Analysis of the Advantages of Online Platforms in Rural Art Education

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Abstract: Currently, rural areas face a significant deficiency in art education. To address this issue, it is essential to establish an Internet-based art education service platform and leverage mobile technology to deliver high-quality content, thereby overcoming geographical, sectoral, and audience barriers. The objective is to ensure comprehensive access to art education resources. Additionally, rural art education should integrate production and education to mitigate challenges such as teacher shortages and low-quality education. This approach aims to achieve cost-effective and socially beneficial outcomes through the art education network platform, ultimately contributing to the revitalization of rural culture.

Keywords: Rural revitalization; Online platform; Art education

1. Introduction

Art education plays a crucial role in nurturing students' well-rounded personalities and fostering their mental well-being. It serves as a guiding force for students to shape their values and enhances their aesthetic and moral sensibilities through the appreciation of beauty and goodness. This process aligns with the foundational objective of moral development and contributes to the advancement of quality education. In today's rapidly evolving digital landscape, the ongoing development and enhancement of online platforms, coupled with the integration of mobile internet technologies into the art education framework, represent an effective approach to advancing the digitization of education. By maximizing the quality and accessibility of mobile internet platforms, we can better serve the needs of the community and propel the digitalization trend in education forward.

2. Status of rural arts education

2.1. Backward educational concepts

The concept of rural art education is currently stagnant. In rural primary and secondary schools, teachers and parents often prioritize academic grades as the primary measure of success. This excessive focus on academic

achievement can result in the neglect of children's holistic development. Such an outdated educational mindset poses a barrier to enhancing the quality of rural family education [1]. It is often considered that exam-oriented education is superior to and more important than art education. Exam-oriented education is often perceived as superior and more crucial than art education, which is often dismissed as a mere hobby or extracurricular activity [2]. Consequently, the importance of art education is diminished in society, schools, and families, leading to detrimental educational practices. This approach imposes undue pressure on children to excel academically, disregards their developmental differences, and overlooks the significance of holistic education.

2.2. Inadequate facilities and staff

Limited opportunities for rural development, influenced by regional economic and cultural factors, have led to an imbalanced structure of rural teachers and a shortage of art experts. The reluctance of young teachers to work in rural areas has further exacerbated this issue. While there may be an adequate number of language and math teachers in small-scale rural schools, there is a significant shortage of teachers in subjects that contribute to students' holistic development, such as music, physical education, and aesthetics [3]. This imbalance inadvertently reinforces the prevalence of test-based education programs while marginalizing arts programs due to the limited availability of teaching staff. Research conducted in rural primary and secondary schools as well as kindergartens in the Suchen District of Suqian City revealed that only 23.81% of schools have professional teachers and teaching materials, while a mere 20.95% have classrooms equipped with professional equipment.

2.3. The singular form of teaching organization

Rural art education suffers from a low frequency of classes and a limited range of course organization, primarily relying on traditional classroom teaching and textbook-based explanations. This approach lacks innovation and interactive engagement. Moreover, due to the shortage of professional teachers and some instructors' low level of professionalism, art education content remains superficial, lacking fundamental teaching principles. As a result, students often lose interest in learning due to the dull and opaque content and unengaging teaching methods. Furthermore, the rigid teaching organization stifles the development of innovative thinking, independent learning, and self-inquiry skills, hindering their overall development.

2.4. Lack of facilities

The current art education facilities and equipment in rural areas are inadequate, especially in economically disadvantaged schools in impoverished regions. A chronic shortage of essential teaching equipment and materials hampers the orderly implementation of art courses according to the curriculum [4]. Survey data from this study reveals that rural schools lack professional equipment and dedicated spaces for art education. The majority of art courses, about 60%, are conducted in regular classrooms, while only 20.95% of students have access to specialized equipment classrooms for such courses. This scarcity of art education resources not only hinders schools' ability to provide comprehensive art education but also limits students' exposure to art resources, constraining the overall development of art education in rural areas and hindering rural revitalization efforts.

2.5. Feasibility of research on an online platform for arts education
2.5.1. Popularization of online education

On August 28, 2023, the China Internet Network Information Center (CNNIC) released the 52nd Statistical Report on the Development Status of the Internet in China in Beijing. As of June 2023, the number of Internet users in China had reached 1.079 billion, which is an increase of 11.09 million compared to December 2022.

The Internet penetration rate was 76.4%, and the number of Internet users continued to grow compared to previous years. The continuous development of network technology has laid the foundation for the implementation and popularization of online platforms for arts education.

2.5.2. Policy support

The 20th National Congress of the Communist Party of China (CPC) marked a significant milestone by including "promoting the digitization of education" in its report for the first time, emphasizing the integration of education, science, technology, and talent development. This highlights the crucial role of digitization in education [5]. Additionally, Article 10 of the Ministry of Education's "Opinion on Deepening Curriculum Reform in Basic Education and Further Promoting Quality Education" underscores the importance of curriculum reform in rural areas. The implementation of the "Remote Education Project for Rural Primary and Secondary Schools" aims to provide rural schools with access to high-quality resources, online training, teaching materials, and professional consulting services, ultimately contributing to rural revitalization through education. These initiatives serve as a policy guarantee for the implementation of internet-based art teaching platforms, aligning with the broader goals of education reform and rural development.

The government's strong support for higher education to contribute to rural revitalization emphasizes the importance of universities leveraging their professional expertise to address local development needs effectively. By tailoring their initiatives to meet specific requirements and challenges, universities can play a pivotal role in rural development efforts. Utilizing online education platforms, colleges can mobilize both faculty and students to establish mechanisms for online art education, thereby serving as a valuable resource for rural revitalization endeavors.

2.5.3. Social demand

The demand for online art education platforms is significant, highlighting a noticeable gap in the market for art education services. Arts education caters to the broader public and aligns well with the psychological development of students, making it highly sought after. However, the current market for art education resources is limited, and the costs associated with training are often high. While the prospects for the industry are promising, it's important to recognize that China's art education sector is still in its early stages, characterized by low market concentration, small-scale operations, significant homogenization, and intense regional competition [7]. Despite these challenges, the art education platform presents substantial development opportunities.

2.5.4. Teacher support and needs

In this study, 289 questionnaires were distributed through the Internet about the willingness to teach art, and all of them were retrieved. 176 of them were teacher-in-training and 80.19% of them were willing to participate in online art education; 70 of them were art major students and 90.62% of them were willing to participate in online art education; 43 of them were school teachers, and 83.72% of them were willing to participate in online art education. Overall, most of the respondents were supportive of art education.

2.5.5. Student support and needs

The questionnaire titled "How much do you know about art education" was distributed through Questionnaire Star and 210 copies were retrieved. The questionnaire was aimed at all age groups from kindergarten to high school to find out the general situation of art education in schools and their needs for art education. Among the art education courses offered in schools, painting accounted for the highest percentage, at 69.52%, followed by

music at 62.38%, and handicrafts at 38.57%. Furthermore, 54.29% of the respondents were very interested in learning art.

3. Importance of the art education online platform in the context of rural revitalization

3.1. Contributing to the rural revitalization strategy and promoting education equity

The art education network platform leverages the Internet's capabilities to transcend time and geographical constraints, thereby attracting numerous talented individuals to contribute to rural art education. Moreover, it fosters collaboration between industry and academia within colleges and universities. Given China's vast agricultural landscape and significant rural population, coupled with regional disparities in development, the successful implementation of the rural revitalization strategy necessitates the influx of talent into rural areas. Through integrated art education programs, professionals are trained to contribute to the revitalization efforts by leveraging their expertise to enhance rural education, foster cultural environments, and develop the art industry. This initiative lays a solid foundation for high-quality rural development [8]. Additionally, the establishment of the network platform has drawn in a diverse pool of college students and experienced educators, thereby facilitating the cultivation of proficient and pragmatic teachers.

In rural areas of China, there is a shortage of teachers, particularly in the realm of art education. An online art education network platform employing online lectures can play a crucial role in leveling the playing field in terms of national education resources. By aggregating educational materials from top-tier teachers nationwide, this platform can provide access to rural students and educators, thereby advancing educational equity. Furthermore, the widespread adoption of the network platform can incentivize local governments to enhance rural internet infrastructure and other essential facilities, spur growth in the rural cultural industry, and ultimately accelerate rural revitalization efforts.

3.2. Promoting rural culture and economic development

As a vital component of rural cultural revitalization, art education plays a crucial role in awakening cultural identity, promoting public art and culture, consolidating resources for cultural innovation, and nurturing talent for rural revitalization [9]. The online platform facilitates rural art education by providing ample educational resources for rural teachers and students. Many villages boast unique cultural heritage, such as distinctive paper-cutting, opera, intangible cultural heritage, folk customs, or breathtaking natural scenery. However, various constraints hinder the dissemination of rural culture. Nevertheless, the establishment of a networked art education platform can leverage the internet to raise awareness of local rural culture, fostering the development of local art industries and tourism. Additionally, the platform's associated service industries, including those in rural areas, stand to benefit and stimulate growth in the surrounding areas. Furthermore, this presents opportunities for individuals to acquire relevant knowledge and skills in the art field, which can be utilized to enhance their hometowns and further drive rural revitalization efforts.

3.3. Contributing to the popularization of arts education for rural students

The popularity of art education is important for the growth of children. Art education facilitates the development of learners' cognitive abilities in a coordinated manner, contributes to the cultivation of aesthetic and creative thinking, and enhances learners' perceptiveness, imagination, and creativity [7]. The internet-based art education platform overcomes temporal and spatial constraints. Although it may be difficult to completely transform the current examination-based education system in rural areas in a short time, the popularization of art education

can help enhance the educational concept in these regions. The network platform provides children with more opportunities for independent learning, allowing them to choose art courses that interest them during their spare time. Moreover, the cost of learning through the network platform is comparatively low. In contrast to many tutoring institutions in the market, the platform's pricing structure presents a significant advantage, with a considerable portion of course resources being available for free. This affordability addresses the financial constraints faced by rural families.

3.4. Helping colleges and universities engage in educational practices

The establishment of the art education platform offers valuable internship opportunities for college and university students. In recent years, some institutions offering art and design education have been criticized for their lack of diversity and their focus on theoretical education rather than practical skills. Consequently, graduates often struggle to meet the demands of the design industry due to the gap between design education and market needs [10]. The art education network platform has a robust supervision and management mechanism, with specialists auditing teaching content and collecting objective feedback from students. This platform serves as a valuable resource for college students, allowing them to enhance their teaching skills, gain insights into rural revitalization efforts, and contribute to the empowerment of rural communities.

4. The network platform to empower rural art education strategy

4.1. Building an online art education platform

The objective of developing an online art education platform is to create a collaborative network service platform involving higher art education institutions, government bodies, enterprises, and other stakeholders. This platform will serve as a hub for production, learning, and research activities, guiding students beyond the confines of the classroom and into rural areas for practical experience. By engaging in hands-on activities in rural communities, students will develop a deeper understanding of rural life and cultivate a sense of social responsibility [11]. Establishing an integrated online and offline service platform via the Internet will enhance the accessibility and effectiveness of extending higher art education resources to rural areas [11]. This interoperable platform will streamline the delivery of resources and services, making them more accessible to rural students and educators. By bridging the gap between online and offline learning experiences, this platform will enrich rural art resources, contribute to the development of rural culture, and support efforts aimed at revitalizing rural communities.

4.2. Integration of course resources on online platforms and innovation of course formats

To address the current scarcity of high-quality art education resources in rural areas, we can utilize digital information technology to integrate and distribute national education resources, ensuring that excellent art education is accessible to everyone, regardless of their location [12]. Our focus should be on nurturing children's creativity, promoting awareness of red culture, and guiding them to develop a correct outlook on life, values, and the world. In arts education, content should be designed to reinforce the integration of arts with various fields such as science, society, health, and language, thereby promoting holistic child development [13]. The online teaching platform offers a variety of instructional modes that can enhance students' understanding of the course from multiple angles and senses and increase their learning enthusiasm and initiative.

4.3. Faculty management for web-based platforms

The quality of teachers and courses offered on online education platforms is crucial, highlighting the importance

of a robust supervision and review mechanism for platform courses. While many teachers on the art education platform are highly motivated college students with solid professional and innovative abilities, they may lack teaching experience. To address this, regular online training sessions should be conducted for these teachers before they begin teaching. Furthermore, it is essential to establish partnerships with relevant schools to create associations and organizations for training and reviewing lesson plans. For experienced teachers who may lack innovation, regular seminars and brainstorming sessions can be organized to facilitate collaboration and idea exchange among registered platform teachers. Additionally, the platform should include an audit department responsible for reviewing each teacher's course content in advance and monitoring course feedback in real time. This allows for adjustments to be made to improve the program and ensure timely student feedback and support.

5. Conclusion

The revitalization of rural areas is closely linked to education, as high-quality education is fundamental for the sustainable development of rural communities. It plays a crucial role in rural modernization and the overall revitalization of the countryside, providing strategic support to strengthen the region [14]. While rural art education currently faces challenges, leveraging art education for rural empowerment is a gradual process. However, by harnessing the power of the Internet to integrate art education resources, empowering rural art education becomes feasible. Accelerating the construction and development of art education is not only vital for advancing education in the new era but also essential for nurturing socialist builders and successors [15].

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