Investigating the Factors Influencing the Teaching of Technical and Practical Courses in the College of Art in Iraq

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Purpose: The objective of this study was to investigate the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses in the College of Art in Iraq.

Methodology: This applied-developmental study employed a survey-cross-sectional design. The statistical population consisted of art teachers in technical and vocational programs in Iraq, with a sample size of 188 teachers selected through cluster-random sampling. Data collection was conducted using a questionnaire validated for face and construct validity, and reliability was confirmed with Cronbach's alpha coefficients exceeding 0.7. Data analysis was performed using SPSS and Smart PLS software to examine the relationships between variables.

Findings: The analysis revealed that strategic teaching planning significantly impacts educational, social, and individual outcomes. The contexts of technical and practical education and the teaching methods used in these courses significantly influence strategic teaching planning. Additionally, educational, human, and organizational factors were found to have a notable impact on the teaching of technical and practical courses. However, the traditional education system negatively affected strategic teaching planning. These findings align with previous research highlighting the importance of strategic planning, adaptive teaching methods, and the integration of modern technologies in improving educational outcomes.

Conclusion: Strategic teaching planning is crucial for enhancing educational, social, and individual outcomes in technical and practical courses. Educational contexts, teaching methods, and various influencing factors must be considered to develop effective strategic plans. The traditional education system's rigidity poses challenges to effective teaching planning, suggesting a need for more flexible and innovative approaches. These insights provide valuable recommendations for educators and policymakers to improve the quality of technical and practical education in the arts.

Keywords: Technical and Practical Courses, Strategic Teaching Planning, Educational Contexts, Teaching Methods, Educational Outcomes, Traditional Education System, Art Education, Iraq.

1. Introduction

The teaching of technical and practical courses in the arts is a crucial aspect of higher education, especially within the context of Iraq's College of Art. Understanding the factors that influence the effectiveness of these courses is essential for developing strategies that enhance educational outcomes, foster creativity, and prepare students for professional success. The creative function of college art education teaching has been a subject of interest in recent research, emphasizing the importance of creativity in the curriculum (Amiri et al., 2023; Bezi et al., 2024; Elhamifar et al., 2019; Faramarzi Babadi et al., 2024; Fel Araghi et al., 2024; Khosravi & Mehrmohammadi, 2023; Mahdian et al., 2022; Mirshamsi et al., 2024). Creativity in art education is not only about producing aesthetically pleasing work but also about developing critical thinking and problem-solving skills (Sadat Mousavi & Ebrahimi, 2024; Salman Al-Oda et al., 2024; Wang et al., 2024). Duan (2024) highlights the outstanding problems and potential countermeasures in the reform of fine arts teaching in China's colleges and universities, which offers valuable insights into the challenges faced globally, including the need for continuous adaptation and improvement in teaching methods (Duan, 2024).

One of the significant factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses is the educational context, which includes the physical environment, available resources, and institutional support. Guo (2020) analyzes the factors affecting the effectiveness of dance teaching in colleges using data analysis and decision tree models, demonstrating how data-driven approaches can identify key influences on teaching outcomes (Guo, 2020). Similarly, Han (2020) evaluates the teaching quality of college physical education using the analytic hierarchy process, underscoring the importance of systematic evaluation methods in assessing and improving teaching quality (Han, 2020).

In the realm of art education, the adaptability and competency of art teachers are critical. Kong (2020) develops an evaluation model for the adaptive teaching ability of college art teachers, which is crucial for responding to diverse student needs and evolving educational standards (Kong, 2020). This adaptability is further explored by Li (2021), who discusses strategies for enhancing the classroom teaching effect of professional art education, emphasizing the need for innovative and effective teaching practices (Li, 2021).

Technological advancements have also played a significant role in transforming art education. Liu and Wu (2023) evaluate music art teaching quality using a grey neural network, showcasing how advanced analytical techniques can provide deeper insights into teaching effectiveness (Liu & Wu, 2023). Miao (2020) presents an evaluation model and enhancement strategies for teaching reform capacity in art courses in higher vocational colleges, highlighting the potential for targeted improvements through systematic assessment (Miao, 2020).

The integration of intelligent technology in teaching has been explored by Peng (2020), who focuses on improving the teaching ability of professional courses in art design (Peng, 2020). This aligns with Wang's (2024) research on intelligent curriculum teaching for art and design majors, which emphasizes the benefits of incorporating technology into the curriculum to enhance learning outcomes. The use of virtual reality in art sketching, as investigated by Tan (2024), further exemplifies how innovative technologies can create immersive learning experiences that enhance student engagement and skill development (Tan, 2024).

Faculty perceptions and their readiness to adopt new teaching methods are also crucial for successful implementation. Shreaves et al. (2020) examine faculty perceptions of online teaching at a mid-sized liberal arts university, providing insights into the challenges and benefits of transitioning to digital platforms (Shreaves et al., 2020). This is particularly relevant in the context of blended teaching strategies for art design major courses, as discussed by Yu (2020), which combines traditional and digital methods to create a more flexible and effective learning environment (Yu, 2020).

The influence of entrepreneurial innovation on modern art teaching models is another area of interest. Zhang and Wang (2022) explore how entrepreneurship impacts teaching models, suggesting that fostering an entrepreneurial mindset among students can lead to more innovative and practical approaches to art education (Zhang & Wang, 2022). Xu and Tsai (2021) study the application of interactive English-teaching modes under complex data analysis, which, while focused on language teaching, offers valuable methodologies that can be adapted to art education (Xu & Tsai, 2021). The importance of interactive and engaging teaching methods is echoed in the work of Mannathoko (2013), who examines whether teaching practice effectively prepares student-teachers to teach creative and performing arts, with a case study from Botswana (Mannathoko, 2013). Information fusion

technology, as discussed by Wang (2024), also contributes to promoting the teaching practice of art design specialties in colleges and universities. This technology integrates various information sources to provide a comprehensive view of the educational landscape, enabling more informed decision-making and better teaching practices (Wang, 2024).

The strategic planning of teaching, particularly in technical and practical courses, requires a multifaceted approach that considers educational, human, organizational, and environmental factors. This study aims to build on the existing literature by examining these factors in the context of Iraq's College of Art, using robust data analysis methods to provide actionable insights for educators and policymakers. In conclusion, the teaching of technical and practical courses in art education is influenced by a complex interplay of factors, including educational context, teacher adaptability, technological integration, faculty perceptions, and entrepreneurial innovation. By understanding and addressing these factors, educators can develop more effective teaching strategies that enhance student learning outcomes and prepare them for professional success in the arts. This study contributes to this understanding by providing a comprehensive analysis of the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses in the College of Art in Iraq, offering valuable insights for the broader field of art education.

2. Methods and Materials

2.1. Study Design and Participants

This research is an applied-developmental study aimed at investigating the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses in the College of Art in Iraq. It employs a survey-cross-sectional design for data collection. The statistical population for the quantitative section includes art teachers of technical and vocational programs in Iraq, with a total of 370 teachers based on obtained statistics. To calculate the sample size, Cochran's formula for finite populations was used, considering each school as a cluster, and several clusters were randomly selected. Consequently, 188 questionnaires were randomly distributed among the technical and vocational art teachers.

2.2. Data Collection Tool

To ensure the validity of the measurement tool, face validity was utilized. The questionnaire was reviewed by several university professors and experts in the field, and their feedback was incorporated. Additionally, construct validity of the variables was assessed using a measurement model, which is further discussed in the data analysis section. The reliability of the measurement tool was tested using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, which resulted in values above 0.7 for the research variables, indicating good reliability of the questionnaire. Data were collected through questionnaires distributed randomly among the selected teachers.

2.3. Data Analysis

After data collection through the questionnaires, the obtained information was analyzed using the Smart PLS software. This analysis included an examination of the construct validity of the variables using the measurement model. The reliability of the measurement tool, confirmed by Cronbach's alpha values, also contributed to the robustness of the data analysis process. The use of Smart PLS allowed for a comprehensive analysis of the data, providing insights into the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses.

3. Findings and Results

The reliability of the research instrument was examined using Cronbach's alpha, which was greater than 0.7 for all variables, thus confirming reliability. The composite reliability (CR) coefficient was also greater than the threshold of 0.7 in all cases (Table 1).

Table 1

Reliability of Research Constructs

Main Constructs	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	AVE
Strategic Teaching Planning	0.871	0.872	0.526
Contexts of Technical and Practical Education	0.815	0.815	0.575
Teaching of Technical and Practical Courses	0.848	0.849	0.523
Educational Factors	0.790	0.791	0.544
Human Factors	0.767	0.768	0.589

Organizational Factors	0.805	0.806	0.562
Environmental Factors	0.810	0.810	0.568
Traditional Education System	0.835	0.835	0.548
Educational Outcomes	0.790	0.791	0.614
Social Outcomes	0.798	0.798	0.622
Individual Outcomes	0.813	0.813	0.572

The external section (measurement model) shows that the items considered for measuring each of the main factors are sufficiently valid. The strength of the relationship between the items and the corresponding factors is assessed by factor loading and their significance with the t-statistic. The results of the external model (measurement model) are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Results of the External Model (Measurement Model)

Items	Factor Loading	t-Statistic
Q01 → Environmental Factors	0.781	35.067
Q02 → Environmental Factors	0.744	25.756
Q03 → Environmental Factors	0.741	26.290
Q04 → Environmental Factors	0.763	32.373
Q05 → Environmental Factors	0.737	28.126
Q06 → Organizational Factors	0.723	23.984
Q07 → Organizational Factors	0.781	32.187
Q08 → Organizational Factors	0.734	27.343
Q09 → Organizational Factors	0.736	27.293
Q10 → Organizational Factors	0.771	32.857
Q11 → Educational Factors	0.705	22.775
Q12 → Educational Factors	0.726	26.370
Q13 → Educational Factors	0.735	28.506
Q14 → Educational Factors	0.769	33.913
Q15 → Educational Factors	0.751	28.688
Q16 → Human Factors	0.803	33.353
Q17 → Human Factors	0.766	31.272
Q18 → Human Factors	0.743	26.911
Q19 → Human Factors	0.756	27.241
Q20 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.725	26.402
Q21 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.738	28.070
Q22 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.754	32.037
Q23 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.716	24.696
Q24 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.736	28.496
Q25 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.692	23.304
Q26 → Technical and Practical Courses Teaching	0.700	24.728
Q27 → Contexts of Technical and Practical Education	0.720	22.938
Q28 → Contexts of Technical and Practical Education	0.729	25.160
Q29 → Contexts of Technical and Practical Education	0.783	35.442
Q30 → Contexts of Technical and Practical Education	0.785	33.321
Q31 → Contexts of Technical and Practical Education	0.772	33.038
Q32 → Traditional Education System	0.784	38.608
Q33 → Traditional Education System	0.740	26.089
Q34 → Traditional Education System	0.703	21.795
Q35 → Traditional Education System	0.749	30.243
Q36 → Traditional Education System	0.735	28.055
Q37 → Traditional Education System	0.727	26.704
Q38 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.750	29.101
Q39 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.701	27.474
Q40 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.714	24.922
Q41 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.693	21.564
Q42 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.711	24.265

Q43 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.742	29.641
Q44 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.735	28.214
Q45 → Strategic Teaching Planning	0.753	32.296
Q46 → Educational Outcomes	0.763	28.364
Q47 → Educational Outcomes	0.805	34.734
Q48 → Educational Outcomes	0.750	26.487
Q49 → Educational Outcomes	0.815	42.407
Q50 → Individual Outcomes	0.757	32.858
Q51 → Individual Outcomes	0.763	28.222
Q52 → Individual Outcomes	0.764	29.034
Q53 → Individual Outcomes	0.740	26.743
Q54 → Individual Outcomes	0.758	27.517
Q55 → Social Outcomes	0.808	34.395
Q56 → Social Outcomes	0.789	33.327
Q57 → Social Outcomes	0.768	30.506
Q58 → Social Outcomes	0.790	32.949

The factor loadings were greater than 0.5 and the t-statistics were greater than 1.96. Therefore, the external (measurement) model is confirmed.

The model's validity was assessed using the Partial Least Squares (PLS) technique. The results from the model's standard estimation show the direction and intensity of the relationships among variables. The Smart PLS software output for the standard estimation is shown below.

Bootstrap resampling was used to assess the significance of the model variables' relationships, which yields the t-statistic. At a 5% error level, if the bootstrap statistic is greater than 1.96, the observed correlations are significant. The t-statistic and bootstrap values for assessing the significance of the relationships are shown below.

Figure 1

Model Validation Output using Partial Least Squares (Standard Coefficients)
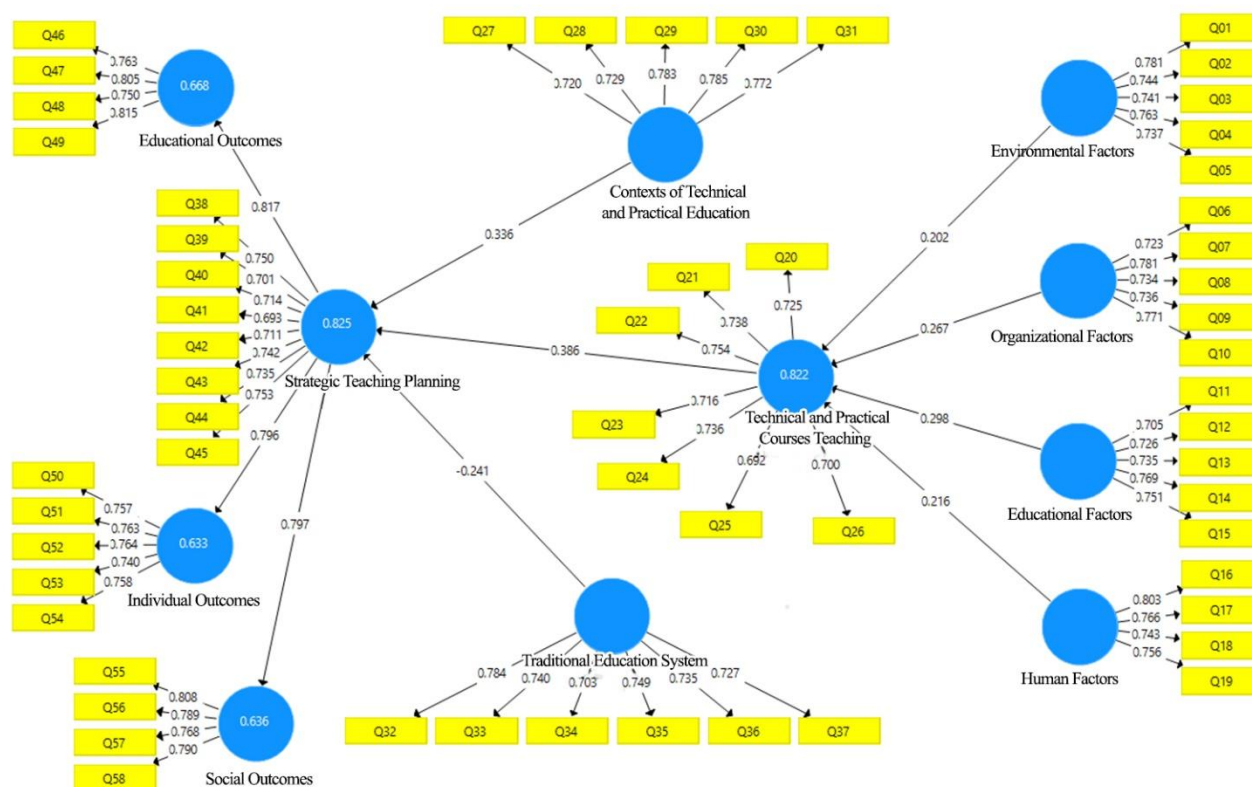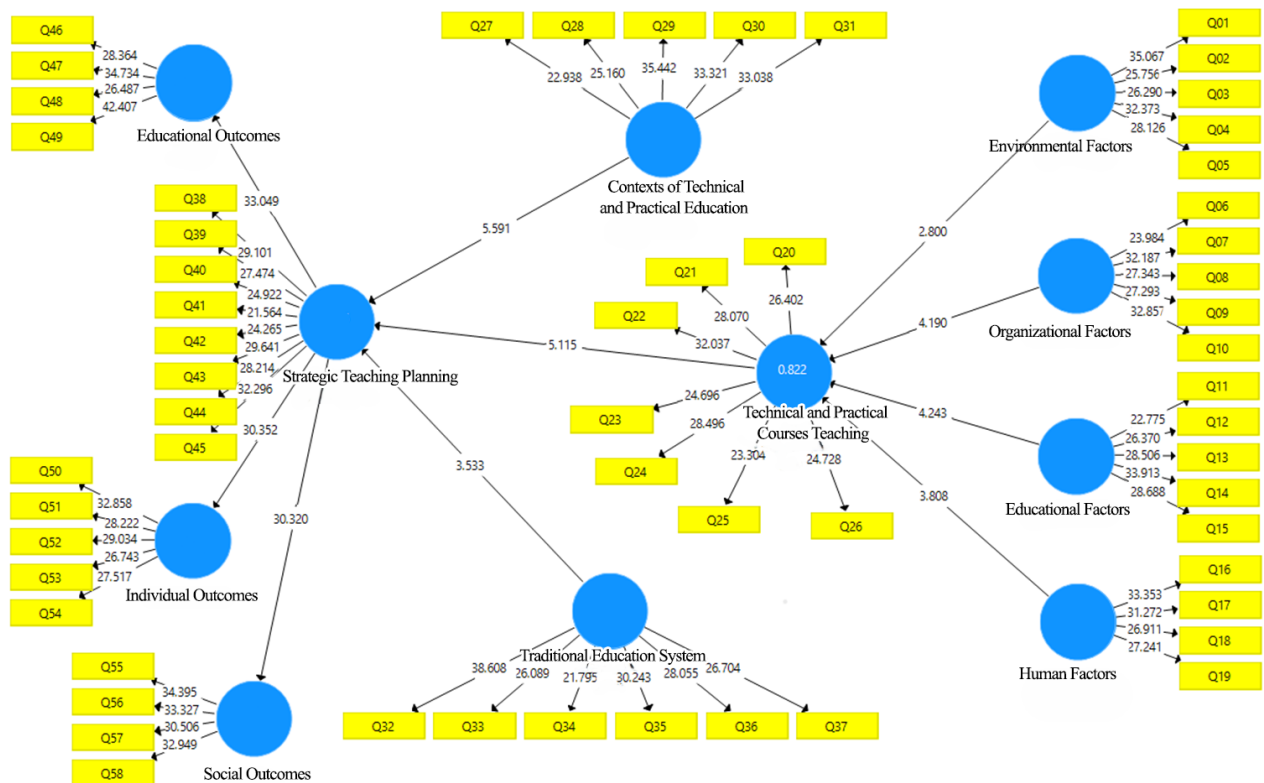
Figure 2

Significance of Variable Relationships using Partial Least Squares (Bootstrapping)

The path coefficient for Strategic Teaching Planning → Educational Outcomes was found to be 0.817, and the t-statistic was 33.049. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Strategic Teaching Planning → Social Outcomes was found to be 0.797, and the t-statistic was 30.32. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Strategic Teaching Planning → Individual Outcomes was found to be 0.796, and the t-statistic was 30.352. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Contexts of Technical and Practical Education → Strategic Teaching Planning was found to be 0.336, and the t-statistic was 5.591. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Teaching of Technical and Practical Courses → Strategic Teaching Planning was found to be 0.386, and the t-statistic was 5.115. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Educational Factors → Teaching of Technical and Practical Courses was found to be 0.298, and the t-statistic was 4.243. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Organizational Factors → Teaching of Technical and Practical Courses was found to be 0.267, and the t-statistic was 4.19. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Environmental Factors → Teaching of Technical and Practical Courses was found to be 0.202, and the t-statistic was 2.8. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

The path coefficient for Traditional Education System → Strategic Teaching Planning was found to be -0.241, and the t-statistic was 3.533. Therefore, this hypothesis is confirmed with 95% confidence.

4. Discussion and Conclusion

The purpose of this study was to investigate the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses in the College of Art in Iraq. The analysis revealed several key

findings. Firstly, strategic teaching planning was found to significantly impact educational, social, and individual outcomes. Secondly, the contexts of technical and practical education, as well as the teaching of these courses, significantly influenced strategic teaching planning. Additionally, educational, human, and organizational factors were found to have a notable impact on the teaching of technical and practical courses. Lastly, the traditional education system was found to negatively affect strategic teaching planning.

Our findings indicate that strategic teaching planning has a significant positive impact on educational outcomes, with a path coefficient of 0.817 and a t-statistic of 33.049. This aligns with Duan's (2024) analysis of fine arts teaching reform, which highlights the necessity of well-structured strategic plans to address existing educational challenges and enhance teaching effectiveness (Duan, 2024). The importance of strategic planning in achieving desirable educational outcomes is further supported by Li (2021), who discusses enhancement strategies for classroom teaching in professional art education. Li (2021) emphasizes that strategic planning enables teachers to structure their lessons effectively, ensuring that students receive a comprehensive education that enhances their skills and knowledge (Li, 2021).

The study also found that strategic teaching planning positively impacts social outcomes, evidenced by a path coefficient of 0.797 and a t-statistic of 30.32. This finding is consistent with the work of Zhang and Wang (2022), who explore the influence of entrepreneurial innovation on modern art teaching models, suggesting that strategic planning in teaching can foster social skills such as teamwork, communication, and leadership among students (Zarei & Mohammadi, 2021). Similarly, Mannathoko (2013) emphasizes that effective teaching practice prepares student-teachers to impart not just technical skills but also essential social skills, which are crucial for professional success in the creative arts (Mannathoko, 2013).

Strategic teaching planning was also found to have a significant positive impact on individual outcomes, with a path coefficient of 0.796 and a t-statistic of 30.352. This finding aligns with Liu and Wu's (2023) evaluation of music art teaching quality, which underscores the importance of strategic planning in enhancing individual student performance. By carefully planning lessons and activities, teachers can cater to individual student needs, fostering personal growth and development. This individualized approach is critical for ensuring that each student maximizes their potential and achieves their personal educational goals (Liu & Wu, 2023).

The contexts of technical and practical education were found to significantly influence strategic teaching planning, with a path coefficient of 0.336 and a t-statistic of 5.591. This finding is supported by Miao (2020), who discusses the evaluation model and enhancement strategies for teaching reform capacity in art courses. Miao highlights that the educational context, including the availability of resources and institutional support, plays a crucial role in shaping strategic teaching plans. A conducive educational environment enables teachers to implement their plans effectively, thereby improving the overall quality of education (Miao, 2020).

The teaching of technical and practical courses also had a significant impact on strategic teaching planning, with a path coefficient of 0.386 and a t-statistic of 5.115. This finding aligns with the research by Peng (2020), who explores the improvement of teaching ability in professional art courses through intelligent technology. Peng's (2020) study suggests that the effectiveness of teaching practical courses is greatly enhanced by strategic planning that incorporates modern technological tools. This integration of technology into strategic plans allows for more interactive and engaging lessons, which can significantly improve student learning outcomes (Peng, 2020).

The study found that educational factors (path coefficient of 0.298 and t-statistic of 4.243), human factors (path coefficient of 0.267 and t-statistic of 4.19), and organizational factors (path coefficient of 0.202 and t-statistic of 2.8) significantly impact the teaching of technical and practical courses. These findings are consistent with the work of Guo (2020), who analyzes the factors affecting the effectiveness of dance teaching in colleges. Guo (2020) emphasizes that educational factors, such as curriculum design and instructional methods, human factors, such as teacher competencies and student engagement, and organizational factors, such as institutional support and resource allocation, all play critical roles in determining the effectiveness of teaching technical and practical courses (Guo, 2020).

Interestingly, the study found that the traditional education system negatively impacts strategic teaching planning, with a path coefficient of -0.241 and a t-statistic of 3.533. This finding aligns with Tan's (2024) research on the application of virtual reality technology in art sketching, which highlights the limitations of traditional teaching methods. Tan (2024) argues that traditional education

systems often lack the flexibility and innovation needed to effectively teach technical and practical courses. This rigidity can hinder the development and implementation of strategic teaching plans, ultimately affecting educational outcomes (Tan, 2024).

Despite the comprehensive nature of this study, several limitations should be acknowledged. Firstly, the study was conducted within the context of Iraq's College of Art, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other regions or educational institutions. Cultural and institutional differences can significantly influence the factors impacting the teaching of technical and practical courses. Secondly, the study relied on self-reported data from teachers, which may be subject to biases such as social desirability or recall bias. Lastly, the cross-sectional design of the study does not allow for the examination of changes over time or the establishment of causal relationships.

Future research should consider expanding the scope of the study to include multiple institutions and regions to enhance the generalizability of the findings. Longitudinal studies could provide valuable insights into how the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses evolve over time. Additionally, future research could employ mixed-methods approaches, combining quantitative data with qualitative insights from interviews or focus groups, to provide a more comprehensive understanding of the factors at play. Investigating the impact of emerging technologies, such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence, on the teaching of technical and practical courses could also offer valuable contributions to the field.

Based on the findings of this study, several practical recommendations can be made. Educational institutions should prioritize strategic teaching planning to enhance educational, social, and individual outcomes. This includes providing adequate resources and support for teachers to develop and implement strategic plans. Incorporating modern technologies into teaching practices can significantly improve the effectiveness of technical and practical courses. Teachers should be encouraged to continuously update their skills and adopt innovative teaching methods to cater to the diverse needs of their students. Finally, institutions should strive to create a flexible and supportive educational environment that fosters creativity and innovation, moving away from rigid traditional systems that may hinder effective teaching and learning.

In conclusion, this study provides valuable insights into the factors influencing the teaching of technical and practical courses in the College of Art in Iraq. By addressing these factors, educational institutions can develop more effective teaching strategies that enhance student learning outcomes and prepare them for professional success in the arts. The findings of this study contribute to the broader field of art education and offer practical recommendations for educators and policymakers to improve the quality of technical and practical courses.

Authors' Contributions

The first author was responsible for conducting the interview and collecting data, and the other authors were responsible for analyzing the data and writing the article.

Declaration

In order to correct and improve the academic writing of our paper, we have used the language model ChatGPT.

Transparency Statement

Data are available for research purposes upon reasonable request to the corresponding author.

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Declaration of Interest

The authors report no conflict of interest.

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Ethics Considerations

In this study, to observe ethical considerations, participants were informed about the goals and importance of the research before the start of the interview and participated in the research with informed consent.

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