

Considering Axiology in the Development of Art

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ABSTRACT

The rapid advancement of science and technology has produced both significant progress and complex challenges, including value crises, cultural commodification, and dehumanization. In this context, art should be understood not merely as aesthetic expression or a creative industry product, but as a value-oriented cultural praxis. This study aims to examine the urgency of an axiological approach to art development and to formulate a conceptual framework that positions ethical, aesthetic, social, and spiritual values as its normative foundation. A qualitative descriptive design was employed using library research through a critical review of literature on the philosophy of science, philosophy of art, and critical social theory. The findings indicate that without a clear axiological foundation, art risks being reduced to an economic instrument, thereby losing its reflective, critical, and emancipatory functions. The study proposes four integrated axiological dimensions for art development: (1) the aesthetic-reflective dimension, which views art as a transformative and reflective experience; (2) the ethical dimension, emphasizing moral responsibility in artistic practice; (3) the social-communicative dimension, positioning art as a medium for dialogue, cultural interaction, and social criticism; and (4) the spiritual-existential dimension, which regards art as a means of seeking meaning and promoting human flourishing. These dimensions reinforce the role of art as a value-based social praxis that fosters critical awareness and supports the sustainability of human values. This framework contributes to the philosophy of art by providing a normative reference for artistic practice, cultural policy, and future studies grounded in humanistic values.

KEYWORDS

Axiology, Art Development, Philosophy, Humanistic Values, Cultural Praxis

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INTRODUCTION

The development of modern science and technology has brought significant changes to human life. On the one hand, these advances have generated convenience, efficiency, and improvements in material well-being; on the other hand, they have also given rise to various humanitarian challenges, including consumerism, cultural commodification, crises of meaning, and dehumanization (Santi et al., 2022). Modern instrumental rationality tends to position human beings and culture within the logic of production, efficiency, and economic profit. In this context, knowledge can no longer be regarded as value-free; rather, it is inherently connected to ethical concerns and social responsibility.

As a field within the humanities, art has also been affected by these transformations. Art is no longer understood solely as a medium of aesthetic expression and cultural reflection but is increasingly positioned as a commodity within the creative industries and the global cultural market.

This phenomenon can be observed in the development of contemporary visual art in Indonesia, where artworks are often evaluated based on market value, commercial popularity, and recognition from galleries and collectors, while their reflective, socially critical, and humanistic dimensions tend to be marginalized. The proliferation of art fairs, art investment practices, and the dominance of market preferences in determining artistic value demonstrate how artistic practices have become increasingly integrated into the logic of cultural capitalism.

This condition is highly relevant to the critique of the culture industry advanced by Theodor W. Adorno and Herbert Marcuse. Adorno argued that art within capitalist societies risks losing its critical potential as it becomes integrated into the mechanisms of industrial production and mass consumption (Adorno & Horkheimer, 2002). Similarly, Marcuse maintained that commodified art tends to undergo homogenization, thereby losing its emancipatory capacity to challenge oppressive social structures (Marcuse, 1978). These critiques remain relevant in the context of contemporary Indonesian visual art, where artworks are frequently produced according to global market demands, popular visual trends, and commercial interests rather than social reflection or humanistic engagement.

Although these developments have created opportunities for innovation and expanded public access to art, they have also raised fundamental philosophical questions concerning the value orientation of artistic development. In many cases, economic value has become more dominant than educational, ethical, and social values, causing art to risk losing its reflective and dialogical functions. Yet, art is fundamentally a cultural praxis that cannot be separated from the value systems of society.

Previous studies have demonstrated that art is inseparable from questions of value, culture, and social dynamics. However, most of these studies have addressed only specific aspects of the issue and have not yet formulated an integrated axiological framework for artistic development.

Kasiyan (2010), in his study on the representation of tradition and local culture in contemporary art in Yogyakarta, found that contemporary artworks function not only as aesthetic expressions but also as media for representing cultural identity and transforming local values. This study highlights the strong social and cultural functions of art in fostering cultural awareness within society. Nevertheless, the research focuses primarily on cultural representation and does not comprehensively examine art from an axiological perspective.

Hujatnika (2011), through his study of globalization and contemporary Indonesian visual art, argued that the development of contemporary art has increasingly been influenced by global market mechanisms, art fairs, auction houses, and the culture industry. According to Hujatnika, contemporary visual art has shifted from the public sphere toward market-oriented logic driven by economic interests. These findings reveal a growing tendency toward the commodification of art in the neoliberal era. However, the study concentrates more on globalization and the art market than on the axiological values underlying artistic development.

Mudana and Ribek (2016), in their research on the commodification of Kamasan Wayang painting, found that traditional artistic practices have undergone a transformation from symbolic and religious functions toward economic functions as products of the creative industry and tourism. Their study demonstrates how commodification can shift the cultural meaning of artworks toward market-oriented economic values. While this research is important in highlighting the tension between cultural and economic values in artistic practice, it remains limited to the context of traditional art and does not address artistic development within a broader philosophy of values.

Kusmara (2019), in his study of contemporary Indonesian visual art based on paper media, showed that the development of contemporary art is influenced by changes in technology, artistic materials, distribution systems, and evolving art discourses. The findings suggest that artistic development is shaped not only by aesthetic considerations but also by social, technological, and cultural factors. Nevertheless, the study focuses primarily on artistic media and contemporary art discourse and does not position axiology as the principal foundation of artistic development.

Wardani et al. (2023) investigated the commodification of art rooted in local cultural wisdom and found that local artistic traditions currently face significant challenges from popular culture and market-driven logic. Their study indicates that artistic development requires a balance between preserving cultural values and adapting to the demands of the creative economy. These findings

reinforce the importance of a value-based approach to artistic practice. However, the study remains focused on cultural commodification and does not systematically formulate the axiological dimensions of art.

Based on these studies, it can be concluded that previous research has examined art from the perspectives of culture, identity representation, commodification, globalization, and contemporary artistic development. Nevertheless, a significant gap remains regarding how aesthetic, ethical, social, and spiritual values can be integrated into a comprehensive framework for artistic development. Therefore, this article seeks to address this gap through an axiological approach by proposing four interrelated dimensions of value in the development of art: the aesthetic-reflective dimension, the ethical dimension, the social-communicative dimension, and the spiritual-existential dimension.

METHOD

This study employs a qualitative-descriptive approach using a library research method. Data were collected through an extensive review of primary and secondary literature relevant to the themes of axiology, philosophy of art, and cultural criticism. Primary sources were selected based on three main criteria: (1) their significant conceptual contribution to the development of axiological theory and philosophy of art; (2) their relevance to the relationship between art, values, and modern society; and (3) their broad academic influence within the fields of humanities and cultural criticism. Secondary sources were utilized to strengthen interpretations, compare perspectives, and broaden the analytical context.

The primary references of this study include the works of thinkers such as John Dewey, Max Horkheimer, Herbert Marcuse, Jürgen Habermas, Jujun S. Suriasumantri, and Kuntowijoyo. John Dewey was selected because of his conception of art as experience, which situates aesthetic value in a direct relationship with social life and human experience. Dewey's perspective is particularly relevant for explaining the humanistic function of art within the context of modernity.

Jürgen Habermas was chosen because his concepts of communicative rationality and the public sphere provide a theoretical framework for understanding art as a medium of social dialogue and a means of critiquing communicative distortions in modern society. Meanwhile, the ideas of Max Horkheimer and Herbert Marcuse are employed to examine the tendency of technological instrumentalism and the culture industry to reduce the humanistic values of art.

Kuntowijoyo and Jujun S. Suriasumantri were included because they represent important perspectives in the philosophy of science and the humanities within the Indonesian intellectual tradition. Kuntowijoyo proposed the concepts of humanization and transcendence in culture, while Jujun S. Suriasumantri provided epistemological and axiological foundations regarding the role of knowledge in human life. The inclusion of Indonesian thinkers is intended to ensure that the axiological analysis of art is not exclusively oriented toward Western paradigms but also takes into account Indonesia's cultural and intellectual context.

Data analysis was conducted through three stages: (1) conceptual data reduction, involving the identification and selection of relevant axiological concepts; (2) interpretive analysis, aimed at examining the relationship between values, art, and social practices; and (3) conceptual synthesis, through which an integrative axiological framework for the development of art was formulated. This approach was chosen because the study focuses on normative and conceptual analysis rather than empirical testing.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

1. Axiology and Art as a Form of Knowledge

Axiology is derived from the Greek words *axios*, meaning worthy or appropriate, and *logos*, meaning study or science (Bagus, 2005: 33). Etymologically, therefore, axiology can be understood as the science or theory that examines what is considered worthy and appropriate.

Several scholars have defined axiology from different perspectives. Jujun S. Suriasumantri (1994: 234) defines axiology as a theory of value concerned with the usefulness of acquired knowledge. Louis O. Kattsoff regards axiology as the branch of knowledge that investigates the nature of value from a philosophical perspective. Loren Bagus, meanwhile, compiles various

definitions of axiology as the analysis of values, including their meanings, characteristics, origins, types, criteria, and epistemological status. More broadly, axiology is understood as the study of the general theory of value or the study of everything that possesses value (Bagus, 2004: 33).

The foregoing discussion demonstrates that the central concern of axiology is the problem of value and its relationship to knowledge. The question of the nature of value may be answered in at least three ways. First, value may be regarded as entirely subjective. From this perspective, values are human responses generated by individuals as agents. Second, value may be considered a reality that does not exist within space and time. In this view, values are logical essences that can be known through reason. Third, value may be understood as an objective element constituting reality itself.

One of the branches of axiology that extensively examines the distinction between good and bad is ethics (Bertens, 1994: 6). As a field of study, ethics takes human behavior and actions as its material object, while its formal object concerns judgments of goodness and badness, morality and immorality. Consequently, actions performed unconsciously or without freedom cannot be subjected to moral evaluation.

In the development of contemporary art, the ethical dimension extends beyond the behavior of artists as individuals and encompasses the social and moral impacts of artworks themselves. Archer (2024) explains that artworks displayed in public spaces can influence how communities understand history, identity, and social relations. Public art is therefore never entirely neutral, as it always carries particular messages, values, and moral consequences. From an axiological perspective, an artwork should be evaluated not only according to its aesthetic quality but also according to the extent to which it respects human dignity, promotes social justice, and contributes to a more inclusive society.

In addition to addressing values of good and bad in relation to human actions and behavior, axiology also examines values of beauty and ugliness, commonly referred to as aesthetics. Aesthetics is generally understood as a branch of philosophy concerned with the phenomena of beauty in nature and art. Etymologically, the term derives from the Greek word *aisthetika*, referring to things perceived through the senses. Consequently, aesthetics is often defined as the philosophy of sensory perception.

It can therefore be concluded that axiology is a branch of philosophy fundamentally concerned with the nature of value in relation to human life and the development of knowledge. Originating from the etymological notion of what is “worthy” and “appropriate,” axiology evolved into a theory of value that examines the status, criteria, and rational foundations of values, whether understood as subjective, objective-ideal, or objective-real. Within the philosophy of science, as emphasized by Jujun S. Suriasumantri, axiology highlights the utility and moral responsibility of knowledge. Knowledge is thus not regarded as value-neutral but as inherently carrying ethical and social implications. Its branches, such as ethics as explained by K. Bertens and aesthetics, demonstrate that the realm of values encompasses both good and bad as well as beauty and ugliness as the basis for evaluating human actions and cultural productions. Accordingly, axiology affirms that all scientific and cultural activities are fundamentally situated within the domain of values and therefore require rational and moral accountability.

From the perspective of the philosophy of science, art is not merely understood as a form of aesthetic expression but also as a mode of knowledge possessing its own structure, methodology, and objectives within the humanities. Art functions as a means through which human beings understand reality—both objective and subjective—through symbols, images, and aesthetic experiences. Therefore, art may be positioned as a form of knowledge that contributes to the development of human understanding of the self, society, and the surrounding world.

Yunus (2020: 72) argues that art as aesthetic expression is the manifestation of an artist’s inner experience, expressed through the artwork and the media employed in its creation. Individuals experiencing emotional impulses or psychological pressures often seek to release such feelings through particular activities. Such activities constitute forms of expression. Whether verbal or non-verbal, expression is intended to convey messages to others. In this sense, expression may be understood as an act of communication. Yunus further relates this view to Robbins and Jones, who

define communication as a behavior, action, or activity involving the transmission of symbols that carry meaning, or the communication of ideas and information from one individual to another.

According to Sugiharto (2013: 54–55), art and science differ in several fundamental respects. Art seeks to reveal mystery and beauty while pursuing unique, personal, and particular experiences. Science, by contrast, analyzes reality through standardized formulations—often quantitative, explanatory, and predictive in nature—and seeks universal abstract patterns. Art operates through the logic of feeling and imagination, whereas science relies on conceptual and theoretical reasoning. In art, the relationship between subject and object is reciprocal and interactive, with each influencing the other. In science, however, the relationship between subject and object tends to be more detached and distanced.

Accordingly, Djatiprambudi (2017: 24) argues that art is essentially the embodiment of knowledge communicated through the language of feeling and imagination. Art encompasses concepts, methods, media, techniques, symbolic meanings, expressive styles, and socio-historical contexts that underlie its creation. Therefore, art ought to be understood through an intuitive approach that takes these dimensions into account in order to appreciate both its quality and the depth of its meaning.

Dewey, on the other hand, viewed art as a *reflective experience* that enables human beings to grasp the deeper meanings of life through the interaction between the individual and the environment. In Dewey's perspective, aesthetic experience is neither passive nor merely the consumption of beauty; rather, it is an active process involving perception, emotion, and intellect in an integrated manner. Consequently, art produces a form of knowledge that is holistic and contextual, differing from positivistic scientific knowledge, which emphasizes objectivity and generalization. This distinction does not place art in an inferior epistemological position; instead, it recognizes art as an alternative mode of knowledge possessing its own epistemological legitimacy (Wiratno, 2025).

As a field of knowledge, art cannot be separated from the dimension of value. The study of art is inherently *value-laden* because its object of inquiry is directly related to human beings, culture, and the meaning of life. The notion that art is value-laden implies that, within the philosophy of science, art belongs to the humanities, whose epistemological and axiological foundations cannot be detached from values. Art is not merely a descriptive object of study but a form of knowledge rooted in human experience, meaning, and expression. Dewey (1934) emphasized that art constitutes a reflective experience imbued with aesthetic value and existential significance; consequently, any understanding of art necessarily involves value judgments from the perspectives of creators, audiences, and researchers alike (Wiratno, 2025).

Kuntowijoyo (2006) further argues that the humanities are never value-free because they continually interact with the systems of values, ideologies, and social interests that exist within society. In this context, art does not merely represent reality; it also constructs and critiques reality on the basis of particular values. Therefore, claims regarding the value neutrality of art become problematic unless they are critically examined through an axiological perspective.

The meaning of value in art cannot be reduced solely to aesthetic dimensions such as formal beauty, harmony of color, or technical mastery. Art is fundamentally a multidimensional phenomenon encompassing ethical, social, cultural, and even spiritual values that are intertwined throughout the artistic process. These values are present from the creation of an artwork, through its distribution, to its reception and appreciation by society. Consequently, art is not merely an object of visual consumption or entertainment but a reflective medium that articulates profound human experiences (Dewey, 1934).

Furthermore, when examined from a deeper axiological perspective, art can be understood as a medium capable of generating social change. Throughout history, art has functioned as an agent of social transformation and a medium of collective resistance. Various forms of artistic expression—including visual arts, performance, literature, film, and digital media—have served as platforms for advocacy, identity formation, and critiques of unjust social structures. Art also contributes to the mobilization of public awareness, policy education, and social discourse concerning issues such as human rights, equality, and social inclusion (Annet, 2025).

This perspective is reinforced by [Evans \(2023\)](#), who argues that contemporary public art functions not only as an aesthetic representation but also as a form of *creative activism* that enables communities to engage actively with various social and humanitarian issues. Through participatory artistic practices, art can create spaces for dialogue across social groups, foster social solidarity, and encourage critical awareness of public concerns. From this perspective, the axiological value of art lies not only in its capacity to generate aesthetic experiences but also in its contribution to the development of a more democratic, inclusive, and just social life.

In the creative process, the value of art is reflected in the attitudes, intentions, and awareness of artists as they respond to social realities. Artists do not work in a vacuum; rather, they interact continuously with the historical, cultural, and moral contexts of their societies. Consequently, artworks often embody social criticism, humanitarian messages, and ethical reflections on inequality, injustice, and crises of identity experienced within society ([Hauser, 1982](#)). At this stage, art functions both as an expression of moral consciousness and as a form of symbolic resistance against systems of values that undermine human dignity.

A similar critique was articulated by Adorno, who argued that the instrumentalization of art deprives it of its capacity to function as a medium of critical reflection on society. Instead, instrumentalized art tends to reinforce the social status quo and reduce artistic practice to an economic object oriented primarily toward material profit. This perspective was further developed by Herbert Marcuse, who maintained that commodified art loses its power to challenge oppressive capitalist structures. Rather than serving as a force of emancipation, such art reinforces capitalist hegemony through processes of cultural homogenization ([Wiratno, 2025](#)).

The social and ethical values of art become even more apparent through processes of distribution and reception. Artworks presented in public spaces, galleries, digital media, and local communities function as forms of symbolic communication between artists and society. Through the process of appreciation, a dialogue of meanings emerges, allowing audiences not only to enjoy aesthetic qualities but also to reflect upon the values embodied in artistic works. In this regard, art serves as a medium of value education that is non-dogmatic, persuasive, and reflective.

[Hermansyah \(2024\)](#) identifies several important functions of art. First, art serves as a medium of aesthetics and artistic expression, through which artworks provide aesthetic value and visual experience. Second, art functions as a tool of political and social criticism, enabling artists to express opinions, challenge social norms, and address issues of identity and social concern. Similarly, [Bolonaki \(2023\)](#) argues that art can be understood in at least three ways. First, it strengthens cultural identity and collective historical memory, as artworks in public spaces often reflect cultural heritage and reinforce a sense of communal belonging. Second, art functions as a medium of social dialogue and education, particularly in contexts involving cultural understanding and public learning. Third, art serves as an instrument for the transformation of urban and community spaces, where contemporary artistic forms such as installations and murals contribute not only to aesthetic enhancement but also to social transformation and civic participation.

These phenomena can also be observed in the Indonesian context. Through a study of public art practices in the City of Semarang, [Ley \(2023\)](#) demonstrates that community-based artistic initiatives function not only as aesthetic elements of urban spaces but also as instruments for community identity formation, citizen participation, and the transformation of social spaces. In this context, public art serves as a medium that connects urban policy, local cultural expression, and community engagement in shaping living environments. These findings indicate that the value of art extends beyond its visual dimension and possesses tangible social functions within everyday life.

Within modern society, art plays a strategic role in addressing the crises of meaning and processes of dehumanization that emerge from the dominance of instrumental rationality. Modernity, as criticized by thinkers of the Frankfurt School, tends to regard human beings as functional objects within economic and technological systems while neglecting the dimensions of subjectivity, empathy, and moral value ([Horkheimer & Adorno, 2002](#)). Such conditions contribute to alienation and the weakening of social bonds and humanistic values.

In such circumstances, art has the potential to serve as an alternative space for revitalizing human values. Art offers aesthetic experiences that are reflective, contemplative, and communicative

in nature, enabling individuals to transcend the limitations of technocratic rationality. Through symbols, metaphors, and visual or performative narratives, art allows human beings to feel, understand, and interpret their lived experiences in a more holistic manner (Marcuse, 1978).

This perspective is consistent with Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action. Habermas (1984) positions cultural practices, including art, as forms of communicative action oriented toward the achievement of mutual understanding rather than merely instrumental success. Within this framework, art functions as a medium of value-oriented dialogue that creates opportunities for intersubjective interaction, through which individuals can share meanings, experiences, and perspectives on an egalitarian basis. Art thus contributes to the formation of a communicative and democratic public sphere.

The concept of communicative action finds particular relevance in various contemporary public art practices in Indonesia. Ley's (2023) study of public art in Semarang demonstrates that artworks situated in public spaces can facilitate interactions among government institutions, artists, and local communities in the process of constructing urban identity. Art becomes a medium of social communication that enables the exchange of meanings and the negotiation of interests among different actors, thereby supporting the development of a participatory and democratic public sphere.

Furthermore, the spiritual dimension of art cannot be overlooked, particularly within societies that continue to uphold religious and transcendental values. Art frequently serves as a symbolic medium through which spiritual experiences, the search for meaning in life, and the relationship between human beings and the Divine are expressed. This dimension reinforces the role of art as a means of integrating rationality, ethics, and spirituality within human life (Eliade, 1987).

Accordingly, art should be understood not merely as a form of individual expression or a cultural product, but also as a social praxis that contributes to the formation of value consciousness and the humanization of human beings. In responding to the challenges of modernity, art possesses emancipatory potential by reaffirming human dignity, strengthening social solidarity, and creating spaces for dialogue grounded in ethical principles and universal human values.

The findings of this study indicate that, based on an analysis of the relationship between knowledge, values, and artistic practice, an axiological approach to the development of art can be formulated through four principal dimensions.

2. The Aesthetic-Reflective Dimension

Drawing upon the thought of John Dewey, aesthetic experience constitutes a reflective experience that generates contextual understanding through symbols and imagination. Art produces a form of knowledge that is not merely explanatory but also interpretive and meaningful. Therefore, the development of art must preserve both its reflective quality and symbolic depth.

According to Dewey, aesthetic experience is not simply an experience of appreciating beauty; rather, it is a holistic reflective experience in which perception, emotion, and intellect operate in an integrated manner. Within this framework, art is not understood as a passive object of consumption but as a process of interaction between the subject and reality that generates new meanings. Aesthetic experience becomes a space for the transformation of consciousness because, through symbols, metaphors, and imagination, individuals are able to comprehend reality in a deeper and more contextualized way.

This aesthetic-reflective dimension affirms the epistemological legitimacy of art as a distinctive form of knowledge. Whereas empirical science is oriented toward explanation and generalization, art is oriented toward interpretation and the construction of particular meanings. The knowledge generated through art is qualitative, contextual, and existential in nature. Consequently, from an axiological perspective, the development of art should not be reduced to technical-formal aspects or merely to innovations in artistic media; rather, it must preserve its capacity for profound reflection and symbolic expression.

Furthermore, this dimension carries a normative implication: the quality of art should not be measured solely by technical skill or surface aesthetics, but also by its ability to generate meaningful experiences that encourage critical reflection. In the context of modern societies, which tend to be characterized by pragmatism and instrumental rationality, the reflective function of art becomes

increasingly important as a space for contemplation and the restoration of critical awareness. Thus, the aesthetic-reflective dimension constitutes the foundational element of the axiological framework of art, for it is through reflective experience that other values—ethical, social, and spiritual—can be mediated and articulated.

3. The Ethical Dimension

Art is never value-neutral. Critiques of instrumental rationality advanced by Max Horkheimer and Theodor W. Adorno demonstrate how cultural practices may be reduced to commodities within market-driven systems. Consequently, art must be grounded in moral responsibility and a commitment to human values.

The ethical dimension within the axiological framework of art emphasizes that every artistic practice carries moral implications, whether in the selection of themes, the representation of reality, or its impact on society. Art may reproduce stereotypes, legitimize power structures, and reinforce social inequalities; however, it may also function as a medium of criticism, resistance, and the defense of human dignity. Therefore, the development of art should not be oriented solely toward formal innovation or commercial success but must also consider its moral responsibility toward collective human life.

From this perspective, the ethical responsibility of artists and art scholars includes an awareness of the social consequences of artistic works, respect for human values, and a commitment to the principles of justice and solidarity. The ethical dimension is also associated with integrity in artistic creation and research, ensuring that artistic practices remain grounded in intellectual honesty and respect for the rights and dignity of the individuals and communities represented.

Accordingly, the ethical dimension reinforces the understanding that art, as a field within the humanities, is inherently *value-laden* and requires a clear normative foundation. Without an ethical dimension, art risks becoming trapped within an instrumental logic that neglects human values. Conversely, when guided by a strong ethical orientation, art can function as a form of critical praxis that contributes to the cultivation of moral consciousness within society.

4. The Social-Communicative Dimension

From the perspective of Jürgen Habermas's theory of communicative action, cultural practices are oriented toward the achievement of mutual understanding. Art functions as a medium of dialogue, social criticism, and the formation of public consciousness. Consequently, the development of art should consciously and normatively take its social impacts into consideration.

Through symbols, narratives, visual representations, and performative practices, art presents interpretations of reality that can be questioned, reinterpreted, and discussed collectively. Therefore, the social function of art extends beyond individual expression and becomes a form of public communication that fosters critical awareness. Art can address issues such as social inequality, injustice, identity crises, and broader humanitarian concerns, thereby encouraging society to reflect upon existing social structures.

Within this dimension, art serves three principal functions:

- 1) As a medium of social criticism, providing alternative interpretations of dominant realities and creating spaces for symbolic resistance against hegemonic power structures.
- 2) As a means of fostering public consciousness, through processes of artistic appreciation that enable audiences to understand social issues in a more empathetic and reflective manner.
- 3) As an agent of cultural transformation, since artistic practices can influence values, worldviews, and patterns of social interaction over the long term.

The axiological implication of this dimension is that the development of art cannot be separated from considerations of its social consequences. Value-oriented artistic practices should take into account their contribution to strengthening a democratic, inclusive, and participatory public sphere. Thus, art functions not merely as a cultural product but as a social praxis that contributes to the creation of more humane and transformative forms of communication within society.

The social-communicative dimension further reinforces the understanding that art, as a field within the humanities, carries an inherent social responsibility. It is not merely a representation of reality but also a symbolic force capable of shaping, critiquing, and normatively transforming that reality.

5. The Spiritual-Existential Dimension

Art also encompasses a dimension of meaning-making and transcendental experience. This dimension emphasizes that art is not only cultural in nature but also existential, and therefore its development requires a value orientation that transcends instrumental interests.

From an axiological perspective, the spiritual-existential dimension affirms that art is not merely a cultural practice or an aesthetic commodity but an integral part of the human search for existential meaning. Through art, individuals reflect upon their limitations, question the purpose of life, and seek deeper value orientations. Authentic aesthetic experiences often evoke an awareness of beauty, fragility, and the interconnectedness of human beings with a broader reality.

As a consequence, the development of art requires a form of value consciousness that is not solely rational-instrumental but also existential and reflective. Such an orientation encourages artistic practices that value depth of meaning, symbolic integrity, and the contemplative dimensions of human experience. In this sense, art functions as a space of transcendence through which individuals can reinterpret their existence in a more holistic and meaningful way.

Taken together, these four dimensions constitute an integrative axiological framework that positions art as a value-laden field within the humanities, fundamentally oriented toward the humanization of human beings.

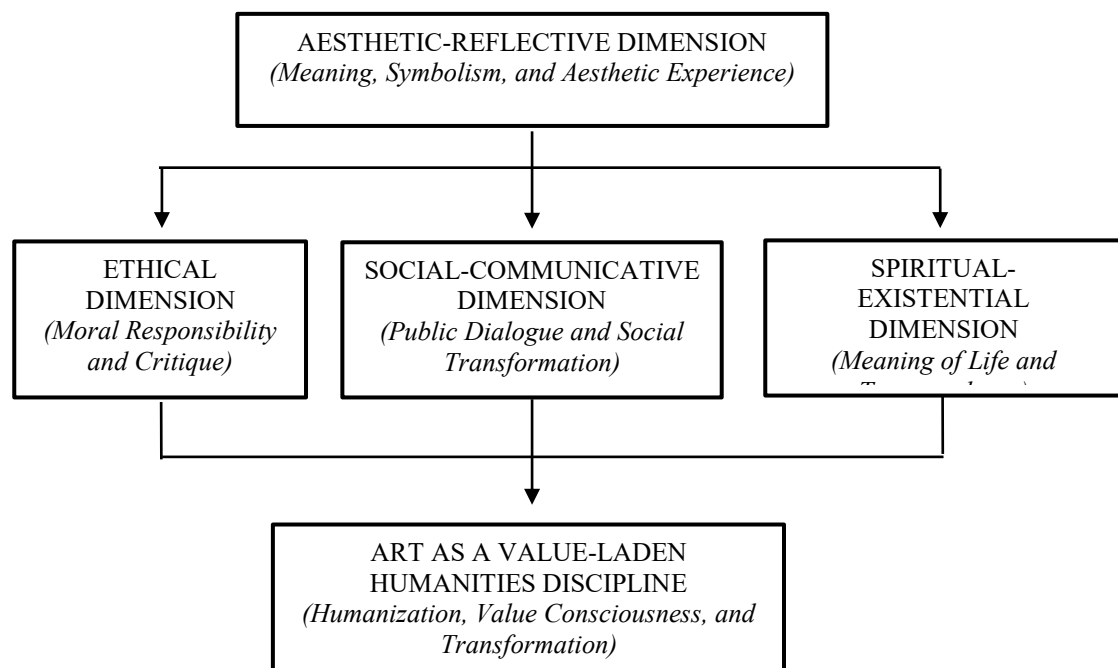


Figure 1. Integrative Axiological Framework for Art Development

The diagram illustrates that these four dimensions do not operate independently; rather, they interact with one another to form an integrative axiological framework. The aesthetic-reflective dimension serves as the foundation of artistic experience, while the ethical, social-communicative, and spiritual-existential dimensions expand the function of art as a form of humanistic praxis.

To clarify the conceptual relationships among the axiological dimensions in the development of art, this article proposes an integrative framework that demonstrates the interconnections among

the aesthetic-reflective, ethical, social-communicative, and spiritual-existential dimensions. These four dimensions do not stand in isolation but interact dynamically in shaping art as a value-laden humanities discipline. The aesthetic-reflective dimension serves as the primary foundation because it is through aesthetic experience that individuals acquire a reflective understanding of reality through symbols, imagination, and artistic experience. From this reflective experience emerges the ethical dimension, which positions art as a practice grounded in moral responsibility and a commitment to human values. The social-communicative dimension further demonstrates that art functions as a medium of public dialogue, social critique, and cultural transformation through processes of symbolic communication among artworks, artists, and society. Meanwhile, the spiritual-existential dimension emphasizes that art is also concerned with the search for meaning in life, transcendental experiences, and existential reflection. Collectively, these dimensions converge on the understanding that art is not merely an aesthetic activity but a form of humanistic praxis that contributes to the cultivation of value consciousness and the humanization of human beings.

This axiological framework possesses significant practical relevance for the development of arts and cultural policies. Within the context of public policy, an axiological approach can serve as a normative foundation for public art curation and the design of cultural development programs. Artistic works should be evaluated not only on the basis of formal aesthetic qualities or economic value but also in terms of their contributions to value education, the strengthening of cultural identity, and the enhancement of public social awareness. For example, urban mural projects, public art installations, and cultural festivals may be directed toward themes related to humanity, environmental sustainability, tolerance, and cultural diversity. Such an approach enables art to function as a medium of social communication that fosters a more reflective, participatory, and democratic public sphere. Furthermore, within the creative industries, an axiological perspective can provide a counterbalance to excessive commercialization, ensuring that artistic development continues to preserve its ethical, social, and humanistic dimensions.

In the context of art education, this integrative axiological framework can also be applied to the development of humanities-based curricula. Art education should not be limited to the acquisition of technical skills and visual innovation; it should also cultivate ethical sensitivity, social awareness, and reflective depth among students. This approach may be implemented through the integration of courses such as art ethics, philosophy of art, art and society, and cultural criticism into the curriculum. In addition, social project-based learning models can encourage students to create artworks that respond to real societal issues, including environmental crises, the marginalization of local cultures, social inequality, and other humanitarian concerns. The evaluation of artistic works should likewise adopt a multidimensional perspective, assessing not only technical proficiency and visual aesthetics but also conceptual depth, social relevance, ethical sensitivity, and reflective capacity. In this way, art education can produce not only technically competent artists but also individuals who possess humanistic consciousness and social responsibility.

Based on the foregoing discussion, it can be affirmed that an axiological approach to the development of art makes significant contributions both theoretically and practically. From a theoretical perspective, this approach strengthens the position of art as a humanities discipline endowed with epistemological legitimacy and value responsibility. From a practical perspective, the proposed axiological framework can serve as a foundation for cultural policy formulation, the development of creative industries, and art education oriented toward fostering critical consciousness and the humanization of human beings. Therefore, art should not be understood merely as an aesthetic product or cultural commodity, but rather as a reflective praxis that contributes to the creation of a more ethical, communicative, and meaningful social life.

CONCLUSION

This study demonstrates that the development of art cannot be separated from the values that underlie the processes of artistic creation, distribution, and appreciation. Art is not merely a domain of aesthetic expression but also a space for the formation of consciousness, social reflection, and the articulation of human meaning. Therefore, an axiological approach is essential to ensure that the

development of art maintains its ethical, social, and humanistic orientation amid the growing dominance of the culture industry and the commercialization of creativity.

The findings indicate that art, as a humanities discipline, possesses a fundamentally value-laden character. Consequently, its existence is inherently connected to moral responsibility and specific social positions. In this context, the proposed integrative axiological framework—comprising the aesthetic-reflective, ethical, social-communicative, and spiritual-existential dimensions—provides a conceptual foundation for the development of art that is more explicitly oriented toward the humanization of human beings. These four dimensions demonstrate that the quality of art should not be measured solely by formal innovation or market success, but also by its capacity to foster critical reflection, strengthen social solidarity, and generate deeper experiences of meaning.

For the development of contemporary visual art, the axiological approach opens possibilities for artistic practices that are more responsive to humanitarian concerns, ecological crises, social inequalities, and issues of cultural identity in the digital age. Future developments in visual art should not be confined to visual exploration and experimentation with artistic media alone; rather, they should also contribute to the creation of inclusive and transformative spaces for public dialogue. In this regard, artists, scholars, educational institutions, and policymakers share a collective responsibility to cultivate an artistic ecosystem that is not only economically productive but also socially and culturally meaningful.

Accordingly, the axiological approach is relevant not only as a theoretical framework within the philosophy of art but also as a practical orientation for the future development of visual art that is sustainable, critical, and culturally civilized. It is hoped that this approach will strengthen the position of art as a medium for civilizational reflection and as a means of fostering human values amid ongoing social transformation.

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