

AESTHETIC AWARENESS EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS IN VIETNAM IN THE CURRENT CONTEXT

MA. Truong Thi Xuan Quynh

University of Education, Hue University, Vietnam

Received: 13/09/2025

Accepted: 22/09/2025

Published: 23/09/2025

DOI - <https://doi.org/10.61421/IJSSMER.2025.3504>

ABSTRACT

Aesthetic education serves as a solid foundation for building a generation of Vietnamese students who are not only professionally competent but also spiritually enriched, thereby contributing to the sustainable development of the nation. Aesthetic awareness refers to the human capacity to perceive beauty in connection with reality and human life. The cultivation of aesthetic awareness becomes critically important as it influences the beauty reflected in behavior, habits, lifestyle, and character. Providing aesthetic awareness education for students—the future owners of the country—is therefore essential and must be properly considered and evaluated in accordance with their position and role in practice. This paper clarifies the concept of students and aesthetic awareness education, and further discusses the role of aesthetic awareness education for students in the present context.

Keywords: Aesthetic education, Aesthetic awareness, students.

1. INTRODUCTION

The goal of education is to foster individuals who are comprehensively developed in morality, intellect, physical fitness, and aesthetics. In the context of Vietnam's ongoing renovation and international integration, education aimed at students' comprehensive development plays a crucial role. Aesthetic awareness education enhances the ability to perceive beauty, enabling individuals to recognize, evaluate, and act in accordance with the principles of beauty. This, in turn, opens up opportunities for students to embrace and create beauty.

Aesthetic awareness is a reflection of reality in human consciousness through aesthetic activities. Among activities such as creation, evaluation, and appreciation of beauty, art represents the highest expression of aesthetic awareness. Thus, aesthetic awareness essentially refers to the human capacity to perceive beauty as it is linked with reality and daily life. Cultivating this awareness is of great importance, as it shapes elegance in behavior, habits, lifestyles, and character.

The work of aesthetic awareness education requires both breadth and depth, in content and in form. The 13th National Congress of the Communist Party of Vietnam affirms: "Focus on research, identification, and implementation of the construction of national value systems, cultural value systems, and standards of Vietnamese people in the new era" [1, pp.18]. With the goal of comprehensive human development and the construction of moral standards, aesthetic awareness education is indispensable.

Beauty in society has emerged and evolved alongside the nation's millennia-long struggle of creative labor and national defense. In the current period of socialist construction and national development, it is imperative—particularly for students—to gain proper understanding of aesthetic and moral values. Only correct understanding can lead to correct action.

At present, students represent the future owners of the nation. Therefore, the issue of aesthetic awareness education must be carefully considered and evaluated in light of their position and role in practice. In the context of globalization, external cultural influences are penetrating into Vietnam. While students are highly receptive and sensitive to contemporary trends, they are also vulnerable to the negative impacts of toxic foreign cultures on social networks, which may distort their psychology, emotions, orientations, and aesthetic consciousness. Hence, it is necessary to enhance education in love for nature, humanity, homeland, country, community, and humankind; to instill respect and gratitude for the contributions of previous generations; and to create a healthy cultural environment for students, while raising their levels of awareness and aesthetic consciousness.

Nevertheless, despite significant achievements in aesthetic awareness education at Hue University, certain limitations remain. Numerous issues require further research and solutions to enhance the effectiveness of aesthetic awareness education for students in the coming time.

2. CONTENT

2.1. Students and Aesthetic Awareness Education for Students

The term “*student*” refers to individuals who are studying at universities and colleges. In some countries, however, the scope of this concept is broader. For example, in France, the term “*student*” not only designates those enrolled in universities and colleges but also includes learners at secondary schools and vocational institutions.

The typical age range of students is between 18 and 25 years. At this stage, individuals experience a certain degree of biological and social maturity. From a biological perspective, students are in the stage of youth, during which the human body advances toward comprehensive development. At this age, muscle strength, height, and weight increase rapidly; physiological and gender characteristics reach maturity; and particularly, the brain achieves a high level of development. Compared to adolescence, the neurons of students exhibit clearer segmentation and branching, thereby enhancing their analytical and information-processing capabilities. Consequently, their intellectual capacity surpasses that of secondary students. It can be affirmed that this is the period when the human body is at its most harmonious, robust, and energetic.

From a psychosocial perspective, student life is rich and complex, marked by diverse relationships that reflect a multifaceted social existence. With their sensitivity, enthusiasm for novelty, and passion for exploration and creativity, students are often characterized by abundant dreams and aspirations, vivid imagination, and a strong desire for self-affirmation and independence in thought and action. They have high demands for education, friendship, and romantic relationships; they value fairness and oppose injustice; they enjoy social interaction and actively engage in social activities. Thus, socially, students are not only concerned with their personal future but also with the nation’s development. At this stage, they begin to form a sense of civic responsibility and obligations toward their homeland.

In terms of activity, upon entering university, students become part of a new social community. Their dominant activity is learning, which serves as a transitional phase from basic education to future professional labor. It also marks the transformation from the status of “pupil” to that of “student intellectuals” in the present and intellectuals of the future. Under the guidance of lecturers, students’ learning activities take on a research-oriented character, aimed at mastering knowledge, skills, and competencies necessary for future professions. The knowledge they acquire includes basic knowledge, specialized knowledge in particular fields of science, technology, and culture, and is characterized by being fundamental, modern, and practical. This knowledge meets the increasing demands of the labor market, national development, and both regional and international

integration. Through their academic training and personal development, students grow comprehensively, particularly in intellectual capacity, independent and creative thinking, as well as in abstract and generalizing abilities. Over time, their knowledge base and information expand, and they gradually mature.

Universities train successive generations of students. Despite differences across generations, students share the common objective of acquiring scientific knowledge and cultivating essential moral qualities to serve the nation's future development. The contributions of student generations and intellectuals to national construction and defense highlight the close connection between scientific knowledge and moral qualities. Ethical values have served as a foundation and stepping stone enabling them to progress further in science, while their knowledge has become more meaningful and socially beneficial when combined with appropriate ethical values.

Vietnamese students constitute an important segment of the nation's youth. They represent a group with high levels of education, agility, and dynamism in adopting and affirming new values. However, their development remains incomplete, and certain limitations persist: impulsiveness, subjectivity, lack of practical experience, tendency toward vanity, individualism, competitiveness, and aversion to being outperformed by others. They are also highly susceptible to negative influences from the market economy, which may result in political disorientation, moral decline, and degraded lifestyles. This makes students vulnerable to manipulation, exploitation, or involvement in unhealthy activities, which could negatively affect themselves, their families, and society.

The root causes of these limitations lie in the fact that students are still in the process of growth and personality formation, lacking extensive life experience. Thus, guiding and training students to recognize their weaknesses, enhance their strengths—especially in academic work and moral cultivation—is essential. Through this process, they can become individuals embodying both virtue and talent, capable of meeting the demands of the revolutionary cause and national development.

In summary, students represent the young intellectual class of the future: knowledgeable, dynamic, creative, courageous, and ambitious, with enthusiasm and sensitivity in life. Their dreams and aspirations are strong motivations for advancement. With passion and determination, most students strive to succeed in their studies despite challenges. Alongside these strengths, certain shortcomings remain, such as impulsiveness, a desire for self-affirmation despite limited conditions, and discouragement in the face of failure. Therefore, understanding students' psychological and physiological characteristics is vital for applying effective and practical educational approaches, particularly in cultivating their aesthetic awareness.

Aesthetic awareness education is a process of forming and developing students' aesthetic personality, enabling them to possess proper consciousness of society's artistic life and the ability to experience and create beauty in their own lives. *"Aesthetic awareness education for students is both education and self-education, developing all their inherent capacities in accordance with the laws of beauty"* [2, pp.69].

Aesthetic awareness education for students involves both education and self-education, fostering all capacities directed toward noble values and beauty. It guides students' morality and character while nurturing active and creative thinking and practical engagement.

2.2. The Role of Aesthetic Awareness Education for Students Today

First, aesthetic awareness education plays a role in orienting values for the formation and development of students' personalities.

Aesthetic values are cultural values created through human activities that not only comply with natural laws but also conform to the principles of beauty. Value orientation is one of the most important components of the personality structure of students, formed and reinforced by their cognitive abilities and personal life experiences over time. It enables individuals to distinguish what is meaningful and practical from what is insignificant. The aesthetic value orientation of Vietnamese students today has undergone profound positive transformations but has also revealed certain negative tendencies that require adjustment. This task demands the participation of society as a whole, working toward a unified goal under the leadership of the Communist Party.

In this regard, aesthetic ideals serve as the most dominant and powerful driving force of development. Thus, in the process of shaping and fostering positive personalities among students, the cultivation of aesthetic ideals holds particular importance. Aesthetic culture directly influences students' thoughts and emotions through its system of values, especially artistic values—the noble and the beautiful in life. Aesthetic ideals are vividly expressed through exemplary models in life or through artistic representations. These ideals both generalize the beauty present in life and embody aspirations for perfection as an inevitable trend of development. Therefore, idealized figures are simultaneously relatable and aspirational. For instance, the character Pavel Korchagin in the renowned novel *How the Steel Was Tempered* was once an ideal model for many generations of Soviet and Vietnamese youth. Similarly, the image of “Uncle Ho’s Soldiers” in the revolutionary literature of Vietnam became a shining symbol of revolutionary heroism, embodying the noble and the beautiful, inspiring countless young people to march “across Truong Son to save the nation” and fight for independence and freedom.

Second, aesthetic awareness education contributes to nurturing emotional capacity and building a harmonious personality for students’ development.

Aesthetic emotions refer to the human capacity for emotional resonance in response to aesthetic phenomena. These resonances—whether joy, sadness, or inspiration—are evoked by aesthetic experiences such as the sublime, the beautiful, and the tragic in life and art. In shaping students’ personalities today, the cultivation of aesthetic emotions through educational and aesthetic activities helps create harmony between reason and emotion, between material and spiritual needs, and between refined individuals and cultural beings.

From the perspective of personality structure, both morality and competence (including aesthetic competence) are closely interconnected, with morality as the foundation for the perception of beauty. In other words, ethical values serve as the basis for aesthetic awareness. In today’s era of rapid scientific and technological progress and intense global competition, students must strive to acquire knowledge and become competent professionals. Yet this condition alone is insufficient. Students must also possess integrity, an appreciation for beauty in life and thought, and aesthetic orientation in art. Without moral purity and a dialectical perspective on beauty, their talents may become misguided or even harmful to the community.

The process of cultivating aesthetic awareness for students is, therefore, a struggle between progress and backwardness, positivity and negativity within each individual. Statistical data from various organizations and research studies, as well as the Party’s assessments of student affairs, present a complex picture of student life, in which positive and negative elements coexist. This reality requires greater urgency, determination, and specificity in revolutionary moral education and progressive aesthetic awareness education for the younger generation.

The more society advances, the greater the need for aesthetic awareness education. In a context of cultural integration, unfiltered reception of foreign cultural flows may result in serious

consequences. For students, the outcomes of aesthetic awareness education depend significantly on the personality and moral example of educators, whose influence plays a decisive role in students' learning and personal development.

To ensure effectiveness, collective engagement is essential. Aesthetic awareness education for students can only succeed through the combined efforts of schools, families, and society. For this reason, it is indispensable to implement structured educational plans and strategies to instill proper behavioral awareness aligned with social interests and to help students appropriately assimilate aesthetic values.

In advancing educational development under the balanced principle of “*educating the person, imparting knowledge, and providing vocational training*,” the foremost priority is educating the person. This requires strengthening moral education and aesthetic awareness education to foster and develop moral qualities and aesthetic values within students' personalities.

Third, aesthetic awareness education plays a role in awakening hidden capacities and perfecting students' aesthetic competence.

Aesthetic awareness education nurtures in students a longing to integrate beauty into life, equipping them with the ability to perceive, appreciate, and evaluate creative activities according to the criteria of beauty. Thus, it stands as one of the most important objectives, orienting students toward noble personalities and enriching their emotional and aesthetic capacities.

In today's context of globalization and international cooperation, Vietnam has opportunities to absorb the cultural quintessence of humanity. However, this also entails challenges from the influx of harmful and reactionary cultural products. Hence, preserving and promoting the nation's cultural heritage while orienting students toward healthy and noble aesthetic values is an urgent task.

The aspiration for beauty is a fundamental human need. To see, create, and appreciate beauty—and to live and work according to the standards of beauty—distinguishes humans from all other beings. Beauty exists in nature and in society. For students to fully appreciate and internalize beauty, support from schools, social organizations, and especially educators is essential.

M.F. Opxiannhicop once affirmed: “*Love for beauty is love for life, creativity, and the struggle for noble ideals. Love for beauty gives wings to humans, filling their lives with vitality, profound meaning, and depth. In beauty, one finds aspirations for happiness, freedom, virtue, wisdom, and moral greatness. Such individuals dedicate themselves generously to others. They are innovators, great artists, and creators, who simultaneously serve as models of high aesthetic development. They create not only useful and necessary objects but also aesthetic values*” [3, pp.35].

Aesthetic awareness education is therefore a purposeful and planned process directed at students, helping them form and develop proper personalities, appropriate behavior in relations between the individual and society, the individual and labor, the individual and others, and the individual and self. It awakens latent creative capacities within them.

In reality, aesthetic awareness education for students today faces significant challenges. The large student population at universities, with diverse backgrounds, regions, and cultural traditions, results in varying levels of awareness and consciousness.

Among all dimensions of education, the cultivation of aesthetic awareness and appreciation of beauty must be emphasized. It is a long-term and continuous effort that must be implemented in all situations, not only during periods of crisis or urgent need.

Aesthetic awareness education should be integrated into the teaching of other subjects to ensure comprehensive development. The teaching profession, driven by passion for human development and the mission of national progress, requires educators to instill both knowledge and aesthetic sensibilities. Aesthetic education should not be limited to the transmission of knowledge. More importantly, its results must manifest in students' emotions, beliefs, and practical actions.

In today's digital age, students easily access new cultural streams through the internet and social media platforms, from urban centers to rural areas. While technological progress brings remarkable benefits, it also poses serious challenges that young people may easily fall victim to.

Given this situation, greater attention must be paid to aesthetic awareness education. Students need to correctly perceive their values and responsibilities in national development. As future educators and intellectuals, they must recognize their noble mission: to contribute knowledge to the building and defense of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. Students, as future owners of the nation, must be competent, virtuous, and aesthetically conscious.

Fourth, aesthetic awareness education guides students toward humanistic and humanitarian values—truth, goodness, and beauty—while providing them with “immunity” against the negative impacts of the market economy and hostile forces.

Students, as future leaders and contributors to national development, have become primary targets of hostile forces seeking to obstruct the socialist path in Vietnam. With their strategy of “peaceful evolution,” such forces constantly attempt to erode students' political convictions, lifestyles, and morality, aiming to turn them into selfish individuals disconnected from the national cause to which past generations sacrificed so much. Therefore, alongside academic learning, the construction of students' morality and aesthetic awareness becomes increasingly urgent.

The 10th Central Committee of the Communist Party of Vietnam assessed: “*Education, prevention, and struggle against the negative influences and manipulation of hostile forces on young people, as well as the propagation of foreign lifestyles incompatible with national cultural traditions, remain weak and even neglected*” [4, pp.81-82]. This reality requires immediate corrective measures to equip young people with the consciousness to resist and counter hostile schemes both domestically and internationally.

Aesthetic awareness education fosters in students scientific confidence in socialism and the revolutionary cause. It helps them establish correct perspectives, transforming the noble ideals of the Party into lived realities. Students become determined, creative, diligent, united, and committed to the common good, while adopting healthy lifestyles, respecting laws and community norms, and developing environmental consciousness.

Within the market economy, where the legal system is still incomplete, negative traits such as selfishness, hedonism, and disregard for conscience, honor, and dignity may resurface. At such times, aesthetic values—particularly those directed toward truth, goodness, and beauty—must act as a fundamental standard regulating cognition and behavior. This is especially vital for students, who are receptive to positive influences but also vulnerable to misconceptions and deviant behaviors.

By cultivating aesthetic awareness, students develop healthy lifestyles, the ability to recognize immoral acts, and the courage to oppose negative and anti-cultural phenomena. They are guided toward noble values and beauty, empowered to resist moral degradation, maintain faith in life, and establish proper motivations and attitudes in study and personal growth—thereby contributing to themselves and to society.

Fifth, aesthetic awareness education for students originates from their position, role, requirements, and responsibilities in the cause of national construction and defense.

At the 10th Central Committee, the Party affirmed: “*Youth constitute a great social force, one of the decisive factors for the future and destiny of the nation; they are the main force in various fields, undertaking tasks that demand sacrifice, endurance, health, and creativity*” [5, pp.35]—and students are a crucial component of this force.

Students are a unique social group. The history of Vietnam’s revolutionary movement demonstrates that students have always been closely linked to the revolutionary cause of the Party through their enthusiasm, conscience, and inherent qualities. Student organizations were established early on, in harmony with the nation’s revolutionary movements. Today, student volunteer campaigns also prove that students remain a special social force, combining youthful vitality, scientific knowledge, political courage, and moral character. Furthermore, students serve as a reserve for the intellectual class, and once they become intellectuals, their contributions to the nation grow even more profound and meaningful.

In his “*Letter to the International Congress of Socialist Students*,” Friedrich Engels wrote: “*You must make young people aware that the intellectual proletariat must be formed from among students, alongside and within the ranks of their friends—the manual workers... The cause of workers’ emancipation requires doctors, engineers, chemists, agronomists, and other specialists. The question lies not only in seizing political leadership but also in mastering the entire social production, which demands solid knowledge rather than empty rhetoric*” [6, pp. 552-553].

Similarly, the 10th Central Committee of the Party affirmed: “*In every era, intellectuals have served as the foundation of social progress. The intellectual community forms the core force in creating and disseminating knowledge. Through creative activities, Vietnamese intellectuals have made great contributions across all fields of national construction and defense*” [7, pp.81-82].

Experience shows that building an intellectual class cannot be achieved without fundamental training. The initial step toward forming the intellectuals of the future is educating them in universities and colleges. For students, their time in school represents a period of accumulating fundamental knowledge, skills, and professional thinking methods, which prepare them for deeper engagement in science and career development. Therefore, more than ever, aesthetic awareness education for students has become urgent. It helps them train themselves, orienting them toward truth, goodness, and beauty. Aesthetic and artistic education strengthens their resilience against life’s temptations, enhances their determination to overcome difficulties in study and self-improvement, and instills responsibility toward themselves and the community. In this regard, aesthetic awareness plays a vital role in encouraging students to resist evil and negativity, protect and promote goodness, and advance societal development.

In conclusion, the necessity of aesthetic awareness education for students at Hue University can be summarized as follows: It is essential to promote progressive and positive aesthetic values within the national cultural tradition; to foster patriotism, national solidarity, and socialist-oriented independence; to build an advanced Vietnamese culture imbued with national identity; and to gradually assimilate the cultural quintessence of humanity. This process will generate a rich and diverse aesthetic life, cultivating future teachers with noble ideals, strong political will, professional ethics, aesthetic and cultural knowledge, good health, refined lifestyles, compassion, passion for their profession, dynamism, and creativity.

Aesthetic awareness education is an indispensable component of comprehensive student education, contributing to the holistic development of future educators. True teachers are those with

comprehensively developed personalities, who use their character to educate the character of others. In aesthetic terms, this refers to their ability to embody the power of personality and act in accordance with the principles of beauty. Thus, aesthetic education for students at Hue University is essential for nurturing their character, educational competence, and capacity to live and act in harmony with the laws of beauty, as citizens and as future owners of the nation.

3. CONCLUSION

In the context of international integration and the rapid development of science and technology, aesthetic education for students has become more urgent than ever. This is not only about imparting knowledge of art but also about nurturing the soul, cultivating creative thinking, and fostering the ability to perceive beauty in life. The ultimate goal is to help students become well-rounded citizens who possess both professional competence and a rich spiritual life.

To achieve this goal, close coordination among schools, families, and society is essential. Schools must innovate their curricula, integrate aesthetic education into both formal and extracurricular subjects, and create spaces for students to practice and experience. Extracurricular activities such as art clubs, exhibitions, seminars, and field trips play a crucial role in stimulating passion and developing aesthetic talent.

Nevertheless, students themselves play the most important role. Each individual must take the initiative to explore, learn, and cultivate aesthetic awareness. Exposure to diverse forms of art, reading, and participation in creative activities will help students broaden their horizons and enrich their inner lives.

When aesthetic awareness is enhanced, students will not only be able to recognize and appreciate beauty but also to create new aesthetic values, thereby making life better. This forms the solid foundation for building a young generation with both talent and virtue, capable of meeting the demands of sustainable development in the current period.

REFERENCES

- 1) Communist Party of Vietnam (2021). *Documents of the 13th National Congress of Deputies*, Vol. 1, National Political Publishing House of Truth, Hanoi.
- 2) Communist Party of Vietnam (2021). *Documents of the Seventh Plenum of the 10th Central Committee*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi.
- 3) Communist Party of Vietnam (2021). *Documents of the Seventh Plenum of the 10th Central Committee*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi.
- 4) Communist Party of Vietnam (2021). *Documents of the Seventh Plenum of the 10th Central Committee*, National Political Publishing House, Hanoi.
- 5) Hoang Ngoc Di, Bui Dang Duy, Nguyen Tai Thu (1983). *Issues of Ethics and Aesthetics in the Transitional Period*, Institute of Philosophy, Hanoi.
- 6) Do Thi Thanh Huyen (2022). "Education and Development of Aesthetic Awareness for Students of Industrial Design Faculty – Hanoi Open University under the Impact of the Current Fourth Industrial Revolution," *Journal of Science, Hanoi Open University*, No. 93.
- 7) M.F. Opxiannhicop (Translated by Pham Van Binh) (2001). *Basic and Advanced Aesthetics*, Culture and Arts Publishing House, Hanoi.