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Research on the Integration of University Dance and Multiple Disciplines Based on Steam Education

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Abstract

The integration of dance education with various academic fields has improved scholarly appreciation for the university within the framework of Science, Technology, Engineering, Arts, and Mathematics (STEAM) education. Currently, the integration of dance with additional academic disciplines in university curricula has remained restricted in many universities. Therefore, the present research aimed to explore STEAM education within the integration of university dance and multiple domains in China. The present research used a quantitative, cross-sectional study design to collect data from 500 students from universities in Shanghai, China. This study also implemented purposive sampling and distributed survey questionnaires to evaluate basic data through descriptive analysis. Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was employed to explore the relationship between the research variables. The primary research findings highlighted that STEAM education has a significant influence on dance and multiple disciplines of the university in Shanghai, China. The study also elaborated that institutional resource support to students and encouraging academic reflection influenced the integration of dance and multiple disciplines among the Chinese universities. In conclusion, efficient implementations of STEAM education are significant for promoting university dance and multidisciplinary integration. Moreover, inquiry-based learning, developing supports of institutions and creative thinking, along with reflective practice, may be constructive for universities in China.

Keywords: AI-Based Learning, Slow Learners, Virtual Reality (VR), 1C Schools

Introduction

STEAM education's multidisciplinary technique to innovative education that involves science, technology, engineering, arts, and math has garnered notice. Dance as an artistic and expressive profession has enabled creative higher education teaching and learning within this framework. The connection between art and science has significant amount of promise to improve education. Dance as an expressive art form plays a crucial role in aesthetics and culture as well as in integrating science into education to enhance educational content (Li & Chin, 2024). Dancing is more than simply expressing individuality, as it may also be a creative way for learners to develop technical and scientific ideas. This interrelated curricular education is swiftly advancing and increasingly getting incorporated into the educational system with creative technological approaches, including virtual reality (VR) and artificial intelligence (AI). Integrating dance into an interdisciplinary curriculum enhances students' artistic and physical skills while improving their cognitive understanding of technology and science. Therefore, the

merging of arts and sciences improves curricular material. It encourages innovation and fosters analytical skills that assist students' progress to STEAM education (Buono & Burnidge, 2022). Dance allows learners to experience STEAM visions through physical movement. These theoretical lenses establish dance as a creative and intellectual practice with supporting STEAM education's inquiry-based aim. The artistic fields embraced by STEAM can be varied (Wu et al., 2025). Divergent perspectives on the notion of STEAM education primarily originated from STEM, with the varying significance attributed to each of the five fields. STEAM education is an efficacious interdisciplinary method for addressing real-life problems. The change to STEAM ensured the development of different skills in addition to building knowledge. Hence, enhancing the development of students' skills by using active methods in cooperative function and through a learner-centred technique is important (Filipe et al., 2024).

Dance studies in colleges substantially enhance students' professional and personal development. Dance instruction markedly improves students' physical well-being and cultural consciousness. Students view dance learning as advantageous for enhancing self-confidence and expanding professional prospects. The instructors underscored the significance of systematic training and digital resources in contemporary dance instruction. Furthermore, dance programs enhance students' social engagement and underscore the necessity for new teaching methodologies. Dance education in China facilitates growth in multidisciplinary information, cultural interchange, and professional growth, offering a more comprehensive appraisal of its impact (Tan, 2026). Specifically, under STEAM education, higher education has shifted toward transdisciplinary and practice-oriented learning. Art-integrated STEAM encourages innovation, creativity, and critical thinking, which are needed to solve 21st-century global problems. Universities are increasingly recognising dance as a powerful medium for transdisciplinary integration as well as an artistic discipline. Dance as an actual and creative form of wisdom offers a unique opportunity to connect with science, technology, and maths. Adding dance to university classes like physics, biology, technology, and engineering lets students experience abstract theories through movement (Cui et al., 2026). The fast expansion of international finance and technological approaches has made developing transdisciplinary and inventive skills a crucial goal of education in the 21st century. National educational changes in China promote innovation-driven growth and interdisciplinary talent development, which includes dance in STEAM education. The position of dance education in academics helps to develop a well-organised curriculum with creative and analytical skills (Li, 2023). This innovative academic integration uses dance as a dynamic instrument for multidisciplinary exploration, which treats dance beyond a performance art. Elements such as rhythm and coordination are essential to dance education. These elements are closely relevant to concepts in mathematics, engineering and physics. Hence, the integration of dance education in technical and scientific fields helps students to learn and understand practical, complex concepts. Moreover, dance inclusion aligns with contemporary educational paradigms like STEAM in several fields, which underscore the significance of creativity and innovation in conjunction with technical proficiency. Higher education institutions often conduct research-oriented educational programmes through multidisciplinary curricula, collaborative initiatives, and the inclusion of dance. The arts advocate for human-centred perspectives and making learning more meaningful. STEAM education promotes the analysis of concepts such as progress, balance, structure, and design through project-based and practical learning across disciplines. It educates learners for the needs of

current society by integrating technical skills with creativity, promoting innovation, teamwork, and critical thinking (Papadopoulou, 2024).

Review of Related Literature

STEAM education has evolved as a transformative pedagogical paradigm in China, highlighting interdisciplinary integration and innovation. STEAM promotes innovation, objective evaluation, and analytical abilities through integrated educational experiences, enhancing the conventional Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) framework. STEAM is a structure that incorporates the arts. Recently enacted educational initiatives like the Education Modernisation 2035 framework have made interdisciplinary curriculum more popular in China (Tian & Kenayathulla, 2026). These improvements aim to boost students' inventiveness and proficiency. A 2025 study in Shanghai on "deep integration teaching" demonstrated that structured interdisciplinary methods can enhance students' practical skills and conceptual understanding without increasing academic pressure. Worldwide, educators endeavour to implement STEAM in education to cultivate talents necessary for the future (Huang et al., 2025). China's Education Modernisation 2035 require 10% of instructional time for transdisciplinary thematic study. The problem has progressed from transient initiatives to attaining profound, sustained curriculum integration that advantages all pupils, particularly under reforms such as China's "Double Reduction" policy (Rafiq-uz-Zaman, 2025).

There has been an increasing amount of research that investigates the incorporation of multidisciplinary approaches into STEAM education in China. In Chinese universities, the innovation of general studies models has demonstrated the significance of support from institutions and curricular design in facilitating multidisciplinary education. STEAM courses with cultural elements boost student engagement, creativity, and practical learning, reinforcing China's value of context-based and culturally appropriate education. In China's STEAM course history, development in general education, academic assignments, and core literacy have been prioritised over higher education, specifically higher vocational education (Li & Li, 2023). Meanwhile, excessive imitation of Western STEAM curricula has resulted in a lack of humanistic viewpoints, inadequate integration with existing courses, and unsustainable development. The progress of STEAM education, matched with exemplary local culture, must consider the prevailing circumstances in China. This methodology has established a novel direction for the local advancement of STEAM education, significantly influencing the cultivation of regionally distinctive talent and the enhancement of China's exceptional local cultural education. The local culture of China serves as a spiritual foundation for its population, integrating the values and principles widely embraced by its domestic individuals. It represents the fundamental philosophy, artistic principles, and aesthetics of the national culture, serving as a source of motivation for innovative expression (Qian et al., 2023).

The most recent research generated from China has specifically investigated dance within STEAM environments. A significant study examined transdisciplinary dance-oriented STEAM education in Shanghai, China. Previous studies indicated that incorporating dance into STEM education improved student engagement, creativity, and collaboration using embodied learning methodologies. Dance basically integrates scientific and mathematical concepts of force, balance and spatial awareness, making it an invaluable resource for interdisciplinary teaching. It underscores the essential function of institutional support, such as adaptable scheduling and educator training in the effective execution and longevity of these projects (Mao et al., 2025). Moreover, current literature

evaluated that although arts integration in STEAM is increasing, dance is still comparatively under-represented relative to other creative forms such as visual arts and music. According to the researcher, interdisciplinary dance programs at Chinese universities are still developing and generally limited by a lack of institutional resources and curricular frameworks (Milara & Orduña, 2024).

Howard Gardner's Theory of Multiple Intelligences explained the standard comprehension of learning beyond visual and auditory methods. The researcher claimed that people generally have different types of intelligence instead of a single general ability (Gardner, 1983). The theory provided a strong framework which supported the integration of dance education with STEAM disciplines for university students. When STEAM education is combined with dance, it acts as an interdisciplinary medium to connect artistic expression and scientific ideas. This integration fosters practical learning to develop creativity, critical thinking skills and teamwork among university students (Li & Chin, 2024). Hence, the integration of dance into STEAM education encourages more effective learning and teaching methods across various domains.

Objectives

Research Objective

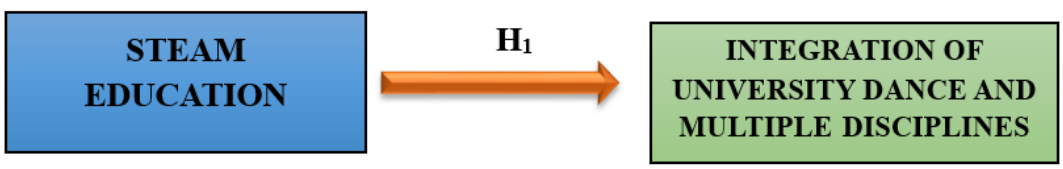
To examine the impact of STEAM education on the integration of university dance and multiple disciplines.

Methodology

Research Design and Procedure

This current research used a quantitative, cross-sectional study design to examine university-level dance and multi-subject integration based on STEAM education in universities in Shanghai, China. The research employed quantitative data to analyse trends and evaluate correlations among study variables. This study examined dance and STEAM pupils' viewpoints, learning experiences and teaching strategy. The researcher used purposive sampling to select students who were enrolled in both Dance and STEAM disciplines. The Likert-scale questionnaire included interdisciplinary learning, creative growth, technological integration, and motivation for dance education. The study survey instrument was prepared based on the criteria. The researcher performed a pilot study to ensure validity, whereas Cronbach's alpha was employed to estimate reliability. Additionally, the selected samples completed a questionnaire and SPSS version 25 was used to uncover measurable relationships between STEAM-based university dance integration and related outcomes. The confidence interval at 95% was employed to indicate the direction and size of the statistical connection. Descriptive analysis identified the key features of the data, and ANOVA examined the relationship between the variables.

Operational Framework



Subjects or Data Sources

This study used a survey to obtain primary data from dance students at Shanghai Universities. Participants were selected from STEAM universities. Students with dance and STEAM education were randomly selected. Students' perspectives, experiences in learning, and involvement in interdisciplinary dance courses were the main data sources collected via structured questionnaires. To supplement the research, course outlines and program descriptions on interdisciplinary or STEAM-based dance instruction were studied. These sources provided quantitative data to analyse STEAM-based interdisciplinary integration in dance programs at the Universities in Shanghai, China. There were two parts to the survey: (a) information on the respondents' demographics, and (b) a 5-point Likert scale with quiries about the integration of university dance and multiple disciplines based on STEAM education.

Instrumentation and Data Analysis

The present research used a purposive sampling technique to select valid and relevant study respondents in the research context. Raosoft tool recommended 384 research participants for the data collection for the study. Therefore, 565 survey questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. 535 questionnaires were returned to the researchers, from which 35 questionnaires were discarded because of inappropriate or incomplete responses. Henceforth, the final sample size was 500. Microsoft Excel as well as SPSS version 25 were employed for performing statistical analysis for the research study. The researcher employed a descriptive analysis technique to possess the key elements of the collected data, while ANOVA was used to assist in evaluating the data collected.

Limitations

The quantitative research had several limitations which might have affected the conclusion of the study. As the research was only conducted in Shanghai, it limited the application of the results to other regions of China or other parts of the world. Hence, this caused the generalisability of the findings. Moreover, the use of closed-ended survey questions prevented the responders from offering in-depth clarifications. Moreover, the cross-sectional research design restricted the potential to accurately capture the changes in students' opinions and learning experiences. Additionally, the study had a small sample size, which limited the findings from being wider and more comprehensive. Ultimately, the results would not be generalisable beyond the selected population, as there are variabilities in demographic characteristics and educational exposure patterns of the respondents of the study

Analysis

Factor Analysis

The primary goal of Factor Analysis (FA) is to indicate the influencing element structure of a collection of measurement components. It is recognised that latent elements influence the scores of the identified variables. The preliminary objective of this work is to establish pathways of causality between latent causes, measurement inaccuracies, and visible phenomena. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) test is employed to decide if the gathered information is adequate for FA. It has been shown that the individual model and its associated variables' sampling adequacy are evaluated. The existence of duplicates might be uncovered by the data.

With the goal to aid the investigator, KMO gives them a number between 0 and 1. A KMO value, which lies between 0.8 and 1, defines an appropriate sample population.

According to Kaiser, the following have been considered the parameters that are suitable: Kaiser has the following certification requirements:

- An appalling 0.50 to 0.59; well below the usual range of 0.60 to 0.69; The typical range for middle grades is between 0.70 and 0.79.
- A quality point score between 0.80 and 0.89. The interval from 0.90 to 1.00 astounds them.

Table 1: Examination of KMO and Bartlett's Sampling Adequacy
According to the KMO scale: 0.895.
The approximate Chi-Square value: 4580.258.
190 is degrees of freedom (df); sig = 0.000.

Table 1. KMO and Bartlett's Test.

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO)		0.895
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	approximate Chi-Square value:	4580.258
	df	190
	Sig.	0.000

The researchers used Bartlett's Sphericity Test to identify the comprehensive significance of the correlation matrices. The KMO score was 0.895, which indicated the sampling adequacy. Based on Bartlett's Sphericity Test, the p-value was 0.00. A significant outcome from Bartlett's Sphericity Test indicated that the correlation matrix was not an identity matrix.

Independent Variable
STEAM education:
STEAM education involves the arts disciplines into the syllabus and education of Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics. This method is identified as beneficial for producing fresh educational possibilities that prioritise practical design and objective evaluation expertise. This education methods boost the utilisation of creativity along with objective evaluation and analytical skills in learners to investigate real-life situations. Moreover, STEAM activities underscore cooperative learning and the enjoyment of learning. Technology encompasses not only the utilisation of advanced technology like computers and robots but also the integration of arts and crafts to create fresh solutions. A STEAM assignment typically provides a harmonious combination of modern and traditional methodologies (Leavy et al., 2023). Academic establishments are increasingly enforcing STEAM education methods to prepare learners for rapidly transforming advanced societies and various employment opportunities. STEAM education is a framework that integrates scientific and technical knowledge with creative practices to cultivate creativity and problem-solving. This methodology equips students to tackle intricate global issues by cultivating technical proficiency and innovative thinking abilities (Segarra-Morales et al., 2026).

Dependent Variable
Integration of university dance and multiple disciplines
University dance integration is an interdisciplinary approach to education that combines dance with academic fields to offer a comprehensive and advanced learning environment. It converts dance from a strictly artistic topic into a multidisciplinary area that fosters creativity, comprehension and the application of practical knowledge by combining

disciplines like science, technology, engineering, humanities, social sciences and mathematics (Li & Chin, 2024). The idea is rooted in interdisciplinary learning, which integrates approaches, ideas and practices from various fields to improve educational results and address complicated challenges. Interdisciplinary integration authorises greater collaboration and production of concepts. Dance integration in university education encourages experiential and project-based education by engaging students in real-world situations. Digital technology may be related to dance via multimedia performance and VR applications. It can further draw on psychology, cultural studies, sociology and history to examine emotional expression, communication and cultural relevance. It is an integrated strategy that promotes analytical skills, creativity, teamwork and strategic planning skills that are important in both creative and professional contexts (Yu et al., 2025).

Relationship between STEAM education and integration of university dance and multiple disciplines

The relation between STEAM education and the incorporation of other disciplines with dance at the university level is deeply interconnected, as both emphasise interdisciplinary instruction, creativity, and practical problem-solving in higher education institutions. STEAM education creates a conceptual and practical foundation for integrating dance with other academic fields. Higher education STEAM supports the integration of scientific and technological knowledge with creative practice, where dance is a performing art and a means for cognitive, analytical, and innovative learning. A recent study suggests that the objective of STEAM techniques in universities is to provide learners with transdisciplinary competencies, foster intellectual curiosity, and encourage collaborative solutions to complex global challenges. This is in good agreement with the introduction of dance in the university, a place where students encounter a range of disciplines, including physics, psychology, digital technology and cultural studies, via learning through movement (Huang et al., 2025). The incorporation of dance into the STEAM framework enhances both intellectual and artistic abilities. Previous studies demonstrate that the amalgamation of dance and technological principles significantly improves learners' innovation, analytical abilities, and scientific literacy, highlighting the significance of interdisciplinary educational methods. In this context, dance serves as a medium bridging the abstract notions of science and the concrete experience of understanding. For instance, dance can physically explore subjects such as movement, balance, and force, enabling students to cultivate a more intuitive comprehension of complex concepts. This underscores the primary aim of STEAM education in amalgamating information from several disciplines to provide pertinent and engaging learning experiences. STEAM-based integration promotes the incorporation of digital media, VR, and AI in dance education. These technologies are employed in multidisciplinary dance programs to enhance creativity and education. In STEAM education, combining dance with STEM subjects allows for a more adaptable, inclusive, and creative university experience by promoting creativity and new knowledge systems (Tan, 2026).

According to the discussion, the involved researchers have developed the mentioned hypothesis to investigate the meaningful connection between STEAM education and the integration of university dance and multiple disciplines:

"H01: There is no significant relationship between STEAM Education and integration of university dance and multiple disciplines."

"H1: There is a significant relationship between STEAM Education and integration of university dance and multiple disciplines."

Table 2. H1 ANOVA Test.

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between groups	85,896.598	195	8713.752	1154.598	0.000
With in groups	897.859	304	7.547		
Total	86,794.457	499			

Meaningful results have been drawn from this investigation. With a distinct F-value of 1154.598 and a separate p-value of 0.000, researchers can determine that the statistical importance is less than the 0.05 alpha level. The findings indicate that the alternative hypothesis, "H1: There is a significant relationship between STEAM Education and integration of university dance and multiple disciplines", was accepted, and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Findings & Discussion

Data analysis indicated a robust association between STEAM education and the interdisciplinary integration within university dance, and it was statistically significant. In addition to the fact that the variables in the dataset were highly associated with one another, the properties of the dataset were also suited for an analysis of factors. This indicates a reasonable level of sampling adequacy with a KMO score of 0.895. In addition, Bartlett's Sphericity Test yielded p = 0.000, which was found to be highly significant. Additionally, the results of the ANOVA test were highly significant, further strengthening the relationship, with a significant F-value of 1154.598 and a distinct p-value of 0.000, which was below the 0.05 level of significance. As a result of these statistical data, the null hypothesis was rejected and the alternative hypothesis was accepted, which determined a statistically substantial relationship between STEAM education and university dance and multi-disciplinary integration. Overall, these outcomes emphasised the effectiveness of the interdisciplinary approach in higher educational settings. An essential predictive association between the research variables was established by the size of the F-value.

The findings of the current study determined that STEAM education acquired a meaningful and statistically substantial effect on the integration of university dance with multiple academic disciplines in higher education institutions in Shanghai, China. The investigation indicated that interdisciplinary methods based on STEAM principles significantly improved the involvement of pupils, imagination, and collaborative learning activities in dance education. The results indicated that STEAM-based pedagogical approaches have significantly enhanced interdisciplinary study in university dance programs. The findings align with previous research indicating that arts-integrated STEAM methodologies enhance students' creativity, analytical reasoning, and profound conceptual understanding. The research indicated that students participating in STEAM-oriented dance instruction gained a deeper comprehension of scientific and technological principles through embodied learning. The study's findings indicated that students engaged in STEAM-oriented dance education achieved a more profound comprehension of scientific and technological concepts. This understanding was achieved using physical

experiences. This corroborates the conceptual framework of embodied thinking, which underscores the significance of physical exercise in cognitive growth and knowledge acquisition. Moreover, the implementation of digital technology, including digital reality and AI, into education in dance substantially enhanced innovative and immersive learning experiences. Students investigated novel artistic expressions while acquiring knowledge in technology and science through these devices. As a result, pupils exhibited enhanced problem-solving skills and a more expansive multidisciplinary viewpoint. The research specified some additional problems. There had been a scarcity of academic support and specialised training for educators. There was a frequent transformation of multidisciplinary curriculum design. Despite these limitations, the study findings underscored the way STEAM education enhanced the university dance and evolved into a dynamic and multidisciplinary platform. It also encouraged the growth and provided learners with important expertise for modern educational and professional environments.

Conclusion

The study found that STEAM education has a significant impact on university dance's integration across several fields in academic institutes in Shanghai, China. The study showed that dance education has effectively transitioned from a simplistic artistic endeavour to a comprehensive learning framework that integrates the multidisciplinary nature of STEAM. The outcomes also demonstrated that students who participated in STEAM-based dance education enhanced their critical thinking, creativity, and teamwork abilities in their overall academic and professional growth. This STEAM-based dance learning method enhanced students' cognitive involvement and facilitated inventive learning strategies. Additionally, the integration of digital technology improved the learning environment and fostered experiential learning. The study yielded significant knowledge into the efficacy of STEAM-oriented multidisciplinary education by analysing innovative teaching strategies and improved student participation. It was established that institutional support, curricular design, and teacher training were essential for the successful implementation of integrative techniques. Overall, the findings of this study indicated that STEAM education fostered new practices and provided an effective framework for enhancing the quality of dance instruction in universities through the integration of many disciplines. It also afforded students extensive possibilities for learning that have facilitated their academic and creative growth. The research underscored the necessity of ongoing initiatives to enhance interdisciplinary teaching methodologies to adequately equip students for the intricate requirements of modern academic and professional landscapes.

This study is important for higher education, especially when it comes to designing collaborative courses and finding new processes to teach. Traditional teaching methods and multidisciplinary curriculum design may help educators learn about new ways to teach STEAM subjects. Based on the study's results, educational institutes may want to rethink how they teach and how they plan their courses. By adding dance to STEM education programs, dance students may be able to improve their imagination, critical thinking, and ability to learn from different fields. By combining dance with STEM education, teachers may be able to construct more interesting ways to teach. It may give institutions the support that they need to promote an interdisciplinary education system. This study may guide lawmakers by providing information. It may also help academic leaders to innovate new ideas for research that can be done in the arts education field about STEM education. Overall, it may deliver understanding to future researchers for

further investigation regarding the incorporation of university dance and multiple domains of STEAM education.

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