

Research on Aesthetic Education in China Under the Background of Ideological and Political Education: Theme Transmutation, Spotlight and Prospects

Yan Wang^{1,*}, and Yun Huang²

¹School of Marxism, Shaanxi Normal University, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710119, China

²School of Communication Engineering, Xidian University, Xi'an, Shaanxi 710119, China

Abstract. The goal is to contribute to research on aesthetic education in China Under the background of ideological and political education, display prevailing spotlights and look at the research trends forward. From 2,998 literature on aesthetic education included in the domestic core database from 1998 to 2022, this research, turning to CiteSpace, an emerging knowledge map analysis software, interpreted research spotlights and frontiers basing key nodes of the keywords. With efforts invested in studying the theme transmutation, spotlight and prospects on the topic by clustering algorithms, here have been listed challenges hampering current researches to provide reference and chart course for subsequent research and exploration.

1 Description of problem

Aesthetic education makes a momentous part to the quest of quality-oriented education. The 18th CPC National Congress held in 2012 marked the beginning of a new era. The CPC Central Committee with Comrade Xi Jinping at its core attached great importance to aesthetic education, adopted an overall action plan, and enabled the leapfrog development. The job of "cultivating socialist builders and successors with all-round development in morality, intelligence, physical fitness, work and aesthetics" concluded by the General Secretary Xi Jinping at the 2018 National Education Work Conference put "aesthetic education" high on the agenda. The later unveiled "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving Aesthetic Education in the New Era" by the CPC Central Committee, the State Council and the Ministry of Education fixed goals on improving students' aesthetic and humanistic quality and ran aesthetic education throughout all stages of talent training in schools at all levels. That enriched the party's education policy in the new era, laid a fundamental basis for labor education in universities, middle schools and primary schools, and defined the way forward. From that, aesthetic education has been jostling for public attention and has become one of the major and popular topics in current educational research, underlining the necessity and urgency of systematically sorting out aesthetic education.

Systematic review of literature found some have summed up researches on aesthetic education. For instance, Zhang Siqin et al sorted out domestic literature on aesthetic courses from 2001 to 2017 in virtue of content analysis. Researches revolved on the value,

objectives, implementation, content setting, evaluation, and resource development of the curriculum, they found. While conclusions of 173 literature on children's aesthetic education gleaned from CNKI (China National Knowledge Infrastructure) from 1987 to 2017 revealed that the established researches in China concentrated on studies on the value and function of children's aesthetic education, the review of thoughts, children's aesthetic education, and the corresponding landing approaches. Moreover, Du Yihuan valued researches on aesthetic education theory in China in 2016, which, as he reckoned, were mostly seen in the discussion of the development status of aesthetic education theory, the interpretation and development of classic aesthetic education thoughts, and studies on aesthetic education in public, schools, and families.

In summary, existing aesthetic education reviews that sorted out literature in traditional ways are found to be flawed in one-sidedness, subjectivity and sampling. Neither have they construed and cleared logic of the said literature comprehensively, intuitively and objectively, nor have they summarized current hit spots and trajectory of deduction. Under such context, it is of great practical significance and theoretical value to sort out the progress of domestic aesthetic education research in all rounds and present the knowledge structure relationship and evolution law of research.

* Corresponding author: 750017503@qq.com

2 Research preparation

2.1 Data source

Core journals are defined by rigorous scientific methods to reveal the latest achievements and development of the discipline, thereby offering references for the academic community, according to the literature dispersion rate discovered and proposed by the well-known metrologist Bradford (S. C. Bradford). This research sourced basic data from CSSCI (Chinese Social Science Citation Index), the most recognized in the field of humanities and social sciences (excluding the extended version). To secure the quality of the initial data, keywords of "aesthetic education" were searched first. That located the first paper in 1998,. So the searching span was set between "1998 and 2022". Strict screening rejected invalid documents such as catalogues, conferences, and speeches, and collected 2,298 document data summarized for the last time on December 28, 2020.

2.2 Research tools

This paper applied CiteSpace, of 5.7R3 with time slicing ="1998-2022", scientific literature visualization software based on JAVA program developed by Professor Chen Chaomei, which shines on visually and clearly drawing the evolution process of a certain research field as a knowledge map and showing the research hotspots and development directions. Data analysis and information mining draw a network visualization map that intuitively displayed the basic status quo, research spotlights and cutting-edge trends of domestic aesthetic education research.

3 Domestic research overview

3.1 Analysis of domestic core authors

Analyzing the main research authors betters understanding and mastery of research status and trends. In the CiteSpace interface, "Author" was selected for Node type to get the main author map of aesthetic education. According to the calculation formula of Price's law core author $M=0.749(N_{max})^{1/2}$ (M =the number of papers, N_{max} =the number of papers published by the author with the most papers in this year), when the number of published papers exceeds M and papers written by core authors account for 50%, those who have published more than 4 papers are classified as core authors, as proved by the statistical calculation results, $N_{max}=21$, $M=3.43$. Statistics of the literature found 40 core authors who have released 271 papers of 12.55% of the total number of literature, less than the standard of 50%. That indicated China lacks of such group of core authors. The main authors of Du Wei, Zeng Fanren, Qi Haiwen and other scholars and their published papers are shown in Table 1. Despite the large base as shown, poor was the cooperation between them. Most of them are pedagogical workers, and researchers

from other disciplines (such as philosophy, art, music) have less involvement, which will bring forth issues to aesthetic education research in the long run. Some have sustained good cooperative relationship, such as Wang Xiang-Luo Kai; Liu Xin-Li Hongju have cooperated twice or more. But the overall cooperative relationship structure is weak.

Table 1. Number of Papers Published by Core Authors.

No.	Author	Amount of papers
1	Du Wei	21
2	Zeng Fanren	17
3	Qi Haiwen	14
4	Zhao Lingli	13
5	Ran Xianghua	11
6	Zhang Lu	8
7	Pan Liyong	8
8	Nie Zhenbin	8

3.2 Analysis of domestic aesthetic education research institutions

Research institutions mapped the spatial distribution of research power. The fact that authors of 2,998 journal papers coming from 260 institutions suggested a wide range of publishing institutions. Price's law counted core institutions that published papers. The lower limit of the number of papers published therefrom was set on $N \approx 0.749 \times N_{max}$, where N was the minimum number of papers published by the core author unit, and N_{max} was taken as those published by the most productive author unit. The number known peaked at 57. $N \approx 42.7$ calculated was round up to 43. That is, institutions with more than 43 papers fell into the definition of core publishing institutions. In this regard, 2 were found as shown in Table 2. Normal Universities dominated the research. Among all, Beijing Normal University has a significant core position. The reasons were assumed that it enjoys famous reputation for educational science, lies in the political center of the country and is more sensitive to educational policies. The rest were basically strong research institutions. Less were cooperation and scattered were studies. It is yet to form a cohesive research group.

Table 2. Top 10 core institutions in china.

No.	Unit	Frequency
1	Shandong University	57
2	Beijing Normal University	49
3	Beijing University	39
4	Zhejiang Normal University	33
5	Capital Normal University	33
6	Hunan Normal University	32

7	Hangzhou Normal University	30
8	East China Normal University	29
9	Southwest University	28
10	Northeast Normal University	27

4. Spotlights in China

4.1 Keywords

Hot topics refer to issues that scholars focus on and discuss within a certain period of time. As a high-level summary of academic papers, keywords can clearly and objectively reflect research hotspots in a certain field. After analyzing the keywords in the literature through CiteSpace, the keyword visualization network map shown in Figure 5 is finally obtained. The larger the node, the higher the frequency of occurrence of the keyword. The lines between represented the degree of association, and the thicker the line, the higher the degree of association. Nodes, from inside to outside, from cool to warm, represented the posting time from the early days to the present. Some were displayed in purple outer rings, indicating that the centrality of these themes was high. Such nodes were closely related to other nodes and are also key nodes connecting different research fields.

Efforts further organized the Excel table exported after the keyword map was generated, and sorted the top 50 keywords with the frequency of occurrence. The results showed that the frequency of the top 50 keywords reached 1,593 times, accounting for 51.52%. It was generally believed that the centrality of a node is greater than 0.1, indicating that the node is more important. Among the keywords with a co-occurrence frequency greater than or equal to 50 listed in Table 1, 7 keywords with an betweenness centrality exceeded 0.1. Excluding the search term "aesthetic education", it shows that the current research on aesthetic education in China mainly focuses on aesthetic education (centrality 0.56), art Education (centrality 0.12), innovation (centrality 0.31), quality education (centrality 0.17), and Cai Yuanpei (centrality 0.11) form the main areas of discussion.

Although a single analysis of keywords in relevant literature in a certain research field can count the hotspots in this research field, it is impossible to understand the degree of correlation between keywords. The co-occurrence clustering properties of keywords can reflect the research focus in the field, and the clustering shows that multiple keywords have high homogeneity, and can be combined into clusters by modules. Therefore, through the cluster analysis of keywords, we can further explore the hot spots of aesthetic education research in our country. In this study, the extracted keywords are clustered through the LLR algorithm (Log-likelihood rate), and the clustered knowledge map is obtained, as shown in Figure 6. It is generally believed that the cluster module value > 0.3 indicates that the cluster structure is significant, and the cluster average profile

value > 0.7 indicates that the cluster structure is convincing. Since the cluster Q value = 0.7037 and S value = 0.3188, it proves that the cluster structure is significant and convincing. Due to the certain correlation between the clustering themes, combined with the keyword co-occurrence knowledge map, clustering view and secondary literature reading, the current research on aesthetic education in China mainly focuses on the review of aesthetic education thoughts, the value function research of aesthetic education, and the aesthetic education curriculum.

4.2 A review of aesthetic education thoughts

Exploring the origin of educational thought is the prerequisite for effective education and teaching. In the field of research on aesthetic education thoughts, scholars focus on the research on the aesthetic education thoughts of representative figures in the history of Chinese and Western aesthetic education. The research on these aesthetic education thoughts has important practical significance for the construction of an aesthetic education system with Chinese characteristics.

Among them, the research on domestic representative figures mainly focuses on the aesthetic education thoughts of Liang Qichao, Cai Yuanpei and Wang Guowei. Liang Qichao is one of the pioneers and founders of modern Chinese national new aesthetics. His aesthetic thought makes a special product of the fusion of Chinese and Western cultures, and it is an important step in the transformation of Chinese aesthetic education culture from classical to modern. Zhang Tingting conducted research on Liang Qichao's family aesthetic education thoughts, and pointed out that he taught his children family aesthetic education such as artistic beauty, emotional beauty, and social beauty by setting an example and encouraging ways, and he was very successful in cultivating children's temperament. It is worthy of future scholars to study.^[1] Wang Xuxiao believes that in Liang Qichao's aesthetic education thought, "taste", "emotion" and "beauty" have the same meaning.^[2] While "fun" refers to a high-spirited and optimistic attitude towards life and spirit of life. Aesthetic education is to improve people's temperament, soul, personality and other aspects. Therefore, the way of aesthetic education for our future generations should not be limited to art education, let alone technical art education. This has a direct warning significance for the problems existing in the current aesthetic education in our country, especially the tendency of pan-aesthetic education. Cai Yuanpei's idea of "replacing religion with aesthetic education" opened the history of modern Chinese aesthetic education. Li Shengchuan pointed out that Cai Yuanpei's theory of replacing religion with aesthetic education is based on the context of the era of "anti-foolishness", "anti-religion" and "taking back the right to education".^[3] The ideological proposition and theoretical declaration issued by the "nationalism" standpoint. Liu Chengji believes that Cai Yuanpei's aesthetic education thought not only endows the sanctity of aesthetic feeling, but also modernizes traditional

Chinese aesthetic education. ^[4]As the founder and founder of Chinese aesthetics at the beginning of this century, Wang Guowei's aesthetic education thought is also a research hotspot. Mei Zhongsun believes that Wang Guowei understands aesthetic education as emotional education, so that aesthetic education has the same status as intellectual education and moral education, and becomes a key factor in a complete person, which promotes students' intellectual development, strong will, and aesthetic ability.^[5]

Schiller represents the research hotspot of aesthetic education thoughts abroad. As one of the most important representatives of German classical literature and classical aesthetics, he put forward a relatively systematic and comprehensive aesthetic education theory for the first time in the history of aesthetics. occupy an important place in history. Gao Yinggang believes that the influence of Schiller's aesthetic education thoughts is very extensive and far-reaching. ^[6]He advocates the idea of cultivating perfect human nature through "aesthetic education" to improve society and build an ideal national system, and fully explore the contemporary aspects of his aesthetic education thoughts. It has very important theoretical reference significance for us to build a socialist harmonious society with Chinese characteristics. Lai Aiqing believes that "the significance of Schiller's aesthetic education thoughts goes far beyond his original intention of writing "Letters on Aesthetic Education" - to solve political problems, which can eliminate the survival crisis brought by modern civilization and establish the noumenal status of sensibility in the structure of human nature, which is of great epochal significance at the current stage.^[7]

4.3 Research on countermeasures of aesthetic education reform

This research field takes up an absolute advantage in the number of current literature. On the basis of clarifying the basic theories of aesthetic education, many scholars have pointed out the practical difficulties of contemporary aesthetic education by discussing specific issues in aesthetic education practice, and thus put forward reform strategies in a targeted manner.

In terms of the existing practical difficulties, the researchers turned to in-depth research on the reality of aesthetic education in our country by means of questionnaires, interviews and other research methods. For example, Sun Yong believes that aesthetic education has the problems of utilitarianism and memorization of education, a serious shortage of teachers, and a lack of evaluation system. ^[8] Jiang Diankun pointed out that, compared with the national goal requirements for aesthetic education in colleges and universities, many domestic colleges and universities currently have a series of problems in the implementation of aesthetic education, such as insufficient attention, lack of cohesion mechanism, and too single educational methods. ^[9]Noble studies introduced the concept of "ecological niche" in ecology. At present, there exist phenomena in aesthetic education teaching such as aesthetic education teaching

and professional teaching, aesthetic education theory and aesthetic education practice, and examination-oriented education and quality education.

4.4 Research on the value and function of aesthetic education

Exploring the educational value of aesthetic education through different art fields is also the focus of aesthetic education research in China in recent years. For example, scholar Liu Yingmei believes that calligraphy is rooted in China's long history and is an art form that condenses national culture and spirit. Today, calligraphy is an important part of quality education. Its aesthetic attributes and aesthetic education value should be valued as a tool to improve people's aesthetic ability and shape a healthy mind and personality. Scholar Lin Yunzhi suggested integrating the art of seal cutting into kindergarten aesthetic education, thinking that it is not a simple processing of objects, but a way for creators to express beauty, which has rich aesthetic value. ^[10] It is possible to cultivate children's aesthetic quality and enhance their sense of identity with traditional culture by mining the resources of seal cutting art and the aesthetic value of seal cutting art. Scholar Zheng Huihui focuses on the original ecological dance, believing that it exists along with people's lives and develops in line with the changes of the times. Its characteristics and nature determine that it has obvious aesthetic value. How to use the campus group dance platform to carry out the relevant suggestions of the original ecological dance aesthetic education was discussed.

5 Discussion and suggestions

5.1 Conclusion

The study focused on 2,298 core periodical documents published on CNKI CSSCI between 1998 and 2022. By CiteSpace5.7R3 visualization software, the research on aesthetic education in China has been comprehensively sorted out from the time evolution process, spatial distribution description and the evolution of research spotlights. The following conclusions were obtained:

1. Analysis of the research space distribution pointed out that the team of scholars and research institutions involved in the study of aesthetic education have been constantly growing. But the existing research institutions barely cooperated, showing a trend of fragmentation. The cooperative relationship between authors was generally loose, and the core group of authors has not yet formed.

2. Analysis of the spotlights and frontiers of research revealed that China mainly focused on the review of aesthetic education thoughts, the research on the value and function of aesthetic education, the development of aesthetic education curriculum, and the the countermeasures of aesthetic education reform. In recent years, researchers have paid more and more attention to the research on aesthetic education courses and school aesthetic education for civic education in colleges and

universities. For the research of new situations and new problems, microcosmization, modernization, and informatization will become the main development trend of aesthetic education research in China.

5.2 Reflection and Enlightenment

Based on the analysis of aesthetic education research in China, the researchers put forward the following research suggestions:

First and foremost, efforts should be invested in integrating and expanding the research team and strengthening cooperation among scholars. Although in recent years, China has formed a large number of research scholars, the scientific research cooperation between scholars was poor. The number of research papers has shown a downward trend in recent years. Scholars should cooperate in multiple ways to strengthen cross-institutional, interdisciplinary, and cross-regional academic research cooperation, form a research pattern of peers in the same direction, and realize the in-depth and long-term development of aesthetic education research.

Second, shifting thinking pattern. Well-loaded aesthetic education should have multidisciplinary and multidimensional interdisciplinary research. However, relatively single have been research methods of aesthetic education in China. Problems of fragmentation of empirical research and insufficient theoretical construction are yet to be addressed. In this regard, the academic community should be problem-oriented, integrate the research strength of psychology, political science, philosophy and other disciplines, integrate different research paradigms and research methods, realize the combination of quantitative and qualitative research, and the connection of horizontal investigation and longitudinal research. They should integrate current situation discussion and intervention research to improve the theoretical comprehensiveness and discipline standardization.

Last but not least, strengthening indigenous research. Answers to strengthening aesthetic education from the combination of history and reality, theory and practice are essential in promoting the all-round development of both people and society in the new era. Aesthetic education, however, an imported concept, reports a relatively short history of domestic exploration and theoretical research. So far, many aesthetic education research by domestic scholars introduced experience and concepts of civic education in western universities. Few localized studies based on school and life. Due to variations in specific national conditions and historical cultures, nothing short of theories and practices combined with its own national conditions enables the significance of its research. In this case, how to form an aesthetic education research system with Chinese style demands prompt solution for current academic circle.

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