at the university. Participation in the study was voluntary, and students who met the eligibility criteria were invited to take part.

To ensure randomness and minimize bias, a systematic random sampling method was utilized to select participants from the student population. This approach involved selecting every *n*th student from a list of the university's student roster, where *n* was calculated based on the total student population and desired sample size.

Upon selection, potential participants received invitations to participate in the study, along with information about the research objectives, procedures, and ethical considerations. Informed consent was obtained from all participants prior to their involvement in the study, emphasizing their voluntary participation and confidentiality of their responses.

Instrument

The researcher-made instrument employed in this study encompassed three distinct sections, each tailored to measure specific constructs pertinent to the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education and the assessment of global mindedness among university students. The first section served to gather demographic data from participants, including their sex, grade, and program of study. Following this, the second segment was dedicated to evaluating the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education within the university context. It comprised six constructs: Sense of Beauty, Satisfaction of Mind-Heart, Satisfaction of Intellectual Intuition, Integration of Parts into Total System, Symbolism, and Simplicity. These constructs were assessed using Likert-type scales or structured questions, allowing respondents to express their perceptions regarding the incorporation of Chinese aesthetic principles into their academic environment. Lastly, the third section focused on gauging the level of global mindedness among university students, encompassing four key constructs: Acceptance of different cultures, Concern for global issues, Interconnectedness and peace, and Sense of world citizenship. Similar to the previous section, respondents provided their responses using Likert-type scales or structured questions, offering insights into their perspectives on global issues and their sense of global citizenship. Throughout the development of the instrument, rigorous validation procedures were implemented to ensure its validity and reliability. This involved consulting subject matter experts, conducting factor analysis for construct validity, and assessing internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha coefficient for reliability testing. As a result, the instrument was deemed robust and reliable for capturing the nuanced dimensions of Chinese traditional aesthetic education integration and global mindedness among university students.

Table 1. Profile of Respondents

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Sex	Male	160	42.4%
	Female	217	57.6%
Grade	1	75	19.9%

	2	69	18.3%
	3	142	37.7%
	4	91	24.1%
Program	Engineering and Technology	97	25.7%
	Language and Social Sciences	117	31.0%
	Business and Management	92	24.4%
	Arts and Sports	71	18.8%

The demographic profile of the respondents, as presented in Table 1, provides a comprehensive overview of their distribution across various categories, including sex, grade level, and program of study. An analysis of the data reveals significant insights into the composition of the sample population, which is essential for contextualizing subsequent findings.

Table 2. Assessment of the Respondents on the Degree of Integration of Chinese Traditional Aesthetic Education in the Selected University in Terms of Sense of Beauty

Indicator	Weighted Mean	Standard Deviation	Qualitative Description	Verbal Interpretation	Rank
1. I believe my education has refined my ability to perceive beauty, enhancing both my perception of and my receptiveness to aesthetic qualities in my environment.	2.90	1	Agree	Integrated	6
2. Courses at the university integrate discussions that challenge and expand my understanding of beauty in natural and artistic contexts.	2.97	0.83	Agree	Integrated	3
3. My learning experiences encourage me to connect aesthetically with various forms of art, fostering a deep appreciation that resonates with my personal experiences and imagination.	2.96	0.75	Agree	Integrated	4
4. The educational environment stimulates my aesthetic senses, allowing me to actively construct an inner appreciation of beauty.	2.99	0.81	Agree	Integrated	2
5. I find that my capacity to appreciate beauty is regularly engaged and developed through my coursework.	3.52	0.75	Strongly Agree	Highly Integrated	1
6. My university promotes an understanding of beauty that aligns with both Eastern and Western philosophical insights, enriching my global aesthetic perspective.	2.91	0.88	Agree	Integrated	5
Overall Mean	3.04	0.55	Agree	Integrated	

Legend: 3.51 – 4.00 (Strongly Agree-Highly Integrated); 2.51 – 3.50 (Agree- Integrated); 1.51 – 2.50 (Disagree-Slightly Integrated); 1.0-1.50 (Strongly Disagree-Not Integrated)

The assessment of the respondents on the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education in the selected university, specifically in terms of the sense of beauty, reveals insightful findings. The overall weighted mean is 3.04 with a standard deviation of 0.55, which qualitatively corresponds to "Agree" and is interpreted as "Integrated." This suggests that, on average, students perceive a satisfactory level of integration of aesthetic education within their university experience.

The standard deviations for most indicators are below 1, reflecting moderate agreement among respondents. The higher standard deviation in Indicator 1 points to a wider range of opinions, which may warrant further investigation to understand the underlying reasons for this variability.

In summary, the findings suggest that the university has successfully integrated Chinese traditional aesthetic education into its programs, effectively enhancing students' sense of beauty. The highest rating for coursework's impact underscores the strength of the academic offerings in fostering aesthetic appreciation. However, the variability in responses to certain indicators, such as the refinement of the ability to perceive beauty, highlights opportunities for the university to further enhance its educational strategies to ensure a more uniformly positive impact on all students.

Table 3. Assessment of the Respondents on the Degree of Integration of Chinese Traditional Aesthetic Education in the Selected University in Terms of Satisfaction of Mind-Heart

Indicator	Weighte	Standar	Qualitati	Verbal	Rank
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	d Mean	d Deviation	ve Descripti on	Interpre tation	
1. My academic program supports a balance between intellectual challenge and emotional well-being, contributing to my overall satisfaction in learning.	2.83	0.67	Agree	Integrated	6
2. The curriculum is designed to nurture my mind and heart, helping me develop a harmonious approach to personal and intellectual growth.	2.99	0.8	Agree	Integrated	2
3. I feel that my educational experiences cater to developing a sense of satisfaction that encompasses both cognitive and emotional aspects.	2.97	0.84	Agree	Integrated	3
4. There are ample opportunities within my courses to explore and resolve emotional dimensions of the academic content.	3.5	0.77	Agree	Integrated	1
5. My learning process at the university fosters a deep, intuitive connection with the subjects I study, affecting both my mind and heart.	2.84	0.84	Agree	Integrated	4.5
6. The university provides mechanisms that encourage students to cultivate their emotional intelligence alongside intellectual rigor.	2.84	1.09	Agree	Integrated	4.5
Overall Mean	3.00	0.43	Agree	Integrated	

Legend: 3.51 – 4.00 (Strongly Agree-Highly Integrated); 2.51 – 3.50 (Agree- Integrated); 1.51 – 2.50 (Disagree-Slightly Integrated); 1.0-1.50 (Strongly Disagree-Not Integrated)

The assessment of the respondents on the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education in terms of the satisfaction of the mind and heart reveals a generally positive perception, with an overall weighted mean of 3.00 and a standard deviation of 0.43. This indicates that the respondents "Agree" that their university experience integrates intellectual and emotional satisfaction, interpreted as "Integrated."

This table provides an assessment of the respondents' perceptions regarding the degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education in the university, particularly in terms of the Satisfaction of Mind-Heart. Philosopher Li Zehou's framework, which defines three levels of artistic experience—sense of beauty, satisfaction of mind-heart, and satisfaction of intellectual intuition—offers valuable insight into understanding these results. According to Li, these levels emphasize both the emotional and intellectual engagement with art, underscoring the depth and complexity of Chinese aesthetic philosophy.

Results and Discussion

Summary

1. Profile of Respondents. The respondents' profile highlights a balanced representation of sexes, with females slightly outnumbering males. This gender distribution allows for nuanced insights into the perception of both groups regarding aesthetic education and global mindedness. Grade level analysis reveals a significant presence of upper-year students, particularly from Grade 3, suggesting that more advanced students may have greater exposure to or awareness of the integration of aesthetic education. The academic program distribution shows notable representation from Language and Social Sciences, followed by other fields such as Engineering and Technology, Business and Management, and Arts and Sports. This diversity ensures that findings reflect a wide range of academic perspectives, contributing to a comprehensive understanding of the integration of aesthetic education and its impact.

2. Degree of Integration of Chinese Traditional Aesthetic Education. Respondents generally perceive the integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education as effective, with an overall mean falling within the "Agree" and "Integrated" range. The dimension of Sense of Beauty ranks highest, indicating that students appreciate the emphasis on aesthetic values in fostering an understanding of beauty. Satisfaction of Mind-Heart also scores highly, suggesting that emotional and intellectual balance is effectively addressed through the curriculum. However, lower scores in Symbolism and Simplicity point to areas where the integration may feel less pronounced or impactful. The findings imply that while the university has successfully integrated aesthetic education, a more focused effort in addressing the less emphasized constructs could enhance overall student perceptions.

3. Differences in the Degree of Integration Based on Profile Variables. When analyzed by sex, grade level, and academic program, there are no statistically significant differences in the perceived degree of integration of Chinese traditional aesthetic education. This uniformity suggests that the university delivers its aesthetic education consistently across different demographic groups. The lack of significant differences by sex indicates that both males and females have comparable experiences of aesthetic education. Similarly, grade level differences are negligible, suggesting that students from varying academic stages perceive the integration similarly. Lastly, the uniformity across academic programs

highlights the inclusive and equitable nature of the university's approach to embedding Chinese traditional aesthetic principles in its curriculum.

4. Level of Global Mindedness of the Students. The respondents exhibit a moderate level of global mindedness, with an overall mean indicating that global mindedness is "Evident" among students. The dimension of Interconnectedness and Peace ranks highest, reflecting students' recognition of the importance of global cooperation and harmony. Care for World Problems also scores highly, indicating awareness of global challenges and a willingness to contribute to their resolution. However, World Citizenship and Acceptance of Different Cultures rank slightly lower, suggesting that while students are aware of and engaged with global issues, there may be opportunities to deepen their commitment to global ethics and cultural openness. These findings reflect the university's efforts to cultivate global awareness while pointing to areas for further enhancement.

Conclusion

1. An accurate portrayal of student opinions is ensured by the wide demographic profile of respondents, which includes a balanced gender participation, a large presence of upper-year students, and a variety of academic programs. A firm basis is provided by this diversity for the purpose of examining perceptions of aesthetic education and global mindedness. It is important to note that the findings reflect the experiences of a wide range of pupils.

2. The university has successfully integrated Chinese traditional aesthetic education, as evidenced by positive perceptions across all dimensions. High scores in Sense of Beauty and Satisfaction of Mind-Heart demonstrate that students recognize the curriculum's impact on fostering aesthetic values and emotional-intellectual balance. However, areas such as Symbolism and Simplicity reveal opportunities for enhancement, suggesting that further refinement in these constructs could elevate the overall effectiveness of the integration.

3. The findings reveal no significant differences in the perceived degree of integration of aesthetic education based on sex, grade level, or academic program. This consistency underscores the university's success in delivering an equitable aesthetic education experience to all students. Regardless of demographic variables, students perceive a uniform integration of aesthetic principles, indicating that the approach is inclusive and effectively standardized.

4. Students exhibit a moderate level of global mindedness, with dimensions such as Interconnectedness and Peace and Care for World Problems scoring highest. These results highlight students' awareness of global challenges and the importance of collaboration and harmony. However, relatively lower scores in World Citizenship and Acceptance of Different Cultures suggest the need to deepen students' engagement with global ethics and cultural openness.

5. The uniformity in the level of global mindedness across sex, grade level, and academic program underscores the university's equitable promotion of global values. Except for a minor overall difference by sex, the findings demonstrate that students, regardless of demographic group, share similar levels of global awareness and engagement. This reflects the institution's effectiveness in fostering a universally accessible global education.

The correlation between the integration of aesthetic education and global mindedness reveals that certain constructs, such as Sense of Beauty and Satisfaction of Mind-Heart, significantly contribute to fostering global citizenship and awareness. However, the lack of a significant overall correlation indicates the need for a more deliberate alignment of aesthetic education with global themes. Integrating aesthetic principles with global ethics, sustainability, and cross-cultural understanding offers a pathway to strengthen this relationship, enriching both students' aesthetic appreciation and their global perspective.

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