

Original Article

Cultural and artistic advancement in Ho Chi Minh city: reconstructing art education in the era of global integration

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the cultural and artistic development of art education in Ho Chi Minh City, Vietnam, within the context of international integration. This study aims to analyze the multidimensional factors, including geocultural, economic, human resources, and creative motivation, that influence the evolution of the city's art education framework. Employing a mixed-methods approach, the research integrates both qualitative and quantitative data collected through surveys and interviews involving 96 students and 4 lecturers at the Ho Chi Minh City University of Fine Arts. Results reveal that public perception, government support, and institutional capacity significantly shape the educational and cultural outcomes of art programs. The findings also underscore the critical interplay between artistic identity, pedagogy, and globalization, highlighting art education as a mechanism for cultural preservation and international collaboration. Moreover, the research emphasizes the transformative role of formative assessments and growth mindset strategies in enhancing student engagement and creative potential. The study concludes that a comprehensive and contextually grounded approach to art education can serve as a strategic vehicle for Vietnam's cultural diplomacy and global integration.

Keywords: Cultural development, Art education, International integration, Ho Chi Minh City, Visual arts, Educational reform

Introduction

Ho Chi Minh City (HCMC), Vietnam's largest metropolis, has become a vibrant cultural hub where traditional Vietnamese art forms intersect with contemporary global influences. The city's rich artistic heritage, coupled with rapid urbanization and economic reforms, has placed it at the forefront of the nation's cultural evolution [1].

Since the implementation of the renovation policy in the late 20th century, Vietnam has experienced significant transformations in its socio-economic landscape. These changes have profoundly impacted the art sector, leading to increased exposure to international art movements and integration of global artistic

practices into local contexts [2]. Consequently, art education in HCMC has undergone a paradigm shift, embracing new pedagogical approaches that balance the preservation of cultural identity with the demands of globalization.

Despite these advancements, challenges persist in aligning art education with international standards while maintaining the unique cultural narratives intrinsic to Vietnamese art. Issues such as limited resources, curriculum development, and the need for professional development among educators highlight the complexities of this endeavor [3-5].

This study aims to analyze the multi-faceted factors influencing art education in HCMC, focusing on cultural, economic, human resource, and motivational aspects. By examining these elements, this research seeks to provide insights into how art education can evolve to support Vietnam's cultural development and its integration into the global art community.

Materials and Methods

Research design

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This study employed an explanatory sequential mixed-methods design that integrated both quantitative and qualitative approaches to comprehensively investigate the factors influencing art education in HCMC within the context of international integration. The quantitative phase involved a structured survey distributed to a targeted group of participants, followed by a qualitative phase that included semi-structured interviews to gain deeper insight into the initial findings.

Participants

The study sample comprised 96 students and 4 faculty members from the Ho Chi Minh City University of Fine Arts. Participants were purposefully selected to reflect a range of academic disciplines, experience levels, and socioeconomic backgrounds within the institution. All participants provided informed consent, and ethical approval for the study was granted by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam (reference no. 17/2021/TT-BGDDT).

Data collection

Data collection was conducted in two phases. In the first phase, participants completed a structured survey using Google Forms. The survey instrument included both closed- and open-ended questions designed to assess perceptions of art education, motivation, institutional support, and cultural engagement. The second phase consisted of semi-structured interviews with a sub-sample of the original participants, focusing on their personal experiences, pedagogical reflections, and perspectives on art integration.

The survey tool and interview guide were developed based on established instruments from prior research on motivation and educational assessment [6-8]. Minor modifications were made to adapt these instruments to the Vietnamese context and the specific focus of this study.

Data analysis

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, including frequency distributions and percentages, to identify trends and common responses. Responses to Likert-scale questions were summarized and visualized in tables. Qualitative data from open-ended survey items and interviews were analyzed using a thematic analysis framework proposed by Braun and Clarke (2006) [9-11]. This involved initial coding, theme identification, and iterative refinement to capture nuanced insights into the participants' experiences and viewpoints.

Reliability and validity

To ensure the validity of the findings, data triangulation was employed by comparing the survey results with the interview narratives. The reliability of the survey instrument was assessed through a pilot test with 10 participants, resulting in minor linguistic adjustments to ensure clarity and cultural relevance.

Results and Discussion

This section presents an integrated analysis of the survey and interview data, structured across seven key thematic domains (**Table 1**), derived from the design of the survey instrument. The aim is to evaluate how these factors contribute to the development of art education in HCMC, Vietnam, within the context of international integration.

Cultural significance and perceptions of art education

As shown in **Table 2**, survey responses indicated overwhelming agreement on the cultural importance of art education. All respondents (100%) affirmed that the arts significantly influence Vietnam's aesthetic development and artistic practices. Additionally, 99% of the respondents agreed that art education aligns with Vietnamese cognitive and cultural traditions. These findings highlight the entrenched role of art in reinforcing cultural identity, supporting earlier arguments that emphasize the importance of visual education in nurturing national consciousness in rapidly evolving societies [12-14].

Table 1. Thematic categories and corresponding survey questions on art education in Vietnam

No.	Topics covered	Survey questions
1	The influence of Vietnam's arts education on teachers and students	1-3
2	Public attitudes toward art education	4-9
3	Professional aspects of artistic practice	11-13
4	Development prospects for art education	14-17
5	Cultural dimensions of art education	18-23
6	Quality evaluation of art education	24-27
7	Financial and institutional support for success	28-31

Note: These groupings were used to guide both quantitative analysis and qualitative interpretation of survey data.

Public engagement and perceived professionalism

Public attitudes toward the art were similarly positive. A large majority (88%) of the respondents acknowledged state interest in art education, and 81% believed that Vietnamese art possesses a distinct cultural identity. However, only 36% rated the quality of national artworks as 70% or higher, revealing a disconnect between perceived value and perceived output quality. Moreover, while 91% viewed the art as effective and 87% as professional, there was a shared concern about the need for improvement in exhibition quality and visibility. This underscores the need for improved public outreach, institutional support, and strategies to raise professional standards across the art sector [15-17].

Institutional limitations and reform needs

Respondents identified key limitations to achieving professionalism in art education: 50% cited limited artistic ability, 32% pointed to inadequate social recognition, and 20% mentioned insufficient funding. These challenges reflect the systemic constraints commonly found in the cultural education systems of developing nations, where creative disciplines often lack sustainable investment or clear career pathways [18, 19]. These issues highlight the urgent need for better policy alignment between cultural aspirations and educational practices.

Evolving expectations for exhibitions and artistic platforms

Regarding the current state of art exhibitions in Vietnam, only 30% of respondents considered them to be of high quality, while 56% called for new models. These findings indicate growing dissatisfaction with conventional curatorial formats and a call for innovation that aligns with global trends in participatory and community-based exhibition practices [20, 21]. Updating exhibition strategies could also enhance public appreciation and expand international visibility.

Table 2. Key survey results on the perceptions and challenges of arts education

Question theme	Key finding	% Agreement
The influence of the arts on culture and cognition	Arts enhance aesthetics and cognition	99–100%
State support and identity in Vietnamese art	Positive engagement and cultural identity	81–88%
Barriers to professionalism	Skill, recognition, and funding limitations	50%, 32%, and 20%
Need for new exhibition models	Reform needed	56%
Arts education's role in global integration	Positive outlook	90–96%

Development potential and curriculum innovation

A strong majority (86%) supported expanding art education into new sectors, and 90% endorsed integrating contemporary development trends. Moreover, 96% of the respondents believed that Vietnamese arts could play a role in international integration. These insights were reinforced in interviews with faculty members who emphasized the need for curriculum reform that reflects national values and global perspectives. Teachers advocated for integrating growth-oriented learning models and fostering creative autonomy through formative assessment [22–24].

Financial support and strategic planning

Planning and financing have become central to the quality and sustainability of art education. While 98% supported macro- and micro-level arts planning and 100% recognized the importance of professional art education in schools, only 77% believed that art currently meets public needs. These findings indicate both institutional ambition and execution gaps and reinforce the need for cohesive policies, professional development, and equitable funding mechanisms [25, 26].

Broader educational impact

Finally, the teacher interviews and open-ended responses demonstrated that art education positively impacts not only artistic development but also student engagement and community participation. As affirmed by prior research, formative assessment approaches and student-centered learning can elevate motivation, deepen understanding, and promote long-term academic growth [27–29]. These pedagogical strategies, when coupled with inclusive cultural programming, may catalyze broader societal engagement.

Overall, this study highlights the complex but optimistic landscape of art education in HCMC. While cultural value and institutional support are evident, major challenges remain in professionalization, exhibition quality, and resource distribution. A well-coordinated policy framework that promotes inclusive education, artistic innovation, and cross-cultural collaboration is essential. With strategic investment and curricular reform, art education in Vietnam can serve as both a cultural foundation and a platform for international engagement.

Conclusion

This study examined the multifaceted relationship between cultural, institutional, and pedagogical factors and their influence on art education in HCMC within the framework of international integration. The findings revealed that while art education in Vietnam is broadly supported and culturally valued, its development is constrained by limitations in professional training, public recognition, and financial resources.

This study confirms that art education plays a critical role in shaping national identity, promoting aesthetic literacy, and supporting student motivation. However, its long-term success depends more on cultural endorsement. Strategic investments in teacher training, educational infrastructure, and innovative exhibition practices are essential. Moreover, fostering international exchange while maintaining cultural authenticity remains a key challenge for Vietnam's arts sector.

To fully realize the potential of art education as a driver of cultural diplomacy and inclusive development, policymakers must bridge the gap between policy intent and institutional execution. This calls for coherent planning at both macro and micro levels, sustained financial support, and curriculum reforms that integrate traditional values with global competencies.

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Ethics statement: This study was conducted in full compliance with institutional ethical standards and was approved by the Ministry of Education and Training of Vietnam under protocol number 17/2021/TT-BGDDT. All participants provided informed consent before participation, and data were collected and managed following ethical research practices.

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