

# The Influence Factors of the Public Music Courses on Aesthetic Ability of Chinese College Students

Min Qiu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> School of Music and Dance, Sichuan Minzu College, Kangding, Sichuan, China

## ABSTRACT

Music courses for Chinese college students are an important means of aesthetic education and also affect the cultivation of musical aesthetic ability. Among them, the influence factors are mainly divided into course content, individual differences among students, and class time, etc. The author of this article uses a hybrid research method that combines qualitative and quantitative methods to conduct interviews and research on college students, and complete the collection, organization, and analysis of relevant data. The preliminary conclusion is that the class time of college students is directly proportional to their aesthetic ability, and the course content, individual differences of students, and the cultivation of aesthetic ability are also directly related.

**Keywords:** College students, Music appreciation courses, Music aesthetic ability, Influence factor.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In recent years, music and aesthetic education for Chinese college students has received increasing attention from the government and society. The Chinese government has also introduced a series of measures to support the establishment of music aesthetic abilities among Chinese college students. In October 2020, the Chinese Ministry of Education issued the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Aesthetic Education Work in Schools in the New Era". The "Opinions" points out that aesthetic education is aesthetic education, emotional education, spiritual education, and also an education that enriches imagination and cultivates innovative consciousness. It can enhance aesthetic literacy, cultivate sentiment, warm the soul, and stimulate innovation and creativity. <sup>[1]</sup> The "Opinions" clearly states that all colleges and universities should incorporate public art courses and art practice into their talent training plans and school teaching plans, and each student must complete the public art course credits specified by the school before graduation. By 2022, breakthrough progress has been made in school aesthetic education. With comprehensive development of aesthetic education courses, significant achievements in education and teaching reform, continuous optimization of resource

allocation, gradual improvement of evaluation system, more perfect management mechanism, and significant enhancement of effectiveness, students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy have significantly improved. By 2035, a modern school aesthetic education system with Chinese characteristics that is fully covered, diversified, and high-quality should be basically formed.

However, it is important to sort out the problems that how to build public art courses in colleges and universities, put music aesthetic education courses into the talent training program in colleges and universities, how to implement aesthetic education practice activities, what to learn, how long to learn, individual differences of students and other factors are related to the establishment of music aesthetic ability. Clarifying the mutual relationship is a prerequisite for building a music and aesthetic education course for college students, and also a basic guarantee for cultivating their music and aesthetic abilities.

## 2. RESEARCH BACKGROUND

The "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Aesthetic Education Work in Schools in the New Era" emphasizes that ordinary colleges and universities should offer arbitrariness elective courses in art

practice, art history and theory, art criticism and other aspects on the basis of offering limited elective courses focusing on art appreciation. Schools of all levels and types should attach importance to and strengthen the education of artistic classics, and develop local and school-based aesthetic education courses with national and regional characteristics based on their own advantages and characteristics. Curriculum aesthetic education requires promoting the integration of various subject courses and aesthetic education concepts in a comprehensive, holistic, and all-round manner, and leveraging the educational role of collaborative aesthetic education among various subject courses. Zhao Lingli believes that the basic content of university aesthetic education should be to impart the philosophy and laws of beauty. Music courses are a part of public art courses, and public art courses are the main forms of art teaching in colleges and universities. Music courses, as a kind of public art courses, are an important way to cultivate college students' musical aesthetic ability.

Music courses are presented as public music courses, mainly focused on aesthetic education courses for college students. Curriculum design is the primary issue of teaching content and the planning of talent cultivation. It reflects the overall planning of the teaching subjects and their objectives, tasks, content, scope, progress, and activity methods required to achieve the cultivation goals. Under the guidance of certain training objectives, determined by certain educational and curriculum values, and regulated by schools or educational authorities, a series of practical activities are systematically carried out for curriculum development and course selection based on the needs of students, society, and the subject.

### **3. RESEARCH METHODS**

This article takes Chinese college students as the research object and adopts a mixed research method of qualitative, quantitative, and qualitative methods, attempting to understand the relationship between public music curriculum design and college students' music aesthetic ability. Statistics have been conducted on the diversity of content offered in public music courses, the length of time students participate in the courses, and individual differences among students. This research adopts retrospective and prospective research, with the non-experimental characteristics. This article plans to conduct in-depth group interviews, conduct

qualitative research, use mobile phones, conduct online surveys, conduct questionnaire surveys, and complete the quantitative analysis section. By studying the influencing factors of changes in college students' aesthetic abilities, including differences in course content, class duration, and student differences, this study aims to investigate and analyze the changes in college students' musical aesthetic abilities. The questionnaire is designed strictly according to the concept definition and keywords, forming a survey questionnaire, conducting pre surveys, modifying questionnaires, conducting formal surveys, and conducting quantitative analysis using data analysis software.

The article mainly analyzes the relationship between differences in content, course duration, and student differences in music learning among college students, and the cultivation of their music aesthetic ability through a survey. In the research process, the issue of defining musical aesthetic ability is addressed. The impact of public music curriculum on the cultivation of music aesthetic ability of college students, whether the duration will affect the cultivation of music aesthetic ability of college students, the differences between students, whether male or female students have a music foundation, and whether there is a positive effect on improving the music aesthetic ability of college students? The research follows the approach of "problems posing - framework concept - literature review - relationship research - validation of effectiveness". First of all, based on the series of policies on improving aesthetic education and college aesthetic education in China in recent years, the article conducts research on college students, clarifies whether the differences in content, duration and students of public art courses will have a relationship with college students' musical aesthetic ability, and whether aesthetic education can improve college students' musical aesthetic cognition, musical expression, musical creativity and musical appreciation.

This article adopts the method of sampling survey, selects Chinese natural science and humanities students to conduct research, and analyzes the relationship between the diversified content learning and music aesthetic ability of college students. At the same time, the length of courses involved in learning and the individual differences of students are also the samples of the survey.

### ***3.1 Sample Size and Sampling Method***

This article adopts the method of sampling survey, selects Chinese natural science and humanities students to conduct research, and analyzes the relationship between the diversified content learning and music aesthetic ability of college students. At the same time, the length of courses involved in learning and the individual differences of students are also the samples of the survey. Using hypothetical goals as the measurement goal, differences in content can cause changes in some factors in music aesthetic ability; The different duration of participating in courses has different impacts on the cultivation of college students' aesthetic abilities, and the improvement of abilities is accompanied by changes in the duration of participating in courses; Student differences lead to changes in the aesthetic ability of music among college students. Before being formally used for actual data collection, it is necessary to test the respondents' understanding of each question.

### ***3.2 Data Collection and Processing***

The research adopts group in-depth interviews with written records, face-to-face interviews with the subjects, and recording and writing methods to further collect data on the changes in music aesthetic abilities of college students caused by factors such as different learning content, duration, and individual differences among students, and verify the results of quantitative information. The article presents the characteristics of surface validity and content validity. When using the questionnaire tools, it is necessary to ensure the accurate relationship between the questions and the research objectives. The relationship between the different content and duration of public music courses and the aesthetic ability of music among college students. Is there a difference in musical aesthetic ability due to the duration of attending music courses? Will students' gender, musical foundation, and learning interests have an impact on their musical aesthetic ability? The author has conducted in-depth interviews with 30 students, tracked interviews, and collected relevant written records.

### ***3.3 Editing the Collected Data***

The author checks the completeness of the questionnaire survey and the respondents' answers to all questions, including: the issues such as "What kinds of Public art courses do college students

participate in? Are they 'Music Appreciation', 'Music History', or performance and singing skills training courses including vocal music, piano, zither, etc.?", as well as the duration of college students' participation in courses, and the correlation data between student differences and musical aesthetic abilities.

## **4. RESEARCH CONTENTS**

In the research content involved in the article, only the factors that affect music aesthetic ability, such as course content, class format, and class time progression, are discussed through the intermediary of evaluation. In China, the public music courses are important components of the higher education curriculum system and the main way for ordinary higher education institutions to implement aesthetic education. Public music course teaching is the central link of art education work in ordinary higher education institutions, mainly applicable to non art majors in ordinary higher education institutions nationwide. Aesthetic education courses are divided into three categories: appreciation, historical theories, and skills. The appreciation series mainly includes photography, film and television, art, music, and literature. The skills mainly include vocal music, piano, choir, sketching, calligraphy, dance, etc. History theories mainly include Chinese and Western music history, Internet culture art, etc. The broadly defined curriculum is the sum of subject knowledge and teaching, as well as the learning subjects set by schools to achieve educational goals, as well as the sum of all educational factors that affect learning and growth, both inside and outside the school. Narrowly defined curriculum refers to "course", which refers to the construction of the runway, while "progress", which refers to the process and methods of curriculum implementation, is often referred to as "teaching process and methods".

The content of public music courses is characterized by diversity. Different course contents have different training objectives. Courses such as "Music Appreciation" and "Introduction to Music" mainly aim at cultivating college students' musical aesthetic ability from the perspective of theoretical cognition. Skill-based courses mainly include music courses such as singing and performance, which mainly cultivate college students' musical aesthetic ability from the perspective of music skills. The music practice course mainly includes participating in concerts and performing in practice, and mainly cultivates the

aesthetic ability of college students in terms of listening or creative ability. The public music courses require each student to take at least one art limited elective course and pass the assessment during their school studies. For higher education institutions that implement a credit system, each student must obtain at least 2 credits through the study of art limited elective courses; Only students who have completed the required credits can graduate. The concept of curriculum design is presented by three variables, including content diversity, course duration, and student differences.

#### ***4.1 The Selection of Course Content Directly Affects the Construction of Aesthetic Ability***

Human beings' aesthetic shaping of themselves is endless, and they always strive to shape themselves at a higher level. [2] The course content should fully reflect students' existing aesthetic knowledge background and the expansion of new knowledge, and enhance their aesthetic ability. Teaching content is the primary issue of curriculum. Western classical music, Chinese traditional music, opera art, and local folk songs are manifestations of diversity of content. In the aesthetic education of Chinese colleges and universities, western classical music and Chinese traditional music are the main teaching contents, and the course "Music Appreciation" mainly focuses on Chinese and foreign famous music to cultivate college students' music cognition and appreciation. The course "Introduction to Music" needs to cultivate the music cognitive ability of college students in terms of music knowledge structure. Cognitive content mainly refers to the relevant knowledge and theories imparted to the audience during music aesthetic education to help them better understand the work. Mainly based on the background of the work, creative information, music style, etc., it is the basic content of music courses. The content of music skills refers to some skills that should be understood and mastered in order to create and feel artistic sounds in music art, such as the skills of playing musical instruments or singing songs, the listening skills of musical elements such as pitch, timbre, value and intensity, and even some musical composition skills. The learning content in terms of skills enables college students to imitate and create music works while learning performance and singing, further cultivating their musical expression and creativity, in order to achieve the teaching goal of aesthetic ability.

Music aesthetic ability is closely related to aesthetic quality, and the quality of music aesthetic directly determines the level of aesthetic ability. Aesthetic quality refers to the sum of the basic qualities and abilities of the subject to perceive, understand, experience, evaluate, express, and create beautiful things (natural beauty, social beauty, artistic beauty, scientific beauty, etc.). It includes four dimensions: aesthetic cognition, aesthetic experience (aesthetic sense), aesthetic expression, and aesthetic creativity. [3] However, the main way to cultivate musical aesthetic ability comes from school curriculum. The teaching equipment in higher education institutions is mainly to offer aesthetic education through art education. Without artistic education, aesthetic education is definitely not a complete one.

Whether it is an aesthetic education course focused on appreciation and historical theory, or an aesthetic education course focused on skills, it can enhance students' ability to appreciate music. The distribution of course content is mainly determined by the textbooks, with national standard textbooks as the main teaching content, supplemented by local teaching materials. Influenced by the western music centered theory, the content of western classical music accounts for a large proportion. With China's increasing emphasis on traditional culture, Chinese traditional music, local operas and other teaching contents are also becoming the focus of music aesthetic education courses.

#### ***4.2 The Length of Learning Is Directly Proportional to the Cultivation of Musical Aesthetic Ability***

In the teaching of public music courses in higher education institutions, the duration of classes has a certain impact on the cultivation of musical aesthetic ability. On the premise that the course content and individual differences among students remain unchanged, the longer the course is offered, the greater the improvement of students' musical aesthetic ability. When studying public music courses for college students, it is set at 18 class hours per semester and 9 class hours per semester. During the learning process, the longer the learning time, the greater the overall improvement of the respondents' music aesthetic ability.

### **4.3 The Impact of Individual Differences Among Students on Their Musical Aesthetic Ability**

Individual differences among students can generally be understood from two aspects: individual differences and differences between individuals. Individual's own differences refer to the differences in the development levels of various factors within an individual system, such as the imbalance of various abilities, interests, etc. possessed by an individual; Individual differences refer to the differences between individuals. This research mainly refers to individual differences among students. This study mainly focuses on four aspects of students' gender, participation, professional direction, and music foundation. Different genders have no significant differences in music appreciation, expressiveness, creativity, and cognitive abilities. Participation refers to the willingness to actively choose and participate in courses, and participation does not affect changes in abilities. The major direction is mainly to take students in natural sciences and Humanities as the main research samples. Students in natural sciences have stronger ability in music creativity and music cognition, while Humanities have higher ability in music appreciation and expression. Students with a good foundation in music have higher overall performance in music aesthetics, while students who have not undergone early music education have lower overall performance in music aesthetics.

Different family backgrounds do not have a significant impact on musical aesthetic abilities. However, Bourdieu stressed that "no language, culture and taste habit is naturally superior to other languages, cultures and taste habits. However, in the real cultural society, some languages and cultural types contain more cultural capital and symbolic capital, which is mistaken by social action collective unconscious for more legitimacy and legitimacy." [4] Just as in the process of music education in China, the schools have collectively adopted the "western centrism" as the learning principle, globalization has made music and aesthetic education equally challenged and impacted. While breaking the center theory, music and aesthetic education also faces multi-dimensional impacts and challenges. However, the inclusiveness of aesthetic education makes the impact of individual differences on students' musical aesthetic ability minimal. Even students from different social classes do not affect the cultivation of musical aesthetic ability.

### **4.4 Course Evaluation**

The evaluation of music courses for college students is one of the important indicators to measure their aesthetic ability in music. Zhao Lingli believes that "evaluation is a lever to leverage the implementation and development of school aesthetic education for everyone, and its evaluation standard is the goal of aesthetic education, that is, to improve students' aesthetic and humanistic literacy". [5] Currently, what is more important is how to effectively promote the implementation of rural aesthetic education through evaluation. The process oriented, experiential, and diversified "new academic examination and aesthetic evaluation methods" can best reflect the nature of beauty, aesthetics, and the freedom and creativity of aesthetic education, accommodate the similarities and differences between urban and rural schools, and "each beauty has its own beauty, and beauty with differences should coexist", shining with the vitality of school aesthetic education in the new era. [6]

## **5. CONCLUSION**

Through the study of the diversity of content offered in public music courses, the duration of students' participation in courses, and individual differences among students, it is not difficult to find that the duration of classes for students is directly proportional to their aesthetic abilities, and there are also direct correlations among course content, individual differences among students, and the cultivation of aesthetic abilities. The selection of teaching content can be based on national standards, the combination of central and local governments, and local music culture teaching content to diversify the content of music courses. The individual differences of students, even if directly related to the cultivation of aesthetic ability, are more important in involving students from different life backgrounds in the cultivation of musical aesthetic ability.

## **REFERENCES**

- [1] Xinhuanet, The General Office of the General Office of the Chinese Communist Party and the General Office of the State Council issued the "Opinions on Comprehensively Strengthening and Improving the Aesthetic Education Work in Schools in the New Era" [EB/OL]. 2021-02-15.

[http://www.xinhuanet.com/policies/2020-10/15/c\\_1126616323.htm](http://www.xinhuanet.com/policies/2020-10/15/c_1126616323.htm). (in Chinese)

- [2] Cai Zhengfei, Psychology of Aesthetic Education [M]. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 1981. (in Chinese)
- [3] Zhao Lingli, The Quality Assessment of Aesthetic Education Supported by Objectives and Curriculum [J]. Journal of East China Normal University, 2017, 35(05). (in Chinese)
- [4] Zhang Yi, Culture and Symbolic Rights: An Introduction to Bourdieu's Sociology of culture [M]. Beijing: China Social Sciences Press, 2005.07, p146. (in Chinese)
- [5] Zhao Lingli, The Evaluation of Aesthetic Education Aiming at the Development of Aesthetic Quality [J]. Journal of Educational Science of Hunan Normal University, 2021, 20(03). (in Chinese)
- [6] How to teach and test aesthetic education [N]. Guangming Daily, 2020-11-17 (7). (in Chinese)