ARTS EDUCATION AND TEACHER PROFESSIONAL IDENTITY FORMATION IN VIETNAM'S DIGITAL CONTEXT

EDUCAÇÃO EM ARTES E A FORMAÇÃO DA IDENTIDADE PROFISSIONAL DOCENTE NO CONTEXTO DIGITAL DO VIETNÃ

EDUCACIÓN ARTÍSTICA Y LA FORMACIÓN DE LA IDENTIDAD PROFESIONAL DOCENTE EN EL CONTEXTO DIGITAL DE VIETNAM

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ABSTRACT: In the context of rapid digital transformation, teacher education is undergoing significant changes in pedagogy, professional roles, and identity formation. Arts education, emphasizing creativity and reflection, can support teachers in adapting to digitally mediated learning environments. This study examines the role of arts education in shaping teacher professional identity in Vietnam. A mixed methods approach was employed with 187 participants, including preservice teachers and lecturers, using surveys, interviews, and analysis of digital learning artifacts from three institutions. Quantitative results show positive perceptions of digital arts education and its relevance to professional development. Qualitative findings highlight how reflective practice, creative engagement, and pedagogical expression contribute to identity formation, professional values, and teaching competence. The study also identifies key enabling factors and challenges, emphasizing the importance of instructional design and institutional support. These findings provide practical implications for policy, curriculum development, and teacher professional growth in digital contexts.

KEYWORDS: Arts education. Teacher professional identity. Digital transformation. Teacher education. Vietnam.

RESUMO: *No contexto de rápida transformação digital, a formação de professores passa por mudanças significativas na pedagogia, nos papéis profissionais e na construção da identidade. A educação em artes, ao enfatizar a criatividade e a reflexão, pode apoiar os professores na adaptação a ambientes de aprendizagem mediados digitalmente. Este estudo examina o papel da educação em artes na formação da identidade profissional docente no Vietnã. Foi adotada uma abordagem de métodos mistos com 187 participantes, incluindo professores em formação inicial e docentes, utilizando questionários, entrevistas e análise de artefatos digitais de aprendizagem provenientes de três instituições. Os resultados quantitativos indicam percepções positivas sobre a educação artística digital e sua relevância para o desenvolvimento profissional. Os achados qualitativos destacam como a prática reflexiva, o engajamento criativo e a expressão pedagógica contribuem para a formação da identidade, dos valores profissionais e da competência docente. O estudo também identifica fatores facilitadores e desafios principais, enfatizando a importância do desenho instrucional e do apoio institucional. Esses resultados oferecem implicações práticas para políticas, desenvolvimento curricular e crescimento profissional docente em contextos digitais.*

PALAVRAS-CHAVE: *Educação em artes. Identidade profissional docente. Transformação digital. Formação de professores. Vietnã.*

RESUMEN: *En el contexto de una rápida transformación digital, la formación docente está experimentando cambios significativos en la pedagogía, los roles profesionales y la construcción de la identidad. La educación artística, al enfatizar la creatividad y la reflexión, puede apoyar a los docentes en la adaptación a entornos de aprendizaje mediados digitalmente. Este estudio examina el papel de la educación artística en la formación de la identidad profesional docente en Vietnam. Se empleó un enfoque de métodos mixtos con 187 participantes, incluidos docentes en formación inicial y profesores, utilizando encuestas, entrevistas y el análisis de artefactos digitales de aprendizaje provenientes de tres instituciones. Los resultados cuantitativos muestran percepciones positivas sobre la educación artística digital y su relevancia para el desarrollo profesional. Los hallazgos cualitativos destacan cómo la práctica reflexiva, el compromiso creativo y la expresión pedagógica contribuyen a la formación de la identidad, los valores profesionales y la*

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competencia docente. El estudio también identifica factores facilitadores y desafíos clave, enfatizando la importancia del diseño instruccional y el apoyo institucional. Estos resultados ofrecen implicaciones prácticas para políticas, el desarrollo curricular y el crecimiento profesional docente en contextos digitales.

***PALABRAS CLAVE**: Educación artística. Identidad profesional docente. Transformación digital. Formación docente. Vietnam.*

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INTRODUCTION

In recent decades, digital transformation has emerged as a defining force reshaping education systems worldwide, profoundly influencing teaching practices, learning environments, and professional roles within teacher education. Advances in digital technologies, including online learning platforms, virtual reality, and immersive media, have altered how knowledge is constructed, shared, and experienced, thereby redefining the expectations placed upon teachers in contemporary educational contexts (Burke, 2020). Within this transformation, teachers are no longer positioned solely as transmitters of knowledge but are increasingly expected to act as designers of learning experiences, facilitators of creativity, and reflective practitioners capable of navigating complex digital environments (Kamran, 2025; Jing et al., 2025).

Against this backdrop, teacher professional identity has gained growing attention as a critical construct for understanding teachers' professional development and long-term commitment to the profession. Professional identity encompasses teachers' beliefs, values, competencies, and sense of purpose, and it is continuously shaped through professional learning experiences, institutional contexts, and socio-cultural conditions (Kenny et al., 2015). Research has shown that identity formation is not a static process but rather a dynamic and negotiated one, particularly during periods of educational change, such as the transition toward digitally mediated teaching and learning environments (Kim et al., 2021).

Arts education occupies a distinctive position within teacher education due to its emphasis on creativity, reflection, embodied learning, and meaning-making. A growing body of international research highlights the role of arts-based pedagogies in supporting teachers' reflective practices, emotional engagement, and sense of professional agency, all of which are central to professional identity formation (Kenny et al., 2015; Aluri et al., 2023). Arts-based learning experiences encourage teachers to explore personal values, experiment with pedagogical identities, and negotiate their professional selves through creative expression and dialogical processes. These characteristics make arts education particularly relevant in contexts where teachers are required to adapt to new digital roles and pedagogical paradigms.

The integration of digital technologies into arts education has further expanded its potential impact on teacher professional identity. Online creative arts teaching, virtual praxis, and immersive technologies such as virtual reality have introduced new modes of artistic engagement and pedagogical interaction, enabling teachers to rethink traditional conceptions of arts teaching and learning (Burke, 2021; Gonzalez-Zamar & Abad-Segura, 2020; Lehrman,

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2025). At the same time, these developments pose significant challenges, including issues related to technological readiness, pedagogical coherence, and tensions between traditional artistic practices and digitally mediated approaches (Dinham, 2024).

In Vietnam, digital transformation in education has been strongly promoted through national policies and regulatory frameworks, particularly in higher education and teacher training. Recent policy documents issued by the Ministry of Education and Training emphasize innovation in training programs, the integration of digital technologies, and the enhancement of teacher competencies to meet the demands of contemporary education. Within arts teacher education, scholars have noted both the opportunities and constraints associated with digitalization, highlighting the need to balance technological innovation with cultural preservation, pedagogical quality, and professional identity development (Huong et al., 2025). Despite these efforts, empirical research examining how arts education in digital contexts contributes to teacher professional identity formation in Vietnam remains limited.

This study addresses this gap by investigating the role of arts education in shaping teacher professional identity within the digital context in Vietnam. By drawing on empirical data from pre-service and in-service teachers and situating the analysis within relevant theoretical and policy frameworks, the study seeks to illuminate how digitally enhanced arts education influences teachers' professional beliefs, values, and competencies. The findings aim to contribute to international discussions on teacher identity formation while offering context-specific insights for the development of arts teacher education programs and professional development initiatives in Vietnam's ongoing digital transformation.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Arts Education in Teacher Education

Arts education has long been recognized as a vital component of teacher education, contributing not only to subject specific pedagogical skills but also to the holistic development of future teachers. Research consistently highlights that arts-based learning supports creativity, reflective thinking, emotional engagement, and professional agency, which are increasingly valued in contemporary education systems (Kenny et al., 2015). Through engagement with artistic processes, preservice teachers are encouraged to explore personal meaning, professional values, and pedagogical beliefs, thereby fostering deeper professional self-awareness and identity development.

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Beyond its intrinsic educational value, arts education has been closely associated with creative pedagogy and interdisciplinary approaches, particularly within STEAM education. Integrating the arts into STEM oriented curricula has been shown to enhance learners' problem-solving abilities, imagination, and socio emotional competencies, which are essential for effective teaching in diverse and rapidly changing educational contexts (Boice et al., 2021). Arts infused STEAM approaches promote empathy, collaboration, and communication, enabling future teachers to design learning experiences that address both cognitive and affective dimensions of student development.

In recent years, the digitalization of education has reshaped how arts education is delivered and experienced within teacher education. Online and hybrid learning environments have introduced new forms of creative engagement, including virtual studios, digital storytelling, and collaborative multimedia projects (Burke, 2020; 2021). While these modalities expand access and pedagogical possibilities, they also challenge traditional assumptions about embodied practice, artistic interaction, and assessment in arts education. Studies indicate that effective online arts teaching requires deliberate pedagogical design, technological competence, and reconfigured teacher student interaction (Dinham, 2024). Consequently, arts education in digital contexts has become a critical area for examining pedagogical transformation and professional development.

Teacher Professional Identity

Teacher professional identity is widely understood as a multifaceted and dynamic construct encompassing teachers' beliefs, values, competencies, and sense of professional commitment. Rather than being a fixed attribute, professional identity is continuously constructed and reconstructed through personal experiences, professional learning, and interactions within institutional and socio-cultural contexts (Kenny et al., 2015). In teacher education, identity formation plays a crucial role in shaping how future teachers perceive their roles, responsibilities, and long-term engagement with the profession.

Scholars commonly identify several interrelated components of teacher professional identity, including professional beliefs about teaching and learning, pedagogical and subject specific competencies, ethical and cultural values, and commitment to professional practice. These components interact to influence teachers' instructional decisions, classroom practices, and responses to educational change (Aluri et al., 2023). Arts based pedagogies have been shown to support the integration of these components by creating reflective learning spaces in

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which teachers critically examine assumptions, articulate professional values, and explore alternative pedagogical identities.

The process of professional identity formation is particularly salient during periods of transition and reform, such as entry into the teaching profession or shifts in pedagogical paradigms. Research suggests that identity development is shaped by tensions between personal beliefs and institutional expectations, as well as between established professional norms and emerging educational demands. Within teacher education programs, structured reflection, mentorship, and experiential learning are recognized as key mechanisms through which professional identity is negotiated and transformed over time.

Digital context and identity formation

The rapid expansion of digital technologies has significantly influenced teachers' professional practices and identity construction. Digital transformation has altered instructional modalities, assessment practices, and professional communication, requiring teachers to adopt new roles as designers of digital learning environments and facilitators of online interaction (Kamran, 2025; Jing et al., 2025). These shifts have important implications for teachers' perceptions of professional competence, authority, and pedagogical identity.

Online teaching and digital classrooms have redefined traditional teacher student relationships by emphasizing learner autonomy, collaborative knowledge construction, and multimodal communication. While such environments offer opportunities for pedagogical innovation, they also introduce challenges related to workload, emotional engagement, and professional confidence (Burke, 2020). Research on digital storytelling and online reflective practices indicates that digital tools can support professional identity exploration by enabling teachers to narrate experiences, reflect on pedagogical values, and connect personal and professional dimensions of teaching (Kim et al., 2021).

Within arts education, emerging technologies such as virtual reality and immersive digital platforms have further expanded possibilities for identity formation. Immersive environments allow teachers and learners to engage in experiential and embodied artistic practices that extend beyond physical classrooms (Gonzalez Zamar & Abad Segura, 2020; Lehrman, 2025). At the same time, the integration of such technologies raises concerns regarding pedagogical authenticity, equitable access, and the preservation of cultural and artistic values (Serna Mendiburu & Guerra Tamez, 2024). In the Vietnamese context, existing studies emphasise the importance of aligning digital innovation in arts education with national

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education policies, cultural identity, and professional development strategies to support sustainable teacher professional identity formation (Nguyen, 2020; Huong et al., 2025).

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

This research was developed from the assumption that teacher professional identity in the digital era cannot be adequately understood through a single methodological lens. Professional identity emerges through practice, reflection, and interaction with institutional and technological environments. For this reason, the study combined quantitative and qualitative approaches to capture both observable patterns and the less visible processes of identity formation.

Quantitative data were used to identify tendencies in participants' experiences with arts education and digital learning, while qualitative data provided contextualized accounts of how these experiences were interpreted and integrated into professional self-understanding. This design allowed the study to move beyond surface level description and to explore how digital conditions shape professional meaning making within teacher education settings.

Participants

The study involved 187 participants drawn from three higher education institutions responsible for teacher training in Vietnam: the Military University of Culture and Arts, Vietnam; the Hanoi National University of Education, Vietnam; and the National University of Arts Education.

Of the total sample, 152 participants were students preparing for teaching careers, while 35 were lecturers currently engaged in teaching and educational activities at the participating institutions. Participants represented different stages of professional development and varied levels of exposure to digitally supported teaching and learning environments. This diversity provided a broad basis for examining how professional identity is shaped across institutional contexts and career phases, without limiting the analysis to a single professional profile.

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Data collection

Data collection was organized in several complementary stages. First, a questionnaire was distributed to all participants to gather systematic information on their learning experiences, perceptions of arts education, and views on professional identity in digitally mediated settings. The instrument was designed to encourage reflection rather than simple evaluation, allowing participants to express degrees of agreement and personal positioning.

Second, in depth interviews were conducted with a smaller group of participants selected to reflect differences in experience and institutional background. A total of 20 interviews were completed, including contributions from both students and lecturers. The interview conversations were open ended, enabling participants to recount experiences, dilemmas, and moments of change related to their engagement with arts education and digital teaching practices.

Finally, documentary sources were examined to contextualize participants' accounts. These materials included institutional training documents, course descriptions, and selected digital learning outputs produced during arts related learning activities. The inclusion of learning artifacts provided additional insight into how professional identity was articulated through practice rather than solely through self report.

Data Analysis

Quantitative responses were processed using descriptive statistical techniques to identify general patterns and tendencies across the sample. Rather than focusing on prediction or comparison, the analysis aimed to clarify how participants positioned themselves in relation to arts education and digital learning within their professional trajectories.

Qualitative data were analyzed through an iterative reading and coding process. Interview transcripts and documentary materials were examined multiple times to identify recurring ideas, contrasts, and shifts in participants' narratives. Themes were refined through comparison across cases and institutions, with attention paid to how professional beliefs, values, and self-perceptions were expressed and negotiated over time.

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RESEARCH FINDINGS

Overview of the sample and data reliability

A total of 187 valid questionnaires were collected from participants across three institutions: the Military University of Culture and Arts, Vietnam; the Hanoi National University of Education, Vietnam; and the National University of Arts Education. The sample consisted of 152 students preparing for teaching careers and 35 lecturers currently involved in teaching and educational activities.

Reliability analysis was conducted for the main scales measuring perceptions of arts education in digital environments and teacher professional identity. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from **0.82 to 0.91**, indicating satisfactory to high internal consistency.

Table 1.
Reliability statistics of research scales

Scale	Number of items	Cronbach's alpha
Perceptions of digital arts education	12	0.88
Professional identity recognition	6	0.84
Professional beliefs and values	7	0.91
Creative pedagogical competence	8	0.86

Note. Author's survey.

Perceptions of arts education in digital learning environments

Quantitative results indicate that participants generally held positive perceptions of arts education conducted in digital learning environments. Mean scores for all perception dimensions were above the neutral midpoint (3.00), suggesting overall agreement with the pedagogical value of digitally mediated arts education.

Table 2.
Perceptions of arts education in digital environments (Likert 1–5)

Dimension	All participants M (SD)	Students M (SD)	Lecturers M (SD)
Perceived relevance	4.12 (0.63)	4.08 (0.65)	4.29 (0.54)
Perceived feasibility	3.78 (0.71)	3.74 (0.72)	3.94 (0.66)
Pedagogical value	4.21 (0.58)	4.18 (0.59)	4.35 (0.51)
Institutional support	3.46 (0.82)	3.42 (0.84)	3.63 (0.74)

Note. Author's survey.

Lecturers consistently reported slightly higher mean scores than students, particularly regarding pedagogical value and feasibility, reflecting greater confidence derived from teaching experience. However, institutional support received the lowest mean score across

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both groups, indicating a perceived gap between pedagogical innovation and organizational readiness.

Interview data reinforced these findings. Most participants described digital arts education as expanding access to resources and enabling systematic reflection through stored artifacts and recorded learning processes. At the same time, concerns were raised about workload and uneven technical support across courses.

Impacts of digital arts experiences on teacher professional identity

Identity recognition

Identity recognition refers to participants' awareness of themselves as teachers, including role clarity, confidence, and professional agency in digital contexts. Survey results suggest that engagement in digitally mediated arts education contributed positively to these aspects.

Table 3.
Identity recognition indicators

Indicator	All participants M (SD)	Students M (SD)	Lecturers M (SD)
Clarity of professional role	4.05 (0.67)	4.01 (0.69)	4.23 (0.58)
Confidence in digital teaching roles	3.89 (0.72)	3.84 (0.74)	4.11 (0.61)
Sense of professional agency	4.14 (0.61)	4.10 (0.62)	4.31 (0.53)

Note. Author's survey.

Qualitative analysis revealed that identity recognition often emerged when participants were required to publicly present or justify their pedagogical choices through digital platforms. Students frequently reported a shift from completing academic tasks to thinking and acting as teachers when designing online activities and responding to peer feedback.

One student noted that revisiting recorded teaching demonstrations helped clarify personal strengths and limitations, while lecturers highlighted how digital environments compelled them to articulate teaching principles more explicitly.

Professional beliefs and values

Digital arts experiences were also associated with shifts in professional beliefs and values, particularly regarding the importance of reflection, creativity, and learner centred pedagogy.

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Table 4.
Beliefs and professional values related to digital arts education

Dimension	All participants M (SD)	Students M (SD)	Lecturers M (SD)
Value of reflective practice	4.32 (0.54)	4.29 (0.56)	4.46 (0.47)
Belief in learner centred teaching	4.18 (0.60)	4.15 (0.61)	4.34 (0.52)
Value of creativity in teaching	4.41 (0.49)	4.38 (0.51)	4.57 (0.43)
Commitment to professional growth	4.26 (0.57)	4.23 (0.58)	4.40 (0.50)

Note. Author's survey

Interview narratives showed that participants increasingly viewed reflection as an integral component of teaching rather than an additional requirement. Many described how digital portfolios and staged tasks encouraged continuous reconsideration of pedagogical decisions. However, several lecturers cautioned that creativity must remain grounded in educational purpose, noting the risk of prioritizing visual effects over learning outcomes.

Creative pedagogical competence

Creative pedagogical competence refers to participants' ability to design, facilitate, and assess learning activities that remain pedagogically coherent while leveraging digital affordances.

Table 5.
Creative pedagogical competence in digital arts teaching

Competence domain	All participants M (SD)	Students M (SD)	Lecturers M (SD)
Designing digital learning activities	3.97 (0.68)	3.93 (0.70)	4.14 (0.59)
Facilitating interaction and feedback	3.88 (0.73)	3.84 (0.75)	4.06 (0.63)
Assessing learning processes and outcomes	3.71 (0.77)	3.66 (0.79)	3.94 (0.68)

Note. Author's survey.

Artifact analysis supported these results. High quality learning artifacts consistently demonstrated alignment between objectives, tasks, and assessment criteria, while lower quality submissions often focused on final products with limited evidence of reflective process. This pattern suggests that creative competence in digital arts teaching is closely linked to pedagogical structuring rather than technical skill alone.

Facilitating factors and challenges

Survey and interview data converged on a set of facilitating factors and challenges influencing the effectiveness of digital arts education.

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Table 6.
Facilitators and challenges perceived by participants (% agree and strongly agree)

Factor	All participants (%)	Students (%)	Lecturers (%)
Adequate access to digital tools	76.5	74.3	85.7
Clear task structure and criteria	82.9	81.6	88.6
Peer collaboration and support	79.1	80.3	73.5
Uneven digital readiness	68.4	71.1	57.1
Difficulty assessing learning processes	72.2	74.3	62.9
Increased workload and time pressure	65.8	67.8	57.1

Note. Author's survey.

Interview data highlighted that facilitators were largely pedagogical rather than technological in nature. Participants repeatedly emphasized the importance of clear expectations, staged tasks, and timely feedback. Challenges were most pronounced in assessment and workload, particularly when digital activities were added without corresponding adjustments to curriculum structure.

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study offer a nuanced understanding of how arts education in digitally mediated environments contributes to teacher professional identity formation in Vietnam. By integrating quantitative patterns with qualitative narratives and artifact based evidence, the study demonstrates that digital arts education functions not merely as a delivery mode but as a formative space in which professional meanings, values, and pedagogical orientations are actively negotiated.

The consistently positive perceptions of digital arts education suggest that participants largely recognize its relevance and pedagogical potential. This result aligns with prior research indicating that digital environments can enhance access to resources, enable sustained reflection, and support documentation of learning processes in creative disciplines (Burke, 2020; Dinham, 2024). However, the comparatively lower ratings for institutional support reveal an important tension. While individuals demonstrate readiness to engage with digital arts pedagogy, organizational conditions and support mechanisms appear uneven. This finding reflects broader challenges in the digital transformation of teacher education, where innovation at the instructional level often advances faster than institutional structures and policies (Nguyen, 2020; Jing et al., 2025).

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A central contribution of this study lies in clarifying the relationship between digital arts experiences and professional identity recognition. The results indicate that identity clarity and professional agency are strengthened when participants engage in tasks that require articulation of pedagogical reasoning, public presentation of work, and iterative revision. These findings support theoretical perspectives that view professional identity as emerging through reflective practice and situated action rather than through abstract knowledge acquisition alone (Kenny et al., 2015; Kim et al., 2021). In the Vietnamese context, where traditional teacher education has often prioritized content mastery, digitally mediated arts education appears to create conditions for a shift toward more reflective and agentic professional identities.

The analysis also highlights the role of digital arts education in shaping professional beliefs and values. High levels of agreement regarding the importance of reflection, creativity, and learner centered pedagogy indicate that participants increasingly view teaching as a process oriented and adaptive practice. Qualitative evidence suggests that digital tools contributed to this shift by embedding reflection within learning activities, making professional thinking visible and revisitable. These findings resonate with arts based identity research emphasizing the role of creative reflection in aligning personal values with professional commitments (Aluri et al., 2023). At the same time, concerns expressed by lecturers regarding superficial production point to the need for careful pedagogical mediation to ensure that digital creativity supports depth of learning rather than aesthetic display alone.

Creative pedagogical competence emerged as both an outcome and a site of challenge. While participants reported growing confidence in designing and facilitating digital learning activities, assessment of artistic processes remained an area of relative uncertainty. This pattern reflects ongoing debates in arts education regarding the evaluation of creative work, particularly in online settings where process is less immediately observable (Gonzalez Zamar & Abad Segura, 2020; Serna Mendiburu & Guerra Tamez, 2024). Artifact analysis in this study reinforces the argument that effective digital arts pedagogy depends more on pedagogical structuring and clarity than on technological sophistication. Teachers who were able to align goals, tasks, and criteria demonstrated stronger pedagogical coherence and a more integrated professional identity.

Finally, the identified facilitators and challenges underscore the conditional nature of identity development through digital arts education. Facilitating factors were predominantly pedagogical and relational, such as clear task design, peer collaboration, and reflective

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prompts. In contrast, challenges related to workload, uneven digital readiness, and assessment complexity highlight systemic constraints that may limit the transformative potential of digital initiatives. These findings support calls in the literature for stronger alignment between pedagogical innovation, institutional leadership, and professional support in digitally oriented teacher education (Chow & Leung, 2018; Kamran, 2025).

IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings and discussion, several implications can be drawn for teacher education policy, curriculum design, and professional development in Vietnam.

At the policy level, the results suggest that digital transformation initiatives in teacher education should explicitly recognize the role of arts education in professional identity development. Rather than treating arts subjects as supplementary or peripheral, policy frameworks should position arts-based learning as a strategic component for fostering reflective, creative, and adaptive teachers. Clear guidance on integrating digital arts pedagogy into teacher education programs would help bridge the gap between national digitalization goals and institutional practice.

In terms of curriculum design, teacher education programs should prioritise learning tasks that make pedagogical reasoning and artistic processes visible. Digitally mediated arts activities should be structured around clear learning goals, staged tasks, and transparent assessment criteria, with reflection embedded throughout the learning process. Such design principles not only enhance learning quality but also support identity formation by encouraging teachers to articulate values, justify decisions, and revise practice based on feedback.

For professional development, the findings highlight the importance of supporting lecturers and teacher educators in developing pedagogical design competence rather than focusing solely on technical skills. Professional learning initiatives should create opportunities for collaborative planning, peer observation, and shared reflection on digital arts teaching practices. Mentoring and communities of practice may be particularly effective in addressing challenges related to assessment and workload management.

At the institutional level, universities should invest in coherent support systems that align digital infrastructure, pedagogical guidance, and workload allocation. Providing accessible platforms, technical assistance, and time for pedagogical experimentation can

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reduce barriers to meaningful engagement with digital arts education. Importantly, institutional leadership should recognize that identity development is a long-term process that requires sustained support rather than short term interventions.

Finally, for future research, this study points to the value of longitudinal and comparative designs that track identity development over time and across institutional contexts. Further studies could explore how different forms of digital arts engagement influence professional identity at various career stages, or how cultural factors mediate identity formation in digitally mediated arts education.

FINAL CONSIDERATIONS

This study examined the role of arts education in teacher professional identity formation within the digital context in Vietnam, drawing on empirical evidence from pre service teachers and lecturers across three teacher education institutions. By combining quantitative survey data, qualitative interviews, and analysis of learning artifacts, the study provides a comprehensive account of how digitally mediated arts education influences professional perceptions, values, and pedagogical practices.

The findings demonstrate that arts education in digital environments contributes positively to teachers' professional identity by strengthening identity recognition, reinforcing professional beliefs and values, and supporting the development of creative pedagogical competence. Participants reported greater clarity in their professional roles, increased confidence in digital teaching contexts, and a stronger commitment to reflective and learner centred pedagogy. These outcomes were particularly evident when digital arts activities required articulation of pedagogical reasoning, public sharing of work, and iterative revision based on feedback.

At the same time, the study reveals that the impact of digital arts education on professional identity is conditional rather than automatic. While participants expressed strong appreciation for the pedagogical potential of digital arts education, challenges related to assessment of artistic processes, workload, and uneven institutional support persisted. The analysis suggests that pedagogical design quality plays a more decisive role than technological sophistication in shaping meaningful professional learning and identity development.

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By situating these findings within the Vietnamese context of ongoing digital transformation in teacher education, the study contributes context specific insights to international discussions on arts education and teacher professional identity. The results highlight the importance of viewing arts education not only as a disciplinary domain but also as a strategic medium for professional identity formation in digitally oriented teacher education systems. Future research may build on these findings by adopting longitudinal approaches or comparative designs to further explore how professional identity evolves over time and across diverse institutional and cultural settings.

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