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Research on Practical Strategies of Infusing Students' Souls with Aesthetic Education under the Background of Five Education Integration

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Abstract: Against the backdrop of the "Integration of the Five Educations" becoming the core orientation of education reform in the new era, Aesthetic Education, as an important carrier for "infiltrating the soul and nourishing the spirit", has faced practical dilemmas that call for targeted strategies to nurture students' souls. This article is based on policy requirements such as the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era" (Jiao Yi Ti [2020] No. 6) issued by the Ministry of Education in October 2020, combined with literature research and real practice cases in primary and secondary schools such as Beijing Dongsi Jiutiao Primary School and Hangzhou Fenghuang Primary School in Zhejiang, to explore practical strategies for infiltrating students' hearts with Aesthetic Education. Research has found that by establishing the concept of Symbiosis of the five educations, constructing an interdisciplinary curriculum system, innovating experiential teaching, strengthening teacher collaboration, and improving developmental evaluation, the deep integration of Aesthetic Education with moral education, intellectual education, physical education, and labor education can be effectively achieved, promoting students' spiritual growth and comprehensive development. Research provides actionable path references for implementing the integration of five educations and deepening Aesthetic Education practices in primary and secondary schools.

Keywords: Integration of the Five Educations, Aesthetic Education, Spiritual Immersion, Practical Strategies, School Education.

1. Introduction

In October 2020, the Ministry of Education issued the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Aesthetic Education Work in Schools in the New Era" (Jiao Yi Ti [2020] No. 6), which clearly proposed to "incorporate Aesthetic Education into the entire process of talent cultivation at all levels and types of schools, and run through all stages of school education", elevating Aesthetic Education to the strategic height of coordinated development of the five educations. However, in the current practice of Aesthetic Education in schools, there is still a tendency towards "marginalization" - some schools equate Aesthetic Education with artistic skill training and ignore its "nourishing heart" function; Or conducting Aesthetic Education solely in art classes leads to disconnection from the guidance of moral values, the exploration of intellectual education knowledge, the coordination of physical and mental health in sports, and the practical creation of labor education, making it difficult to achieve the goal of "beautifying people with Aesthetic Education". According to a survey conducted by China Education Daily in the spring of 2024, although art classes are required to be offered in some urban primary and secondary schools, nearly 20% of the class hours are occupied by subjects such as mathematics and Chinese, and teaching mostly stays at the level of painting and copying, and singing songs, failing to guide students to grasp the emotional and cultural implications embedded in the works. According to data from the Ministry of Education in 2024, 38% of rural schools still do not integrate Aesthetic Education into other subject teaching. This dual predicament in urban and rural practice further underscores the urgency of empirical research [1]. Based on this, this article combines the policy requirements of the Ministry of Education and typical cases of primary and secondary schools in Beijing, Zhejiang and other places to explore specific strategies for Aesthetic Education to infiltrate the soul from the perspective of the integration of the five educations. This is not only a necessary requirement for responding to national education policies, but also a practical need to solve the current difficulties in Aesthetic Education practice and promote students' spiritual growth. It has important theoretical supplements and practical guidance significance.

2. Establish the Aesthetic Education Concept of "Symbiosis of the Five Educations" and Anchor the Core Goal of Spiritual Immersion

The primary task of Aesthetic Education in the context of the integration of the five educations is to dispel the cognitive misconceptions of "subordination of Aesthetic Education" and "skill supremacy", and establish the concept of "symbiosis of the five educations" - viewing Aesthetic Education as a "spiritual bond" connecting the other four educations, with the core goal of "infiltrating the soul" rather than simply imparting skills. According to the "Overall Plan for Deepening the Reform of Education Evaluation in the New Era" (Jiao Zheng [2020] No. 1) issued by the Ministry of Education in October 2020, which aims to eliminate the emphasis on scores and further education, schools need to reposition the value of Aesthetic Education: through Aesthetic Education, students' aesthetic perception, emotional empathy, and spiritual creativity are cultivated [2], thereby nourishing the "goodness" of moral education, the "truth" that supports intellectual education, the "health" of collaborative sports, and the "practicality" that empowers Labor Education [3].

In actual education, the concept of "Aesthetic Education to nourish the heart" can be conveyed through special training for faculty and staff, home-school co-education seminars, and other forms. For example, Fenghuang Primary School in Hangzhou, Zhejiang Province, as a local pilot school for the Integration of the Five Educations, regularly holds three "Aesthetic Education Practice of Five Education Integration" seminars every semester. Chinese language teachers share "The Beauty of Imagery and Moral Cultivation in the Book of Songs", while science teachers combine school-based curriculum to explore "The Beauty of Form and Rational Thinking in Chemical Crystallization Experiments", guiding teachers to break down disciplinary barriers and clearly incorporate "Spiritual Immersion" into the teaching plan objectives of each subject. The school also often holds "Life Aesthetic Education Parent Class". Last time, the theme was "Transforming Waste Materials into Aesthetic Ornaments". Parents and children used cardboard boxes and bottle caps to make small table lamps together, and the teacher guided them while saying "Aesthetics is not about buying expensive things, it's about discovering the beauty of ordinary things". Some parents said after class that "I came to accompany my children to pinch, cut, and trim, but also to nourish their hearts". At the same time, the school has created the "Fengming Green Plant Aesthetics Corner" and "Student Calligraphy and Painting Corridor", allowing students to observe plant growth and appreciate peer works during breaks. This immersive environment transforms the concept of "Aesthetic Education moistening the heart" from teacher cognition to students' daily experiences.

3. Build an Interdisciplinary Integrated Aesthetic Education Curriculum System to Broaden the Path of Spiritual Immersion

Curriculum is the core carrier for Aesthetic Education to infiltrate the soul. It is necessary to break the limitation of "Aesthetic Education only exists in art courses" and build a three-level interdisciplinary Aesthetic Education system of "national curriculum+local curriculum+school-based curriculum", so that Aesthetic Education can naturally integrate into various educational and teaching scenarios [4]. According to the "Compulsory Education Art Curriculum Standards (2022 Edition)" released by the Ministry of Education in April 2022, which requires "strengthening the interconnection between disciplines and emphasizing the comprehensiveness of curriculum content", the focus is on exploring aesthetic elements in various disciplines, forming a curriculum pattern of "one subject leading multiple subjects, and multiple subjects integrating Aesthetic Education".

In the national curriculum, Chinese language can be combined with prose and poetry teaching to guide aesthetic perception. For example, when teaching Zhu Ziqing's "Spring", Beijing Normal University Affiliated Experimental Middle School designed the "Reading aloud and experiencing+campus spring search" activity. Students use words to record the tender sprouts and spring breeze they observe, and feel the beauty and vitality of nature through comparing text and real scenes; Mathematics can use geometric shapes to infuse formal beauty. When a teacher at a high school in Jinan analyzed the golden ratio of the Parthenon temple in ancient Greece, he asked students to draw a scale diagram using a compass to intuitively experience logical aesthetics; Sports can be integrated with dance. Dongsi Jiutiao Primary School in Dongcheng District, Beijing, incorporates basic training in ethnic dance into its physical education classes. Its Golden Sail Dance Troupe's play "National Song of Joy" combines physical training with cultural inheritance, achieving the goal of "beauty for physical fitness and beauty for the heart".

The interdisciplinary integration of music in the national curriculum also highlights the "health attribute": a primary school in Shanghai has developed a "Music Emotion Perception Course" (a music+psychology interdisciplinary course), which is co-taught by music teachers and psychology teachers — first guiding students to compare and listen to "Ode to Joy" (major key, bright rhythm) and "Erquan Yingyue" (minor key, soothing melody), and encouraging students to draw a "music-emotion correspondence map"; then, combined with the neuroscientific basis of "music health", they explain the principle that "major melodies can stimulate dopamine secretion and enhance a sense of pleasure, while minor melodies are more likely to trigger emotional resonance to relieve negative emotions". After the course, many students reported that they would actively listen to "Jasmine Flower" to regulate their mood when feeling unhappy, truly making music aesthetic education a "practical tool for mental health".

At the local curriculum level, Heizhima Hutong Primary School in Xicheng District, Beijing has developed an intangible cultural heritage (ICH) Aesthetic Education course titled "Beijing Opera Facial Mask Painting"; Students learn about the meaning of colors (red represents loyalty and righteousness, white represents deceit), and combine historical stories to understand the values behind art [5]. In terms of school-based curriculum, Pingjiang Experimental School in Suzhou, Jiangsu Province offers a "Campus Plant Photography Class", where students use cameras to record flowers and plants throughout the four seasons, and teachers simultaneously explain composition aesthetics and plant growth knowledge, allowing for a deep integration of observation beauty and exploration truth.

4. Innovate the "Experiential Participation" Aesthetic Education Teaching Method to Deepen the Effect of Spiritual Immersion

The "immersion" characteristic of Aesthetic Education determines that it cannot rely on "indoctrination style" teaching, and requires innovating "experiential participation" approaches that enable students to undergo spiritual enlightenment through personal experience and active engagement. According to the requirements of the "Regulations on School Aesthetic Education Work" (Ministry of Education Order No. 13) issued by the Ministry of Education in 2002, which states that "schools should organize students to carry out rich and colorful extracurricular art activities and create a good atmosphere for Aesthetic Education", experiential Aesthetic Education can be promoted from two aspects: "situational creation" and "practical participation".

Specifically, the construction of off-campus experience scenes is crucial. Xiangming Middle School in Huangpu District, Shanghai organizes two art museum study tours every semester. Students appreciate Xu Beihong's "Running Horse" under the guidance of a guide from the Shanghai Art

Museum, and discuss the patriotic feelings in the work in combination with its historical background. Many students noted in their field trip journals: "I never realized such profound emotions are conveyed through ink and brush"; Tunxi Experimental Primary School in Mount Huangshan City, Anhui Province, used the resources of Xin'an River to carry out the activity of "autumn sketching". Students sat by the river to draw mountains and rivers, and teachers explained the techniques of "leaving blank" and ecological protection knowledge at the same time, so that the natural beauty and ecological civilization ideas can simultaneously infiltrate the soul [6]. Campus practical activities place more emphasis on full participation. Fangcaodi International School in Chaoyang District, Beijing held the "Textbook Drama Art Festival", where students adapted "The Five Heroes of Langya Mountain" and "The Little Hero Rain Comes" into plays. The prop group used waste materials to make sets (labor education), and the actors pondered the emotions of the characters (Aesthetic Education). Through reciting lines, they deepened their understanding of the text (intellectual education). This full process participation allows every child to achieve spiritual growth.

At the same time, a middle school in Haidian District, Beijing, has opened a "Campus Light Music Healing Workshop". During the lunch break every week, music teachers lead students to experience immersive soothing folk music such as "Autumn Moon over Pinghu" and "Fishing Boat Singing at Night", accompanied by gentle breathing rhythm guidance. The activity requires students to record their emotional states before and after participation: a student with pre-exam anxiety wrote in his/her log that "the vibrato of the guzheng flowed like a stream, and after listening to 'High Mountains and Flowing Water', his/her tightly clenched palms slowly loosened"; music teachers also combine the theory of "music health" to explain the scientific logic that "slow-paced melodies can reduce heart rate variability and alleviate the tension of the sympathetic nervous system", allowing students to perceive the beauty of music rhythm while mastering practical methods of using music to regulate emotions, truly realizing the dual value of "nourishing the heart with beauty and nourishing the body through music".

The Central Primary School in Shuanglong Town, Xixia County, Nanyang City, Henan Province has also innovated the "Family Aesthetic Education Task". Art teachers have designed a "Spring Observation Guide" to guide students in recording succulent growth and photographing snail crawling at home. The works are compiled into a "Family Aesthetic Education Cloud Exhibition Hall", extending beauty from campus to daily life scenes.

5. Build a "Multi-dimensional Collaborative" Team of Aesthetic Education Teachers to Solidify the Foundation of Spiritual Immersion

The quality of Aesthetic Education infiltrating the soul depends on the professional competence and collaborative ability of the teaching staff. Currently, some schools have the problem of "homogenization of Aesthetic Education teachers" - relying solely on art teachers to carry out Aesthetic Education is difficult to meet the needs of interdisciplinary integration [7]. According to data from the Ministry of Education in 2024, over 1200 Aesthetic Education teacher training sessions were held nationwide, covering 500,000 teachers, but the coverage rate of interdisciplinary training is still less than 40%. Therefore, it is necessary to build a multidimensional collaborative teaching team with "art teachers as the core, subject teachers as the support, and external experts as supplements" to provide human resources support for Spiritual Immersion.

Strengthening the integration ability of art teachers is the foundation. The Education Bureau of Nanshan District, Shenzhen, Guangdong Province organizes an annual "interdisciplinary Aesthetic Education training" and invites professors from South China Normal University to explain "color and painting expression in scientific experiments". As a result, art teachers at Nanshan Experimental School have developed a "crystal growth painting course" to guide science teachers in integrating Aesthetic Education into experimental classes [8]; Aesthetic Education training for subject teachers is also essential. Jingwu Road Middle School in Jinan City, Shandong Province, provides training on "Aesthetic Interpretation of Poetry" for Chinese language teachers. When teaching "Water Tune Songtou: When Will the Bright Moon Occur", teachers use guqin music to read aloud, allowing students to feel emotional beauty in rhythm; Labor education teachers provide training on "ceramic aesthetics" to guide students in making flower pots that are both practical and aesthetically pleasing. The introduction of off-campus resources can make up for shortcomings. Wuhou Experimental Middle School in Chengdu, Sichuan Province, cooperates with the Chengdu Intangible Cultural Heritage Expo Park and invites Zhang Yueming, an inheritor of paper cutting (a national ICH), to host an on-campus workshop. Students learn to cut the word "Fu", and Master Zhang tells the folk stories in Paper Cuttings at the same time. This teaching of "skill+culture" really brings traditional beauty into the heart. The construction of teacher ethics and style also needs to keep up. The story of Zhang Xiangjiang, a music teacher at Yangmei Middle School in Liuyang City, Hunan Province, is very inspiring. She worked tirelessly to coordinate professional teachers to support teaching across cities, formed a wind band, and her perseverance has helped rural children build confidence through music. This is the best way to teach by example.

It is worth noting that Teacher Zhang Xiangjiang deliberately prioritizes works with bright rhythms and positive emotions, such as "Sunshine Always After Wind and Rain" and "Song of the Young Pioneers", in the selection of wind music repertoire. After collaborating with the school's psychological department for a semester of follow-up, she found that the number of emotional distress consultations for rural children participating in the wind band decreased by 22% compared to before. Students who were originally shy and prone to bowing their heads gradually became more willing to take on vocal parts in the ensemble, and their physical relaxation level and eye contact frequency significantly improved. This is precisely the healthy empowerment effect of spiritual relaxation and social confidence through "group auditory resonance + rhythm coordination" in music aesthetic education, which also aligns with the core research paradigm of "music intervention to improve physical and mental state" in the field of "music health".

6. Establish an Aesthetic Education Evaluation Mechanism that Emphasizes Both Procedural and Developmental Aspects to Ensure the Quality of Spiritual Immersion

Traditional Aesthetic Education evaluation mainly focuses on "skill testing" and "grading of works", ignoring the process of students' spiritual growth and making it difficult to ensure the immersion effect of Aesthetic Education [9]. According to the requirements of "improving Aesthetic Education evaluation, strengthening process evaluation, and exploring value-added evaluation" in the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education Work in the New Era" issued by the Ministry of Education, it is necessary to establish an evaluation mechanism that emphasizes both process and development, and incorporate the effect of "Spiritual Immersion" into the evaluation core.

Process evaluation relies most realistically on the implementation of "growth records". The "Aesthetic Education Growth Portfolio" of No.1 Primary School in Kangbashi District in Ordos City, Inner Mongolia is very representative, which includes students' paintings, choir videos, as well as activity insights and peer comments. A child wrote after "Autumn Sketching": "Today I found that the patterns on ginkgo leaves look like small fans, and the sunlight shining on them is golden. It turns out there is so much beauty around me." This kind of text can directly reflect the change in aesthetic perception; In the class choir competition, teachers will record students' participation and cooperation performance, such as the progress details from "not daring to speak up to actively leading the singing", which can better reflect spiritual growth than simply scoring. Developmental evaluation should set aside "uniform standards" and focus on changes in participation attitudes for students with weak artistic foundations. For example, Wang Kuan, a walking teacher at Shuanglong Township Primary School in Pengshui County, Guangzhou, awarded the "Courage Award" to students who have never drawn, encouraging them to boldly write; For students with special talents, creativity is emphasized [10]. For example, Beijing Normal University Affiliated Experimental Middle School encourages art students to create comics with the theme of "carbon neutrality" and assesses their capacity to integrate social reflections into artistic creation. Multiple evaluation subjects are also important. Dongsi Jiutiao Primary School in Dongcheng District, Beijing has designed a "Family Aesthetic Education Observation Form", in which parents record their children's behaviors such as tidying up their desks and enjoying music at home. Some parents have given feedback that "their children now actively say that the sunset is beautiful and teach us how to see the shape of clouds". This feedback from life best reflects the nourishing effect of Aesthetic Education.

7. Conclusion

Under the background of the Integration of the Five Educations, infiltrating students' hearts with Aesthetic Education is an important way to implement the fundamental task of "cultivating morality and nurturing talents". This article combines the public policies of the Ministry of Education (such as the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving School Aesthetic Education in the New Era") with real practical cases of primary and secondary schools in Beijing Dongsi Jiutiao Primary School, Hangzhou Fenghuang Primary School in Zhejiang, and Xiangming Middle School in Shanghai, and concludes that effective practical strategies need to form a closed loop around "concept curriculum method teacher evaluation": clarify the goal of Aesthetic Education to nourish the heart with the concept of "symbiosis of the five educations", broaden the path of Spiritual Immersion with "interdisciplinary curriculum", deepen the effect of Spiritual Immersion with "experiential teaching", consolidate the foundation of Spiritual Immersion with "collaborative teachers", and ensure the quality of Spiritual Immersion with "developmental evaluation". These strategies are all derived from real educational practices. After the implementation of relevant strategies in Kangbashi District, Inner Mongolia in 2024, the proficiency rate of artistic literacy among primary and secondary school students has risen by 37 percentage points over three years, confirming their operability and effectiveness. They can effectively solve the problem of the current separation between Aesthetic Education and other four educations, and the emphasis on skills over the mind, promoting students' spiritual growth in aesthetic perception, emotional empathy, spiritual creation, and ultimately achieving the coordinated development of the five educations.

In the future, school Aesthetic Education practice needs to further integrate with the needs of the times. For example, Kangbashi District in Inner Mongolia has built an Aesthetic Education cloud platform containing 32,000 digital exhibits, integrating the resources of the Palace Museum's "Digital Cultural Relics Library" for students to study online; The design of the "Dance+Technology" play by Beijing Dance Academy Affiliated Middle School, which uses light and shadow technology to interpret traditional culture, is worth learning from. At the same time, it is necessary to continue collecting feedback through questionnaire surveys and student symposiums. For example, Fenghuang Primary School in Hangzhou, Zhejiang conducts a "Voice of Aesthetic Education" survey every semester, adjusts course content based on student suggestions, and makes Aesthetic Education truly meet the needs of the soul, becoming an important force in nourishing students' spiritual world and promoting comprehensive development.

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