

Research on High-Quality Construction and Practical Paths of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Applied Undergraduate Universities in Jiangsu Province

Fei Ruan¹, Wenjuan Chen²

¹School of Literature and Law, Wuxi Taihu University, Wuxi 214064, China

²Academic Affairs Office, Wuxi Taihu University, Wuxi 214064, China

ABSTRACT

Based on relevant national and Ministry of Education policy documents, this article takes applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu Province as the research object. By combining the educational reform practices in these universities, and through objective survey data and analysis, this article delves into the current status, existing problems, and their causes of aesthetic education teaching material construction in applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu Province. It proposes practical paths such as strengthening top-level design, improving teaching material quality, perfecting evaluation systems, reinforcing teacher development, and promoting digitalization construction, with the aim of enhancing students' aesthetic literacy and innovative capabilities. This research provides valuable references for the high-quality development of aesthetic education textbooks in applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu Province.

KEYWORDS

Jiangsu; Applied undergraduate universities; Aesthetic education textbooks; High-quality construction; Practical paths

1 Research Background

In recent years, the Ministry of Education has successively issued relevant documents, clearly emphasizing the importance of humanities literacy and aesthetic ability in higher education. Jiangsu, as an economically and educationally developed province, faces new challenges in the construction of aesthetic education textbooks during the transformation process of its many applied undergraduate universities.

The nation has attached great importance to aesthetic education, viewing it as a crucial path to enhancing students' comprehensive quality, fostering innovative spirits, and cultivating aesthetic abilities. President Xi Jinping has repeatedly stressed the significance of aesthetic education, noting that "Aesthetic education is about education in aesthetics, sentiment, and the soul. It also enriches imagination and fosters a sense of innovation, enhancing aesthetic literacy, cultivating sentiments, nourishing the soul, and stimulating innovative creativity"[1]. The Ministry of Education has also successively issued a series of policy documents to promote the in-depth development of aesthetic education work.

In March 2019, the Ministry of Education issued the "Opinions on Effectively Strengthening Aesthetic Education in Institutions of Higher Learning in the New Era," which explicitly stated the need to "strengthen the construction and management of aesthetic education textbooks, improve

the aesthetic education teaching material system, and promote the high-quality development of aesthetic education textbooks in institutions of higher learning"[2]. This document provides clear policy guidance and specific requirements for the construction of aesthetic education textbooks in institutions of higher learning.

2 Construction and Development Status of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Applied Undergraduate Universities in Jiangsu Province

2.1 Overall Overview

As a prominent educational province, Jiangsu has made remarkable progress in the construction of aesthetic education textbooks in its applied undergraduate universities. In recent years, with the increasing national emphasis on aesthetic education, universities in Jiangsu have actively responded to policy calls, increased investments, innovated mechanisms, and strived to improve the quality and level of aesthetic education textbooks, exhibiting characteristics of "beyond aesthetics" and "comprehensive aesthetics"[3]. According to survey data from multiple applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu Province, the coverage rate of aesthetic education courses reaches 85%.

2.2 Construction and Development Status of Textbooks

2.2.1 Quantity and Types of Textbooks

Based on research conducted in multiple applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu Province, these universities have currently developed and put into use over 20 types of aesthetic education textbooks, covering various art categories such as music, fine arts, dance, drama, film, and television. Among them, music-related textbooks account for the highest proportion, reaching 45%, followed by fine arts materials, accounting for 25%. Furthermore, some universities have combined local characteristics to develop aesthetic education textbooks with regional cultural features, such as Jiangnan silk and bamboo music and Suzhou garden art, further enriching the content of aesthetic education textbooks.

2.2.2 Usage of Textbooks

In terms of teaching material usage, survey data indicates that the majority of applied undergraduate universities have incorporated aesthetic education textbooks into their teaching plans and used them as essential teaching resources for compulsory or elective courses. Meanwhile, more than half of the students report that through studying aesthetic education textbooks, they have gained a deeper understanding and appreciation of art, significantly enhancing their aesthetic abilities.

2.2.3 Satisfaction Survey of Textbooks

To further understand students' satisfaction with aesthetic education textbooks, we conducted a questionnaire survey. The results show that approximately 67% of students are satisfied or very satisfied with the currently used aesthetic education textbooks, believing that they are rich in content, diverse in form, and easy to understand. However, 20% of students expressed some dissatisfaction with the textbooks, primarily focusing on issues such as the timeliness of content, integration with their majors, and practical operational aspects.

2.2.4 Innovation and Practice of Textbooks

In terms of innovation and practice, applied undergraduate universities in Jiangsu actively explore new ideas and methods. Some universities have collaborated with local art groups to jointly develop a set of aesthetic education textbooks incorporating local opera elements and introduced opera performance practice sessions into their teaching, achieving remarkable results. Additionally, some universities have utilized modern information technology to develop digital aesthetic education teaching material platforms, realizing a combined online and offline teaching model, further enhancing students' learning experience and outcomes.

3 Issues and Analysis of the Construction of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu Applied Undergraduate Colleges

3.1 Existing Issues

3.1.1 Uneven Quality of Textbooks

Some aesthetic education textbooks are outdated, monotonous in form, lacking in innovation and a sense of the times, making it difficult to meet the diverse needs of students. Additionally, some materials lack rigorous academic support and practical verification during their compilation process, resulting in low-quality textbooks.

3.1.2 Insufficient Integration with Professional Courses

Aesthetic education textbooks tend to be disconnected from professional courses, lacking interdisciplinary integration awareness and practice. This leads to difficulties in effectively infiltrating and extending aesthetic education within professional teaching, thereby affecting the effectiveness of aesthetic education.

3.1.3 Imperfect Evaluation System

Currently, the evaluation system for aesthetic education textbooks is incomplete, lacking scientific and objective evaluation criteria and methods. This results in subjectivity and arbitrariness in assessing the quality of textbooks, making it difficult to accurately reflect their actual level and application value.

3.2 Analysis of the Causes of the Issues

3.2.1 Insufficient Attention

In the current educational system of Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges, the construction of aesthetic education textbooks generally suffers from insufficient attention. The root cause lies in the fact that educational decision-makers and administrators, faced with limited resources and extensive educational needs, often allocate their primary efforts and funds to seemingly more "urgent" areas such as science and engineering majors and vocational skills training. Aesthetic education courses are relatively marginalized, leading to less frequent and lower-quality updates and improvements in their textbooks compared to other disciplines. Moreover, due to traditional educational concepts, the value of aesthetic education has not been fully recognized and promoted, with many still regarding it as non-mainstream or additional educational content, further exacerbating the neglect of aesthetic education teaching material construction[4].

3.2.2 Weak Faculty Strength

The weakness of faculty strength is a crucial issue that cannot be ignored in the construction of aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu applied undergraduate colleges. The reasons behind this phenomenon are complex and diverse. Firstly, due to historical and cultural factors, the importance attached to aesthetic education by society is insufficient, leading to a relative decline in the size of the aesthetic education faculty in universities, which lacks attractiveness and competitiveness. Secondly, the existing teacher training and recruitment mechanisms fail to effectively incentivize outstanding artistic talents to enter the education field. Limited exchanges between the art and education sectors prevent the full exploitation of potential teacher resources. Furthermore, universities often prioritize funding for science and engineering research and equipment upgrades over humanities and social sciences, especially aesthetic education, further exacerbating the shortage of faculty strength.

3.2.3 Insufficient Cooperation and Exchange Among Universities

An ideal educational ecosystem should promote resource sharing and knowledge complementarity, yet in reality, universities remain relatively closed in terms of textbook development and teaching resources, with few cross-institutional collaboration projects. This situation partly stems from historical factors, where the competitive relationship among universities outweighs the cooperative one, especially when funding is limited, and each university tends to develop and utilize educational resources independently. Secondly, the absence of effective regional educational collaboration platforms physically and virtually restricts the circulation and sharing of educational resources. Furthermore, the administrative departments of education lack clear policies to promote collaboration and innovation among applied undergraduate colleges, leading to a lack of policy guidance and support for cooperation among universities.

4 Practical Pathways for High-Quality Construction of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu's Applied Undergraduate Universities

4.1 Strengthening Top-Down Design

4.1.1 Overall Development Plan of Aesthetic Education

The reinforcement of top-down design necessitates education authorities and university leaders to adopt a visionary approach, elevating aesthetic education to a strategic level within the overall development plan of institutions.

The pivotal role of aesthetic education in fostering students' holistic development, enhancing humanistic literacy, and bolstering innovative capabilities must be explicitly acknowledged. Concretely, this entails formulating a comprehensive plan for aesthetic education textbook development, establishing scientific and rational goal systems and evaluation criteria to ensure that textbook content not only aligns with aesthetic principles but also remains relevant to contemporary needs, thereby stimulating students' aesthetic interests and nurturing their abilities in aesthetic appreciation and creation.

4.1.2 Fostering Collaboration and Construction

Additionally, fostering cross-departmental collaboration, integrating internal and external aesthetic education resources, and constructing an open and shared textbook development

platform that attracts scholars, artists, and frontline teachers to collaborate is essential for forming a diversified and high-quality textbook authoring team. Furthermore, maintaining the continuity and dynamic adjustment of textbook construction based on the latest demands of educational reform and student feedback is vital to continually optimize content and structure, ensuring that aesthetic education textbooks evolve with the times and cater to the practical demands of applied undergraduate talent cultivation.

4.2 Enhancing Textbook Quality

4.2.1 Incorporating Quality Resources

Universities should proactively incorporate high-quality aesthetic education resources from both domestic and international sources, drawing on advanced textbook compilation experiences and teaching methodologies. By integrating these resources, the quality of aesthetic education textbook compilation and teaching standards can be elevated.

4.2.2 Strengthening Interdisciplinary Integration

The development of aesthetic education textbooks should prioritize interdisciplinary integration, infusing aesthetic elements into professional course instruction. By mining the aesthetic resources within professional courses, an organic and mutually reinforcing connection between aesthetic education and professional curricula can be achieved[5].

4.2.3 Innovating Textbook Content and Format

Aesthetic education textbooks must keep pace with the times, continually innovating their content and format. By introducing new technologies, methodologies, and concepts, these textbooks can better align with students' actual needs and learning characteristics.

4.3 Improving the Evaluation System

4.3.1 Establishing a Scientific Evaluation System

Universities should establish a scientific and objective evaluation system for aesthetic education textbooks, clarifying evaluation criteria and methodologies. Regular assessments and feedback on aesthetic education textbooks should be conducted to promptly identify issues and implement corrective measures.

4.3.2 Strengthening the Application of Evaluation Results

Universities should prioritize the application of evaluation results, using them as essential references for the development of aesthetic education textbooks. Through incentive mechanisms, outstanding textbook authoring teams or individuals should be recognized and rewarded, while specific improvement suggestions should be offered for identified issues, thereby driving continuous enhancements in the quality of aesthetic education textbooks.

4.4 Enhancing Faculty Development

4.4.1 Expanding Faculty Size

Universities should intensify recruitment efforts for aesthetic education teachers, expanding the

faculty to ensure sufficient support for aesthetic education courses. Meanwhile, attention should be paid to the diversity and professional backgrounds of teachers, introducing instructors with various artistic talents and practical experiences to enrich the diversity of aesthetic education teaching.

4.4.2 Improving Faculty Quality

Universities should strengthen the training and education of aesthetic education teachers, enhancing their professional qualifications and teaching capabilities. By regularly organizing seminars, workshops, domestic and international exchanges, and other activities, a platform for learning and communication should be provided to teachers, facilitating their knowledge updating and mindset transformation. Additionally, teachers should be encouraged to participate in textbook compilation and educational reform research in the field of aesthetic education, enhancing their practical and innovative capabilities in this domain.

4.5 Promoting Digitalization

4.5.1 Developing Digital Textbooks

Leveraging modern information technology, universities should develop digital textbooks for aesthetic education. By utilizing multimedia formats such as audio, video, animation, and virtual reality, the content representation of textbooks can be enriched, enhancing their fun and interactivity. Additionally, a digital textbook platform should be established to facilitate the sharing and updating of textbook resources, enabling students to learn anytime, anywhere.

4.5.2 Exploring Online Teaching Models

Relying on the digital textbook platform, universities should explore online teaching models for aesthetic education. Through live streaming, recorded courses, and online discussions, the spatiotemporal constraints of traditional classroom teaching can be broken, improving teaching efficiency and learning outcomes. Furthermore, leveraging big data and artificial intelligence technologies, students' learning behaviors and preferences can be analyzed, providing personalized learning plans and resource recommendations.

5 Research Conclusions and Limitations

Through an in-depth study of the current status, existing problems, and their causes in the development of aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu's application-oriented undergraduate universities, this article proposes practical paths including strengthening top-level design, improving textbook quality, refining the evaluation system, enhancing faculty development, and promoting digitalization. These paths aim to drive the high-quality development of aesthetic education textbooks in Jiangsu's application-oriented undergraduate universities, enhancing students' aesthetic literacy and innovative capabilities. While the paper offers insights and suggestions, it is limited by the sample size and scope, failing to comprehensively reflect the situation in all application-oriented undergraduate universities. Future research could expand the sample range to further explore issues such as the interactivity and practicality of digitalized aesthetic education textbooks.

Funding

2024 General Project of Philosophy and Social Sciences Research in Colleges and Universities, "Research on the High-Quality Construction of Aesthetic Education Textbooks in Jiangsu's Application-Oriented Undergraduate Colleges and Universities" (2024SJYB0681).

Reference

- [1] He Wuhua, Yang Zilai. Xi Jinping's Theoretical System and Philosophical Thoughts on the Importance of Aesthetic Education [J]. Observation and Thinking, 2024,(07):42-51.
- [2] Opinions of the Ministry of Education on Strengthening the Work of Aesthetic Education in Institutions of Higher Learning in the New Era [J]. Bulletin of the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, 2019,(05):19-23.
- [3] Liu Jianting, Wan Bei, Zhan Qi. The Implementation of Aesthetic Education in Universities in the New Era: Connotational Evolution, Logical Compliance, and Path Construction [J]. Jiangsu Higher Education, 2023,(10):99-103. DOI: 10.13236/j.cnki.jshe.2023.10.014.
- [4] Yang Jie. Bottlenecks and Problem Analysis of Current Aesthetic Education in Universities [J]. Journal of Shandong Normal University (Social Sciences Edition), 2020,65(03):127-140.DOI: 10.16456/j.cnki.1001-5973.2020.03.015.
- [5] Liu Shan. The Goal Orientation and Path Selection of Aesthetic Education in Universities in the New Era [J]. Journal of Hunan University of Science and Technology (Social Sciences Edition), 2020, 23(05): 159-165. DOI: 10.13582/j.cnki.1672-7835.2020.05.023.