

THE EMPIRICAL RESEARCH OF COLLEGE STUDENTS' BACKGROUND OF ARTS EDUCATION AND RELATIONSHIP WITH MENTAL HEALTH

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Abstract

Research background: Today, with the normalization of COVID-19 prevention and control, college students are easy to show a psychological state of sub-healthy because of excessive mental stress, and even get a series of psychological problems, such as test anxiety, social anxiety, employment anxiety, and so on. In this context, according to the investigation and research, it is found that the mental health of students with arts education background is better than those who have not studied arts, and arts education plays an increasingly important role in the development of physical and mental health of college students.

Research purpose: The research purpose is to explore the relationship between college students' years of arts education and their life meaning experience, to find the relationship between college students' arts education background and their mental health.

Research methods: The data were collected by questionnaire and analyzed by SPSS and Mplus software. Through the mediation model and regression analysis of the questionnaire data, this paper demonstrates the relationship between college students' arts education background and their mental health.

Subjects: The data of 277 students were selected for latent variable analysis, and the years of learning arts and the frequency of participating in arts were taken as independent variables to study their effects on mental health-related factors such as life meaning experience and life meaning pursuit.

The results of data analysis: Through the analysis of the mediation model, it is found that the longer the years of learning arts, the higher the value of life meaning experience and the pursuit of life meaning. The number of years of learning arts also plays a mediating role in the experience and pursuit of life meaning through life satisfaction. When positive emotion is used as a mediating variable, the higher the frequency of participation in arts, the higher the experience of life meaning and the pursuit of life meaning.

Keywords: *Arts education, life meaning experience and pursuit, positive emotions, life satisfaction.*

1. Background

From the outbreak of COVID-19, the college students are in a more closed learning environment with a lack of face-to-face communication. This situation makes college students more stressed and highly susceptible to sub-healthy psychological states. Various sources of stress also lead to a variety of sleep problems, such as sleep duration, sleep disorders, and daytime disorders. These sleep problems can lead to excessive cortical arousal, confused thinking, poor concentration, memory loss, and further impact on cognitive function. Severe sleep problems further lead to the development of psychological disorders or diseases (Gao, L., 2016). To improve the mental health of college students, it is necessary to start from various aspects. According to the research, there is a certain connection between the learning background of arts education and the mental health of college students. Arts education can cultivate the sensual quality of college students and enrich their inner spiritual world. This facilitates their effective fight against depression and positively affects the development of physical and mental health (Li Hongju, 2019).

Paying attention to the mental health status of college students, studying the influence of arts education background on mental health, and taking timely scientific measures to improve the mental health level of college students is very important for the talent training of quality education in the new era. This study is based on the analysis of the existing relevant literature and makes an investigation and research on the relationship between college students' arts education background and mental health, to provide theoretical basis and data support for the construction and development of college students' mental health.

In a paper on how leisure activities affect health, Daisy Fancourt and colleagues pointed out that there is no unified reason to explain how leisure activities affect health, but Stebbins RA has described a unified framework. He believes that from the perspective of Yan Su leisure is more conducive to mental health. These usually take months or years of training to develop professional skills and knowledge (for example, playing musical instruments in a community orchestra). Artistic activities from this perspective will enrich personal experience, promote self-renewal and make interpersonal relationships more harmonious. There are also many benefits in terms of self-expression, creativity, social attractiveness, sense of belonging, meaning, and achievement (Stebbins,2020). There is a growing body of data on the health benefits of participating in leisure activities (voluntary and enjoyable non-work activities, such as hobbies, arts, etc.). Another similar article identified and mapped more than 600 mechanisms of action during the survey. And through psychological, physiological, and other aspects to confirm these beneficial effects on mental health.

In one study of active and receptive arts participation and its association with mortality among U.S. adults, researchers applied socio-demographic knowledge and controlled for relevant variables and found that participants aged 65 years and older who did not listen to music, sing/play instruments, or engage in arts and crafts-related activities had higher mortality rates. Participants aged <65 years, likewise had a higher mortality risk if they did not listen to music. Engaging in artistic activities was shown to have a lower risk of mortality, and it can be seen that the overall psychological profile of the college student population with an artistic educational background would be more stable, thus having a beneficial effect on the development of physical and mental health, with a lower mortality rate at the same age.

2. Subjects and tools

In this study, students from a university in Beijing were selected as subjects, and 288 questionnaires were distributed. After receiving valid questionnaires and screening, 277 questionnaires remained. We analyzed the questionnaire data, taking the years of arts learning as the independent variable and life meaning experience as an important mental health variable to conduct the research. The main scale used in the study is the Life meaning scale, which has 10 items, of which No. 1, 4, 5, 6, and 9 are the dimension of life meaning experience, and No. 2, 3, 7, 8, 10 are the dimension of the pursuit of life meaning. The positive emotion scale was used to measure the positive emotion, with a total of 4 items: happy, excited, take it easy, and I am great. In addition, there are different items about the number of years of learning arts, life satisfaction, and love of arts. The analysis software tool was Mplus 8.3. The data were analyzed by confirmatory factor analysis and structural equation model.

3. Results

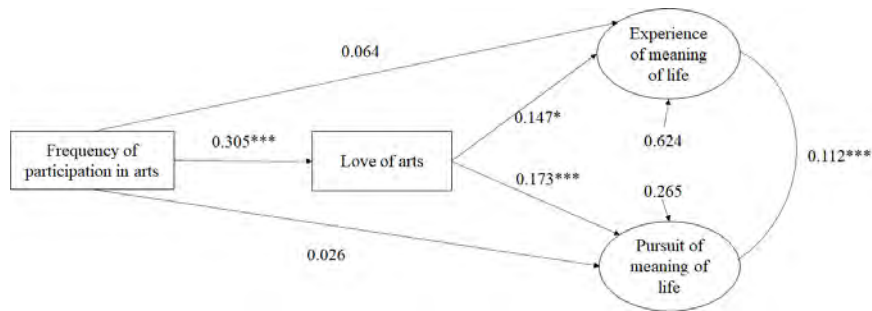
This research mainly explores three models, the purpose is to reveal the impact of artistic activities on the meaning of life, and its mediating process, the three models fit well.

Table 1. Goodness-of-fit indexes for Model I, Model II and Model III (N= 277).

	χ^2	χ^2/df	CFI	TLI	RMSEA
Model I	97.332	1.947	0.968	0.957	0.058
Model II	159.016	1.871	0.958	0.948	0.056
Model III	102.439	2.049	0.965	0.954	0.062

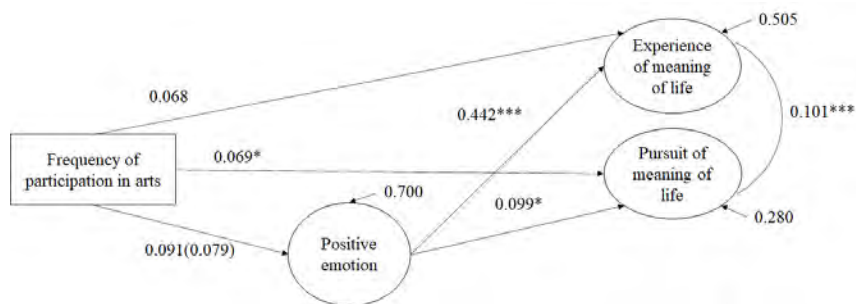
The results are shown in Table. For all the three models, the chi-square statistic is significant (Model1: $\chi^2 = 97.332$, $df = 50$, $p = 0.0001$; Model2: $\chi^2 = 159.016$, $df = 85$, $p < 0.0001$; Model3: $\chi^2 = 102.439$, $df = 50$, $p < 0.0001$). Three commonly used goodness-of-fit indices were employed to assess model fit. The comparative fit indexes (CFI) are all greater than 0.90, the Tucker-Lewis indexes (TLI) are also greater than 0.90, and the root means square errors of approximation are all smaller than 0.08 which indicated that the tested models fit the data well.

Figure 1. Model I.



Model 1 (figure 1) mainly explores the mediating effect of arts love on the influence of learning arts years on the meaning of life, and the results show that the love of arts completely mediates the influence of learning arts years on the pursuit of life meaning and the experience of life meaning.

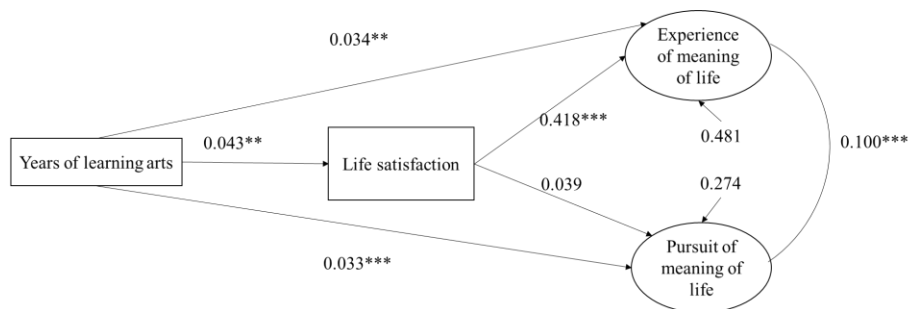
Figure 2. Model II.



The results of figure 2 show that the frequency of participation in arts activities has a marginally significant impact on positive emotion, indicating that the frequency of participation in arts activities can also predict positive emotion to a certain extent.

Positive emotion completely mediates the influence of the frequency of participating in artistic activities on the experience of the meaning of life and partly mediates the influence of the frequency of participating in artistic activities on the pursuit of the meaning of life.

Figure 3. Model III.



The result of model 3 (figure 3) shows that life satisfaction partially mediates the influence of years of learning arts on the experience of life meaning, while the mediating effect of life satisfaction on the process of learning arts years on the pursuit of life meaning is not significant.

4. Discussion

Based on the analysis of the correlation between the years of learning arts, the frequency of participation in arts, and the experience of life meaning and the pursuit of life meaning, this study explores the relationship between learning arts time and the mental health of college students. Through model fitting, it is found that the mediation model in which the number of years of learning arts affects college students' life meaning experience through life satisfaction is established, and the influence can be done in both direct and indirect ways. On the one hand, the longer the college students' arts study time,

the more happiness they get from the arts activities, the higher the personal life satisfaction and the better the life meaning experience. On the other hand, the longer the time of learning arts, the more positive feedback students get in arts activities, the higher the life meaning experience and the pursuit of life meaning.

When taking the frequency of participation in arts as the independent variable and the degree of love for arts as the mediate variable, the higher the frequency of participation in arts, the higher the degree of love for arts, the higher the experience and pursuit of the meaning of life. When learning arts frequency as an independent variable, it acts on the experience and pursuit of life meaning through positive emotion.

It can be seen that the longer the college students study arts and the higher the frequency of participating in arts activities, the better their psychological quality will be. College students can participate in more arts-related activities to promote mental health, increase their satisfaction with life and experience the value and meaning of life at the same time. In a word, there is a positive correlation between college students' arts study years and mental health.

5. Conclusion

Today, with the epidemic and control, parents and society have widely concerned about the physical and mental health development of college students. Students' mental health level is also affected by many factors. This study verifies the importance of arts learning background for mental health development through a questionnaire survey.

Arts education has a gradual and lasting effect on the mental health growth of college students. Through long-term professional practice in music, arts, dance, and other artistic activities, students will gradually establish a correct attitude and get rich and nourished in the spiritual world. While cultivating their interests, students also meet their aesthetic needs. At the same time, interest encourages students to make breakthroughs in their fields of proficiency, achieve achievements, and gain richer meaningful experiences. And this creative process also feeds back the psychological development of students. It can be seen that arts education activities have a positive and beneficial effect on students, and the specific practice needs the joint efforts of parents, teachers, schools, and other parties.

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