



# Visual Arts Pedagogy in Arts Education: Exploring contemporary trends in Chinese Painting Education

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## ABSTRACT

In arts pedagogy, painting education involves the use of various painting practices to cultivate creativity, critical thinking, and artistic expression. As a field of ideal aesthetics, painting education provides an interdisciplinary learning environment for students who explore opportunities to incorporate the perspective of history, spirituality, culture, and heritage in artworks. This study examines the socio-cultural and philosophical characteristics of Chinese traditional painting. In addition, this study explores the significance of traditional oil and ink painting in Chinese art education. The insights from the study conclude that in the modern pedagogical framework for painting education, a sustained emphasis on traditional philosophical influences in artistic creation and expression allows students to explore artistic and spiritual sensibilities through art. Moreover, the genre of traditional ink and oil painting plays an important role in cultivating critical thinking and the ability to observe and interpret nature and expression.

**Keywords:** art education, painting education, Chinese traditional painting, visual arts

## INTRODUCTION

In education, the arts manifest the integration of imagination and self-expression in the teaching-learning process to foster creativity among students. Contemporary societies are characterized by domineering visual cultures that play a crucial role in shaping social constructions, expressions, and perceptions among individuals. The incorporation of visual arts and the development of art therapy have been substantial practices in the ambit of arts education that have been significant in emotional maturation, inclusion, and diversifying perspectives on socio-cultural political issues within societies (Hannigan et al., 2019). In the parlance of arts education, the integration of arts, images, objects, and visual depictions is crucial to learning about diverse societal issues and representations. Art education seeks to engage an extensive set of pedagogical approaches to foster tendencies of self-expression and creativity and cultivate skills for critical thinking among students. Modern art expressions are characterized by vibrant visual cultures, which require the integration of innovative modes of communication and expression while using advanced techniques of student engagement and learning. The domineering visual cultures in modern societies have led to a transformative impact on the practices within arts education, and new technologies, innovative media, and sensory experiences are being integrated to upgrade art pedagogy.

Within the multifaceted domain of art education, painting has evolved as an essential subfield that engages students with dynamic processes in creative expression, cultural awareness, and critical arts. In painting education, teachers engage in inculcating art techniques among students by making them use and develop their imaginative power, emotional sense, and critical interpretation. Painting education fundamentally involves the development of an understanding of visual language among learners. In practice, instructors aim to impart knowledge about art styles, painting mediums, and socio-cultural symbolism for the understanding of issues within society. In China, a country that embodies a legacy of ancient artistic heritage, painting education has evolved into an important art field with rich cultural and historical significance (Wen & White, 2020). Since the painting in China dates back to ancient times, the heritage associated with it draws from classical art styles, cultural themes, and symbolic motifs, adding to its socio-cultural richness. Moreover, painting in China has a deeper aesthetic relationship with Chinese philosophical traditions like Confucianism, Buddhism, and Daoism. Historically, the cultural and aesthetic legacy of Chinese painting has been an integral feature of arts education. In this perspective, Chinese painting education does not only involve the development of skills and techniques but it also encompasses the cultural values of discipline, devotion, harmony, and admiration for nature. During the 18th convention of the Council of Heads of States of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization in 2018, the President of the People's Republic of China, Xi Jinping, stated the government's commitment to cultivating creative

self-realization among Chinese youth and high-quality training for teachers in the realm of arts education( Rybalko et al., 2023) .In 2019, the art training market in China was valued at 214.96 billion yuan and was predicted to reach 298.94 billion yuan in 2022, making it a total growth rate of 11.6 percent (Boom in Demand for Children’s Art Education in China, n.d.).

This study is posited at the intersection of multimodal pedagogy and arts education to explore how emerging visual artistic practices are utilized to enhance the effectiveness of teaching arts in the modern education system. This study aims to examine the significance of the visual arts in the realm of art education. In this direction, the study will undertake a reflective exploration of the emerging trends and practices in Chinese arts education, with a focus on Chinese painting education. It will be significant to identify the perspectives of critical thinking, innovation, and social value associated with painting in Chinese art education. They mainly draw from the artistic influence and the spiritual doctrines embedded in Chinese heritage. While exploring the evolution of arts education in China, this study will examine the influence of Western art styles on contemporary perspectives of painting in Chinese education. These inquiries will be significant in unraveling the artistic influence of contemporary and Chinese historical painting on contemporary Chinese painting education. Using the constructivist lens, this study explores the perspectives of appreciation and skill development in arts education, which nurture creativity and develop artistic voice and expression among the learners. This significantly involves navigating the emerging trends in the use of digital technology in enhancing visual arts education within Chinese academia. The study mainly draws from the perspectives of visual aesthetics, social constructivism, and critical pedagogy in understanding arts education, especially painting in arts pedagogy. It navigates the socio-cultural and philosophical characteristics within Chinese traditional painting and then explores the significance of traditional oil and ink painting in Chinese art education. In its theoretical framework, the study draws from socio-cultural theory and media ecology to explore spirituality.

## 1.RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

RO1: To explore the influence of socio-cultural factors in Chinese painting education.

RO2: To assess the significance of traditional oil and ink painting in the art education pedagogy.

### 1.1 Literature Review

As a learning field, arts education has evolved as a pathway that fosters socio-cultural understanding, cognitive creativity, and critical thinking among students. The field of arts education involves creative learning and performative practices through visual art, music, dance, theater, and creative writing. The field has been substantially explored to cultivate the fundamental skills of critical thinking, problem-solving, and self-expression among learners. The skill development within arts education is significant in widening the perspective and values of observation, concentration, and persistence, allowing students to foster a constructive thought process while dealing with the complexities of society (Bradeško & Potočnik, 2022). Punzalan (2018) stated that “a good arts education is built on and reflects recognition of the specific and unique way that the arts shape people's thinking and their lives” (p.122). The integration of a transformational approach in place of a conventional transmissive approach in arts education is characterized by the participatory mechanism that allows students to learn problem-solving and decision-making independently. The innovations in art pedagogy, while drawing from the theoretical perspectives of cognitivism and constructivism, emphasize students’ exploration of their tendencies. It helps to gain knowledge through individual experience and learning through the construction of the meaning of the world around them (Tomljenovic & Vorkapic, 2020).

The aesthetic significance of arts education has made it essential to the comprehensive development of human aesthetics and appreciation among learners for living a better and more meaningful life. The practices and skills imparted through “art education are conducive to improving the humanistic cultivation of young students, enhancing the spiritual realm of human beings, and cultivating the creative ability of young people” (Liu et Al., 2021, p. 80). The skill development in arts education enables students to cultivate tendencies to propose diverse responses in solving distinctive problems through creative and critical thinking (Eisner, 1995).

In modern times, within the broader spectrum of art education, the perspectives of artistic aesthetics, communication design, appreciation, and expression are emphasized by educators. Arts education emphasizes an artistic medium to inspire learners towards impactful social expression within a diverse array of societal themes (Dewey, 2008). The innovative practices in developing creative skills within the students are aimed at cultivating a deeper self-understanding and encouraging a constructive yet critical outlook on the world around them (Mernick, 2021). Liu et al. (2021) stated that “school art education has become an important role in the development of education in China and is gradually moving towards a new formal and positive development path” (p. 81).

In arts education pedagogy, the visual arts have evolved as a significant area for exploring a range of skills and artistic expertise through visual expression and representation. In the realm of visual arts education, instructional learning involves the cultivation of abilities among students to evaluate and interpret visual creations through the lens of artistic procedures and socio-cultural contexts (Catterall & Pepler, 2007). The development of visual arts pedagogy involves the promotion of visual literacy skills, which mainly focus on helping students explore their imagination and visualize and express their creativity (Bertling, 2019). In recent decades, there have been an increased pedagogical focus on visual-oriented teaching, allowing students to develop their artistic and critical visualization skills through images and graphics (Kedra, 2018). Instructional teaching in the visual arts is imperative for comprehension of complex social phenomena, customized literacy, and critical knowledge.

The diversification in the means and modes of art education has enabled teachers and instructors to integrate a variety of media, like visual arts, art performance, and design elements, into their teaching procedures (Roldán, 2015). In the realm of arts education, multimodal pedagogy, characterized by the integration of diverse techniques, communication, and expression. It

allows students to discover their creative tendencies and cultivate a profound understanding of creative concepts (Ruiz-Madrid & Valeiras-Jurado, 2020). The integration of diverse modes of communication, expression, and demonstration in teaching-learning processes fosters an educational environment that is collaborative and inclusive (Phuong et al., 2021). These dynamic art education environments enhance artistic skills among the students and inspire them to utilize them for problem-solving and critical thinking abilities (Thomas et al., 2009). The advent of digital technology and its integration into practices within art education in the form of digital art, VR, and interactive has ushered in new opportunities for students to explore and express themselves (Qian, 2022). The emergence of interactive forms of visual communication and representation has enabled learners to cultivate creative art skills, enhancing their abilities to enhance their understanding of arts and expression in the modern landscape (Caldwell et al., 2022).

In both modernistic and post-modernistic pedagogical traditions within arts education, the integration of learning based on spirituality and aesthetics plays a crucial role. Especially countries with rich cultural heritage have focused on integrating spiritual and aesthetic dimensions in teaching-learning within arts education (An & Nie, 2023). For holistic development and enhanced creativity, the use of a spiritual perspective in creativity and expression facilitates a vibrant learning environment for students (Liu, 2013). In China, the spiritual and aesthetic values of Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have continued to enrich art education by cultivating emotional expression, connection with the inner self, and cultural understanding among art students (Tan & Tan, 2016). The integral dimensions of mediation and meditation in art education largely draw from the religious and spiritual doctrines deeply embedded in ethnic societies.

The advent of the digital revolution led to a profound impact on the practices and pedagogy of arts education. With the advent of digital media, there has been exponential growth in the means and modes of practices in visual arts education, which significantly include animation, graphic design, and 3D modeling (Gumulcine & Coskun, 2019). The innovation in digital technology and the emergence of advanced digital tools have facilitated significant spaces for creativity and expression within arts education. From advanced digital tools for art creation to the emergence of online platforms for interactive teaching-learning practices, digital technology has led to a paradigm shift in arts education (Vuk & Bosnar, 2021). Integrating digital technology in various facets of art education pedagogy has enabled educators and students to foster environments of innovation and experimentation in art, thereby expanding prospects in the art world. The integration of digital tools in the teaching-learning processes of arts education enables learners to produce and manipulate digital artworks meticulously. Nowadays, collaborative projects in arts pedagogy are undertaken to explore the vast array of visual arts experimentation, including performances, digital art, and visual installations (Ateca-Amestoy & Castiglione, 2023). In modern art education, visualization through emerging visual art forms is being leveraged to cultivate art skills, cultural literacy, and critical thinking among the learners (Firat et al., 2022). In modern times, arts education can transcend its conventional framework into a more inclusive and diverse field, and the integration of emerging artistic perspectives, techniques, and learning styles, especially contemporary visual cultures, has enriched the pedagogy within the field (Chisolm et al., 2021). The digital advancement in visual media is being integrated into arts education, and innovations like virtual reality and interactive installations are enriching conventional teaching art practices (González-Zamar & Abad-Segura, 2020). The discussion in the literature about arts education reflects the emerging diversity within the field. Most importantly, the innovations in the field of arts education have opened up potential spaces for enhanced artistic creativity and inclusivity in teaching-learning.

## 1.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework identified for this study draws from the conceptual perspectives that lie at the intersection of art, culture, and creativity. The framework involves scholarly debates on the socio-cultural and philosophical characteristics of art and how they influence contemporary art education pedagogy. While studying art learning as a socio-cultural practice, this study draws from the concepts of social constructivism and social mediation within the sociocultural theory of Vygotsky (Hariana, 2021). In this direction, this study will look into painting education as a socially mediated practice that is shaped by the philosophical values and aesthetics prevalent in a society. It emphasizes the role of culture and heritage on the cognitive development of students while learning traditional Chinese painting. The learning process of painting in arts education involves the transformation of knowledge and experience. In this direction, this study integrates Kolb's (2014) "Four Stages of Learning": Concrete Experience 'feeling', Reflective Observation 'watching', Abstract Conceptualization 'thinking', and Active Experimentation 'doing'. The research study will identify the relevance of each stage in the process of learning traditional Chinese painting among art students. The perspectives in the theoretical framework identified for this study contain some of the relevant theories and concepts that are significant in developing a comprehensive understanding of painting education in China. These concepts, besides guiding the rationale of this study, will enhance the theoretical contribution of this study.

## 1.3 Methodology

The study adopted an exploratory approach to understanding the influence of socio-cultural factors in Chinese painting education. In this direction, the study will adopt qualitative methods for critically analyzing the existing literature and documentary analysis to draw meaningful insights and conclusions. The analytical process involved drawing from the major themes identified in the literature on the historical evolution and cultural significance of painting in China. The study scans secondary resources to understand the spiritual and aesthetic perspectives of painting education. In addition, the interpretative analysis involves navigating the resources for oil painting education and creative arts pedagogy. Lastly, as a special case of creativity through visual communication, the study analyzes the traditions and pedagogical cultures in Chinese ink.

## 2.SPIRITUAL AND AESTHETIC PERSPECTIVES IN PAINTING EDUCATION

The traditional Chinese socio-religious philosophy had a profound impact on the evolution of art in the nation. The core values enshrined in the philosophical doctrines of Daoism, Confucianism, Buddhism, and Taoism have had a remarkable impact on the evolution of art education and its adaptability within Chinese society. The modern art education theory in China developed under the cumulative influences of traditional philosophical aesthetics and modernity. The history of art in China encompasses rich cultural and spiritual traditions in the domains of painting, sculpture, music, and architecture (Wang, 2021). In art education, the moral values and character that characterize Chinese traditional philosophy emerged as fundamental tenets within the realm of teaching-learning. In traditional painting education in China, “painting as a character” was celebrated in reverence to values of morality and character propounded by socio-religious philosophies (Bertling & Moore, 2020). The inheritance of traditional culture through copying and imitating rich artworks has been a significant practice in ancient Chinese painting education. In these traditions, learners of painting used to draw from the essence of existing cultural artworks of their ancestors and masters, thereby carrying on the legacy of high-quality painting education. Zheng (2024) stated that “the concept of ‘learning from famous masters and painting’” is not only an inheritance of traditional culture but also a positive guide to traditional culture” (p. 9).

Historically, painting education has been characterized by principles of ‘imitation of the original’ that manifest classical emphasis on the retention of the teacher’s expression as a guiding principle in learning the craft. Such practices in the painting teaching-learning process were considered essential for integrating master’s aesthetics and maintaining traditional principles. Although imitation in the realm of painting education was discouraged as copying, in Chinese traditional art education, influenced by the core values of discipline and persistence, imitation was considered central among learners for the creation of aesthetic artworks. In traditional art education in China, painting education mainly emerged from two historical schools of the Tang dynasty: the Northern School of Painting and the Southern School of Painting, also known as Literati Painting. While the Northern School of Painting focused on the refinement of details and color using traditional practices and methods, the Southern School painters mainly focused on impressionism, educating pupils through ink-wash painting. In the context of Literati painting, the moral and aesthetic philosophies have significantly shaped the institutional and pedagogical framework within modern art education (Zheng, 2010). While shaping the painting art movements, the philosophical influences cemented a rich tradition between institutional learning and heritage art traditions, thereby influencing modern art education. Like other art forms, Chinese traditional painting is a manifestation of spirituality that encompasses meditative ways of engaging with the soul and thought. The traditional ink painting in China embodies the spiritual values of harmony, balance, and nature emphasized by Taoist and Buddhist philosophy (Xu & Stahl, 2023). A noted French sinologist and political scientist while exploring perspectives in traditional Chinese painting stated that the practices reflect a “special and pervasive feature of China’s social and cultural theater”(Chinese Painting, Spiritual Encounter and Creative Identities - Benoit Vermander’s Artwork, n.d.).

Painting as a rich medium of artistic expression has evolved through a long history of religious and cultural influences. On one hand, cultural traditions in teaching-learning practices within Chinese painting are manifested through the persistence of expressions of feelings, nature, and beauty across the painting genre. On the other hand, the innate influences of the philosophical traditions of Buddhism and Confucianism constitute the moral values, visual aesthetics, and spiritual manifestations in paint creations. In modern art education, “Chinese painting combines the highest moral realm that people pursue in the field of ideal aesthetics, which is also the result of the fact that the inherent characteristics of Chinese philosophy have a far-reaching impact on Chinese painting art” (Fugui, 2020, p. 634). Cao and Kong (2014) argued that the Chinese ink painting drew from the devotion to nature preached in Taoist philosophical principles, and such ideological connotation has shaped the teaching-learning of Chinese landscape painting.

While deepening students’ connection with spirituality and heritage, such practices in painting education enable teachers to facilitate an interdisciplinary learning environment for students who explore opportunities to incorporate the perspective of history, spirituality, culture, and heritage in artworks. The incorporation of spiritual and cultural expression in painting education allows cultural contextualization and enables the learners to have diverse artistic perspectives in visualizing their ideas and thoughts. In modern painting pedagogy, experiential learning mainly draws from traditional painting methods for aesthetic application and cultural retention. Moreover, the mainstreaming of philosophy, culture, and spirituality in modern painting education is substantial for the promotion of cultural exchange and understanding and cultivating spiritual depth among Chinese painting students. Among the major objectives of art education is to foster self-cultivation and self-discovery among students to develop artistic creativity. In the realm of Chinese painting, spiritual exploration through the integration of philosophical and spiritual traditions plays a substantial role in cultivating creative skills among students that resonate with their socio-cultural identity and spiritual expression. The pedagogical framework in this direction must always adopt an inclusive approach in shaping the teaching practices that foster spiritual enrichment, introspection, and aesthetic expression among aspiring painters.

### 3.OIL PAINTING EDUCATION AND CREATIVE ARTS PEDAGOGY

The fundamental tenets of arts education are characterized by the cultivation of creativity based on aesthetic abilities and self-realization among students. The teaching-learning framework in art education adopts an interdisciplinary approach in pursuit of the development of innovative competence and creative self-development in students. Art education encompasses a diversity of disciplines, and the teaching practices call for fostering value orientations among art students in contemporary multicultural environments. Art education calls for the “implementation of artistic creativity, scientific and pedagogical activity, and the relay of artistic, cultural, and artistic national values in the educational process” (Panok, 2016, p. 102). As a vibrant area within the field of art education, painting education involves a creative learning space that aims at enabling students to polish their imaginative capabilities and visual thought process in drawing their creative expression. The teaching practices in painting education are framed to cultivate artistic expression among students while availing them of opportunities to learn visual concepts,



art aesthetics, and diverse media for visualization. A major characteristic of oil painting is that it uses oils that last longer and are consistent in furnishing intricate color textures and intimate details.

According to Rose and Jolley (2016), arts education as a diverse field caters to various aspects of student development, which involve the development of imagination and creativity, expression and visualization of ideas and feelings, and problem-solving skills among students. The teachers in painting education guide students toward sensory exploration while drawing their creations across various genres of traditional and modern painting practices. Painting education involves a variety of types, including impressionist painting, oil painting, acrylic painting, ink painting, water-based color painting, etc. Oil paintings, which originally flourished during the European Renaissance, were introduced in China during the 16th century AD. One of the earliest pioneers of Chinese oil painting was the Chinese Guan Zuolin artist, who lived between 1765 and 1805 AD. Wu Fading was among the first oil painting teachers in China who learned the craft in France and returned in 1911 (Ruixiang, n.d.). In traditional oil painting cultures within China, historical themes and heritage played a crucial role in the evolution of the contemporary framework of painting education pedagogy.

Oil painting is a promising area in art education that involves the development of students' taste for color textures, aesthetics, and creative ideation. It involves learning the craft of using and blending different colors to create images using cognitive tendencies and inner feelings. It is advised that teachers help students explore their emotions and perceptions in the creation of oil paintings. Like other areas of art education, painting education in China is traditionally characterized by impressionist teaching practices that enable students to master spiritual values and aesthetics for rich artistic expression (Kovalova & Qiu, 2020). The spirit of the art of learning through painting draws inspiration from the traditions belonging to the Chinese ancient past. Therefore, national culture and cultural identity are reflected in the contemporary traditions of oil painting. In modern oil painting art practices, the pedagogy must involve cultivating the expression of inclusiveness among aspiring painters, which will ultimately contribute to cultural preservation and nation-building. However, at the same time, teachers teaching painting must position the pedagogy at the intersection of innovation and heritage. Such traditions in oil painting will cultivate the sensitivities of multiculturalism and cultural diversity among painting students. This painting system "combines the methods and rules of creating sketches based on the theory of color science, which allows you to show the inspired beauty and virtuosity of oil painting" (Rybalko et al., 2023, p. 15).

In its essence, Chinese traditional oil painting involves a blend of knowledge of philosophy, cultural aesthetics, colorology, and music (Rybalko et al., 2023). The existing painting education pedagogy involves the integration of basic courses focusing on drawing skills and creative dealing with the cultivation of creativity, expression, and imagination among students. This framework enables the painting students to initially develop the craft and technique and later follow their intuition and cognitive tendencies for artistic creation. Oil-based paintings allow students to explore ideas for incorporating Chinese cultural and philosophical elements into their work. Chuyu (2000) stated that it is necessary to help students learn to integrate classical graphics and visual overtones that resonate with heritage and cultural identity. These practices involve the representation and aesthetics of dragons, Feitian, Peking Opera, etc. The art of painting is not merely about learning skills and techniques for drawing attractive images; rather, it must serve a broader purpose of inculcating artistic creativity among students. The art pedagogy devised for painting teachers must enable them to develop environments to allow students to explore their creative domains and deal with the subject through intuition, thought process, and consciousness (Wei & Xinhan, 2019). Painting education is about the techniques and methods that involve learning color schemes, composition, lines, and expression through creative imagination. Imitation of folk traditions is integral to learning painting as it allows students to explore and replicate the themes within the realm of culture and heritage.

Painting education is significant as it facilitates an artistic environment for the students characterized by the components of culture, spirituality, emotions, and rationality. Particularly in the case of China, a nation with a deep history, spirituality, and philosophy, painting is a rich knowledge domain for students to push intellectual limits and express creativity.

#### 4. INK PAINTING PEDAGOGY: CULTIVATING CREATIVITY THROUGH VISUAL COMMUNICATION

Historically, ink painting, also known as *shu i-mò* or literati painting, belonged to the Southern school of Chinese painting and thrived during the Tang dynasty (618–907) (Woon et al., 2022). This distinctive painting tradition involves the use of basic tools— a brush, ink, and paper to draw objects with meticulous details. Technically, Chinese ink painting focuses on visual aesthetics through color composition and the movements of brush, which are imperative for resonating with the essence of the subject matter. Like other painting traditions, the spiritual and aesthetic creativity associated with ink painting draws from the philosophical values of Buddhism, Confucianism, and Taoism. The distinctive style attributes of Chinese ink painting lie in the delicate and beautiful use of lines, in contrast to the mainstream Western painting traditions, which use the balance of shadow and light in painting. The delicacy and craft of brush strokes form the defining trait of Chinese ink painting as these movements determine the sense of tranquility or vigor while depicting the expression ingrained in an artwork.

Visual arts like painting offer socially constructed learning environments for students to academically deal with complex social issues and the nuances of society (Buelow et al., 2018). The visual skills associated with arts education are significantly linked with meaning-making communication, where students develop skills to learn through interpretation and constructivism (Churchill-Dower, 2020). The development of self-expression within the visual arts deals with the development of artistic skills, critical expression, and creative vision. In the visual arts, the pedagogical framework involves diverse areas of learning, which include painting, printing, sculpting, drawing, and art design.

The pedagogical framework in ink painting education strictly draws from the traditional use of techniques and materials. The teaching practices involve the use of "Four Gentlemen Plants", highly revered in Chinese spiritual and cultural symbolism.

Historically, the four plants- plum blossom, bamboo, orchid, and chrysanthemum- continue to remain common subjects in Chinese traditional literati, or ink paintings. Such traditions are imperative for the promotion of cultural symbolism through painting education in China. This tradition in ink painting manifests the depiction of cultural legacy through art, as the bamboo represents resilience, the plum blossom symbolizes perseverance, the orchid signifies elegance, and the chrysanthemum symbolizes endurance. On the one hand, students learn to learn the craft of brush strokes, lines, and curves in drawing these symbolic objects through their personal styles and expressions. On the other hand, students adopt their creative expressions to convey the aesthetic significance, symbolism, and emotional connections associated with these plants.

In modern art education pedagogy, ink painting education has been integrated into the visual arts pedagogy to inculcate creative and aesthetic sensibilities among art education students (Saunders, 2021). Among various genres of painting, ink painting has been significantly adopted to cultivate visual communication skills among students and effectively use brush strokes to express ideas and aesthetics pertaining to objects, humans, and nature. Zhang (2021) stated that Chinese ink painting is undoubtedly a visual language that uses brush strokes and color compositions to express calmness and poetic beauty. Trinidad et al. (2021) stated that the creative aesthetics of ink painting mainly lie in its techniques to use ink patterns as a form of expression through a blend of harmony and balance. In the realm of visual communication education, ink painting draws largely from Chinese cultural assets like Taoist and Zen Buddhist philosophy for creative and critical expression of nature (Wang, 2022). As a unique visual language, ink painting skills involve the ability of students to decide on compositions that perfectly balance the presence and absence of movements for creativity through expression. The craft of ink painting significantly involves learning spatial relationships in drawing the objects, as it allows the students to explore ways to produce visually stunning artworks.

In Chinese ink painting teaching, expression through brushwork and aesthetics through calligraphy are the central themes that cultivate impressive visual art skills among students. The underlying visual communication training through ink painting education mainly relies on the student's abilities to convey meaning and narratives through meticulous brush strokes. Theoretically, ink painting education involves the attributes of constructivism, as the craft relies on constructing and disseminating meaning and ideas around objects, humans, and nature. Such practices involve allowing students to try various techniques and themes to visually attribute meaning to ideas and allow audiences to connect with them. These traditions facilitate opportunities for students to explore possibilities to enhance their creativity and aesthetic capabilities while painting. The significance of visual communication through ink painting education has been linked to socio-cultural campaigns like raising awareness about local issues, promoting cultural heritage, and raising social awareness (Villanueva, 2022). Since ink education is part of extensive artistic discourse, students' artworks in this direction can enable them to participate in community building and cultural promotion at large. Ink painting, being a raw and volatile artistic terrain, enables students to experiment with a diverse range of ways to explore their creative tendencies while expressing ideas and emotions.

Since Chinese ink painting fundamentally uses ethnic symbolism and cultural motifs, the visual communication art involved in the craft involves the effective use of compositions and brushwork to convey messages and narrate stories. In the realm of ink painting, "students learn to compress complicated ideas into visually intelligible forms by studying and practicing this art form, which improves their ability to communicate thoughts visually" (Wang et al., 2024, p. 112). The Chinese calligraphy art vocabulary involves the fusion of Chinese calligraphy and traditional ink painting. Students learning traditional calligraphy express their character and emotions through calligraphic styles and the fluidity of ink. Such art practices in painting education promote the sensibilities of cultural preservation among Chinese students. Moreover, experimentation with calligraphy and ink painting allows students to explore modern themes and styles, thereby bridging the past and the present through art.

The use of visual metaphors allows students to develop their aesthetic abilities and creative imagination by attributing emotions and expressing abstract ideas. Such abilities in communicating visual art through symbolism enable students to explore their tendencies in making effective use of details, compositions, and brushstrokes. One of the major implications of arts education is to teach students the skills of observation and attention to detail. Ink painting education is an effective domain where students are exposed to a creative environment and motivated to observe objects and nature and draw the most appealing visuals. Ink painting is a unique characteristic of art education in China and possesses ever-increasing relevance in contemporary visual cultures. The traditions of detailed expression and metaphorical symbolism associated with Chinese ink painting education make it a distinctive area for the cultivation of artistic creativity and aesthetic sensibility among students.

## 5.CONCLUSION

This research study aimed to delve into the visual arts pedagogy in Chinese art education through the lens of Chinese painting education. This study first navigated through the socio-cultural and philosophical characteristics of Chinese traditional painting and then explored the significance of traditional oil and ink painting in Chinese art education. The insights from the discussion in this study can be summarized into three major conclusions. First, it found that within the realm of art education in China, painting education possesses significant socio-cultural and aesthetic importance in the development of creative art practices. Philosophical traditions and cultural aesthetics played a crucial role in shaping contemporary art education in China. Particularly in the realm of Chinese painting, literary and learning practices witnessed profound influences from artistic expression and values enshrined in philosophy and culture. The distinctive styles and visual aesthetics in Chinese painting are significant in shaping the cultures of cultural appreciation, creative expression, and most importantly, carrying forward the traditional spiritual traditions that characterize the socio-cultural identity of the nation. In the modern pedagogical framework for painting education, a sustained emphasis on traditional philosophical influences in artistic creation and expression allows students to explore artistic and spiritual sensibilities through art.

Secondly, Chinese ink painting education involves instructions and training to inculcate aesthetic sensibilities among students. This mainly involves cultivating the abilities to observe and interpret nature and express it meticulously through lines and curves. Such aesthetic sensibilities allow teachers to enable students to draw striking visuals that manifest the blend of culture and nature. The genre of Chinese ink painting requires the use of minimalistic compositions and the delicate use of empty spaces, which allows the students to attain higher aesthetic sensibilities in expressing balance and harmony in the artworks (Shin & Yang, 2021).

The genre of oil painting in art education is a significant area as it involves traditional techniques that allow students to try creativity with historical themes and heritage. One of the most important characteristics of oil painting is its slow-drying nature, which enables students to try their hands on the creation of complex artworks. Oil painting is a vital area within art education that helps teachers cultivate skill development in aspiring painters by helping them explore their creativity with various materials, compositions, and textures. It is equally important to note that oil painting requires the use of physical materials, thereby cultivating students taste for materiality in creativity and visual expression. In the realm of Chinese art education, painting education must be promoted to allow students to innovate independently with art. Painting education has huge potential for the development of aesthetic psychology among art students in Chinese schools, colleges, and universities. Future research in this direction can involve investigating painting education pedagogy at selected educational institutes in China to assess the teaching-learning framework in this domain.

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