

The Intersection of Art and Psychology: The Impact of Artistic Creation on the Mental Health of College Students

Qi Dai^{1, *}

¹Department of Fine Arts (Teacher Training), Guangdong Polytechnic Normal University, Guangzhou, China

*Corresponding author:
20183114007@stu.qhnu.edu.cn

Abstract:

The topic of this paper is exploring the intersection of art and psychology with the impact of artistic creation on the mental health of college students. After reviewing previous literature on art and psychology, the theoretical basis of art therapy, the relationship between artistic creation and psychological process, this paper takes college students as the research object to explore the impact of artistic creation on their mental health. Through literature review, empirical investigation and concrete case analysis, this paper analyzes the positive and negative effects of artistic creation on college students' mental health and its mechanism. The main arguments of this paper includes: 1) Mental health status of college students; 2) The concrete influence of art elements on the psychology of college students. The research shows that artistic creation, as a form of creative expression, is helpful to improve college students' self-cognition, emotional regulation, psychological anti-pressure ability and social communication ability to promote their mental health development.

Keywords: Artistic creation; Psychology; Mental health; Influence; Education.

1. Introduction

Art and psychology have a close relationship. Art can express thoughts and feelings. Since ancient times, art and its educational activities have been an important means for human to treat mental illness and guarantee mental health. Under the influence of Sigmund Freud and Carl Gustav Jung [1], two different views of art therapy have been produced. The use of "art psychotherapy" by American psychotherapist Margaret Naumburg in the 1940s signaled the beginning of art therapy as a form of psychotherapy.

Freud's theory of repression and the unconscious is the basis of the approach. The psychology of art also began to take shape in previous years. The psychology of art has significant research value and practical applications as a field that examines the psychological mechanisms of individuals engaged in artistic endeavors like painting, sculpture, photography, and architecture, as well as the psychological activities and their laws demonstrated in the production or appreciation of these works of art. First, one significant way that human civilization and artistic creation are

expressed is through beautiful art. Through in-depth study of the impact of fine art works on people's psychology, it is necessary to better understand the essence and meaning of art and explore the mystery of human mind. Secondly, the appreciation of art works is a special psychological aesthetic activity. Psychological aesthetic activity is a universal human experience, which is not only related to individual sensory and cognitive processes, but also closely related to emotion, memory, imagination, cultural background and other factors, which can help the appreciator to master aesthetic methods and improve aesthetic level to a certain extent.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Art and Psychology

Art psychology is a discipline that studies the psychological phenomena and mechanisms involved in the process of art creation, art appreciation and art education. It explores the psychological changes and experiences of artists, audiences and students in terms of cognition, emotion, awareness and behavior in fine art activities. Art psychology studies the influence of art on human psychological life by paying attention to the psychological performance of individuals and groups in art activities. Art psychology research encompasses a wide range of topics, including but not restricted to the following: First, watch artists' psychological processes and artistic creation from their point of view. Examine how artists' thinking, imagination, inspiration, creativity, and emotional experiences evolve as they create. The second is to observe the audience's psychological response and appreciation of art: the audience is the primary research subject, and their perception, thought, emotion, assessment, and other psychological processes and experiences are studied when they come into contact with art pieces. The third is the psychological development of students and art education: studies the psychological changes and development of students' cognition, emotion, consciousness and creativity in the process of art education. The results obtained from the above three perspectives could reflect the interaction between art and psychology.

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therapy. Freud's theory of repression and the unconscious is the basis of the approach. The psychology of art also began to take shape in previous years. The psychology of art has significant research value and practical applications as a field that examines the psychological mechanisms of individuals engaged in artistic endeavors like painting, sculpture, photography, and architecture, as well as the psychological activities and their laws demonstrated in the production or appreciation of these works of art. First, fine art is an important form of expression of human culture and artistic creation. In different historical periods and different cultural backgrounds, artistic creation carries rich emotions, thoughts and aesthetic values. Through in-depth study of the impact of fine art works on people's psychology, it is necessary to better understand the essence and meaning of art and explore the mystery of human mind. Secondly, the appreciation of art works is a special psychological aesthetic activity. Psychological aesthetic activity is a universal human experience, which is not only related to individual sensory and cognitive processes, but also closely related to emotion, memory, imagination, cultural background and other factors, which can help the appreciator to master aesthetic methods and improve aesthetic level to a certain extent.

Art psychology, a crucial component of fine arts, examines the psychological experiences and processes of artists, viewers, and students. This has significant ramifications for modern art education. Students today are ready for more innovative information because traditional art education has failed to suit their expectations due to the rapid development of society and the constant shift in people's aesthetic notions. Thus, investigating the connection between art psychology and contemporary art education will contribute to raising the standard and appeal of art education.

The background of the study of art psychology lies in the human interest and need for art. Art, as a way of expression and communication, can be deeply rooted in the hearts of the people and cause the audience to have emotional resonance. The foundation of art practice is art creation. Artists use their own creative process and psychological experiences to engage with the audience and share their innermost thoughts. However, the development of personal feelings and creativity has long been neglected in favor of the cultivation of skills and forms of expression in art school. In order to investigate the art education model that better suits the demands of contemporary society, it is beneficial to investigate the connection between art psychology and art education.

2.2 The Theoretical Basis of Art Therapy

Art therapy, especially painting[2], sand table[3], games,

landscape composition[4], etc., explores the unconscious world and unconscious conflicts of patients through art forms. As a result, psychoanalytic schools—particularly Jung’s analytical psychology—provide the majority of its direct theoretical foundation. Of course, psychological ideas like humanism can also serve as its theoretical foundation. Drawing exercises are used in art therapy, a fundamental psychotherapy technique, to aid clients with behavioral, emotional, and cognitive issues. Painting is a straightforward and practical pastime that can essentially yield pertinent experimental results. The theoretical basis of art therapy also includes expressive art therapy[5], psychological theory, humanistic theory, neuroscience and art theory[6].

The main psychological theory basis of art therapy is psychoanalytic theory. Psychoanalytic theory holds that painting is a way to express inner emotions and conflicts, which can help people better understand their inner world. Painting water is a therapeutic way for people to communicate their feelings and inner experiences, which helps them feel less stressed and anxious. Neuroplasticity is the foundation of the neuroscience hypothesis of art therapy. According to the neuroplasticity idea, experiences and the environment can influence the structure and function of the brain. Drawing exercises that target particular brain regions can help with behavioral, cognitive, and emotional issues in art therapy.

The basic knowledge of art theory of art therapy includes art creation theory and art therapy theory. The theory of artistic creation holds that painting is a creative expression that can help people gain a better understanding of the inner world and emotional experiences. Art therapy theory holds that painting can be used as a therapy to help people with emotional, cognitive and behavioral problems.

2.3 The relationship between artistic creation and psychological process

There is a complex and profound connection between artistic creation and psychological process. Artistic creation is not only the display of skills, but also the expression of the artist’s inner world and the externalization of emotions. This process involves perception and observation, emotional expression and catharsis, thinking and imagination, will and action and other levels, which are intertwined and jointly affect the birth and development of artistic works [7].

Perception is the first step of artistic creation, which refers to the process of artists receiving external information through their senses and transforming it into internal psychological experience. The artist’s perception ability directly affects the depth and breadth of his creation. Artists are typically more perceptive than the general public and

are able to capture the qualities of things that are hard for the general public to see. When an artist observes nature, society, and life, along with his immediate psychological reactions, this clarity allows him to extract distinctive artistic elements that provide rich ingredients for creation. Artists frequently have selective perceptions, choosing the most helpful information from complex data based on their own aesthetic requirements and creative requirements. This selectivity helps artists maintain individuality and style in their creations. When perceiving things, they will project their emotions into the objects, making the objects show specific emotional characteristics and have strong emotional characteristics, which injects vitality into artistic creation.

Thinking is the core of artistic creation. Thinking is the most important component of the artistic production process, which entails analyzing, integrating, and innovating the information that is perceived in the mind. In order to transform concrete perceptual information into abstract creative symbols and imagery, artists must employ abstract thinking. When creating art, image thinking is an essential method of thought. Artists transform abstract artistic symbols and images into concrete works of art through image thinking. These ways of thinking provide intuitive psychological guidance for creation.

Emotion is the soul of artistic creation. Since emotion permeates all aspect of artistic creativity, it is an essential component. Artists frequently get inspiration from their inner emotional impulses; when they encounter soul-stirring objects, they experience a powerful emotional resonance that piques their urge to create. Through their creations, artists express their feelings to the audience, allowing them to empathize and be moved during the appreciation process. This type of emotional expression contributes to psychological resonance and increases the allure and shock of artistic creations.

In the process of artistic creation, the artist’s emotion is often sublimated and purified. Through their works, they transform the inner pain, joy, anger and other emotions into a higher level of artistic experience, so that the audience can get spiritual comfort and sublimation in the process of appreciation.

Imagination is the wings of artistic creation. Imagination is an indispensable psychological process in artistic creation, which enables artists to transcend the constraints of reality and create a colorful art world. The artist’s imagination is incredibly flexible, allowing them to create a wide range of bizarre artistic sceneries and images in their brain and psychology. This gives them countless creative possibilities and sources of inspiration. Creativity in artistic creation comes from imagination. In order to produce original and distinctive works of art, artists employ their

imagination to reassemble and alter pieces of reality under the psychological influence. They transform their creative ideas into tangible works of art that the public can view and enjoy by employing methods and supplies.

Memory is the accumulation of the final artistic creation. Memory plays an important role in artistic creation, which enables artists to look back on the past, learn from history, and incorporate personal experiences and psychological emotions into their creations. In the process of creation, the artist will continuously accumulate experience and materials, and in the process of creation, the artist will extract the elements and images from the memory according to the need, and integrate them into the work. This extraction process helps the artist maintain coherence and consistency in his creation and mental memory.

The interaction between artistic creation and psychological process is complex and dynamic. On the one hand, psychological process provides rich material and inspiration for artistic creation; However, the psychological process is also impacted by artistic creativity, which leads to the development and improvement of the artist's perception, thinking, emotion, imagination, memory, and other psychological levels. An artist's mental state has a direct impact on both the caliber of his work and his creative style. An artist with rigorous thinking and clear reasoning, for instance, can focus more on the internal structure and logical relationships of his work, but an emotional and imaginative artist can frequently produce works that are both original and emotional.

Artistic creation also has a negative effect on the psychological process. Artistic creation is not only a process of expressing one's inner world, but also a process of self-discovery and growth. Through creation, artists can have a deeper understanding of their inner world and improve their perception, thinking and creativity. At the same time, artistic creation can also help artists relieve pressure, regulate emotions, and maintain mental health.

To sum up, there is a complex and profound connection between artistic creation and psychological process. Perception, thought, emotion, imagination, and memory are psychological factors that collectively influence the genesis and evolution of artistic creations. In addition to talent demonstration, artistic creativity involves the externalization of emotions and the presentation of the artist's inner world. Artists can enhance their creativity and psychological well-being and gain a better grasp of their inner world through artistic work. In addition, artistic production offers the audience a rich aesthetic and emotional experience, allowing for spiritual solace and sublimation during the appreciating process. Therefore, it is necessary to attach importance to the relationship between artistic creation and psychological process, provide artists with

more creative opportunities and resources, and promote the prosperity and development of artistic creation.

3. Current Situation and Influencing Factors of College Students' Mental Health

3.1 Mental Health Status of College Students

The mental health problems of college students are mainly anxiety, depression, interpersonal sensitivity and so on. The factors that affect college students' mental health include family background, academic pressure, interpersonal relationship, social support and so on[8]. A number of psychological issues and even mental illness are frequently brought on by these stresses. College students are currently under a lot of psychological strain. They must contend with intense competition in their coursework and pressure to find jobs, which frequently surpasses their psychological capacity and leads to psychological issues like anxiety and melancholy. Some college students have high standards for themselves and self-cognitive dissonance. They are prone to dissatisfaction and self-denial when psychological expectations and reality diverge. College students often lack the necessary communication skills and social ability in interpersonal communication, which leads to interpersonal tension, interpersonal relationship disorders, and even loneliness and social fear. College students are in the transition stage from adolescence to adulthood, their emotions are easy to fluctuate, and they are easy to fall into negative emotions when they encounter setbacks.

3.2 The Concrete Influence of Art Elements on the Psychology of College Students

The specific impact of art elements on college students' psychology is multifaceted, including aesthetic enhancement, emotional enrichment, pressure relief, self-confidence enhancement and personality shaping. College students can develop their aesthetic skills and improve their sense and understanding of beauty by including rich colors, lines, composition, and other components into their artwork. Students can discover the beauty in life and develop a lovely perspective on the world around them through art education. College students' emotional experiences are enhanced by this development of aesthetic ability since it not only makes them feel happier and more satisfied when they appreciate art but also helps them discover and create beauty in everyday life.[8].

In college life, students are faced with pressure from many aspects, such as study, employment and interpersonal relationship. As an effective way of emotional release, art

creation can help college students relieve their inner pressure. In the process of creation, students can project their emotions into the works and express their inner emotions through the use of colors, lines and other elements. The release and expression of this emotion helps them regulate their emotions and maintain mental health.

In addition, color in art works also plays a role in emotional regulation. For example, warm colors can make people feel warm and excited, while cool colors can bring a feeling of calm and relaxation. When appreciating or creating art works, college students can adjust their emotions by choosing suitable colors to achieve the effect of relaxation. In addition to encouraging students to produce in accordance with their interests and talents, fine arts education places a strong emphasis on teaching pupils according to their ability. Students can fully express their creativity and imagination during the creative process, as well as their individuality and sense of style. In addition to helping college students identify their strengths and potential, this creative process boosts their self-esteem and sense of achievement.

At the same time, by participating in art exhibitions, competitions and other activities, college students can display their works and exchange ideas with others, thus broadening their horizons and enhancing friendship. In addition to giving college students a stage on which to display their abilities, these activities also help them develop strong interpersonal bonds and enhance their social skills. Making art is a task that calls for perseverance, patience, and focus. College students must continuously overcome obstacles and hurdles in the creative process in order to advance their abilities. This approach builds a sound personality by strengthening their self-discipline, perseverance, and willpower. Additionally, making art can help college students improve their communication and emotional expression abilities. They can improve mutual understanding and trust by using the works to express their thoughts and feelings to others. This ability of emotional expression and communication is of great significance to the mental health and interpersonal development of college students[9].

4. Conclusion

This study shows that artistic creation has a positive effect on college students' mental health. In order to give full play to the role of artistic creation in mental health education, this paper puts forward the following suggestions: Colleges and universities should make full use of art education resources, set up rich art courses, and provide high-quality art education services. College students can acquire professional knowledge and skills as well as en-

hance their aesthetic quality, emotional expression ability, and mental health level by bolstering art education in colleges and universities and integrating art creation into the mental health education curriculum system. In order to improve the quality of art education provided by teachers, colleges and universities should also focus on the integration of fine arts education and mental health education, hold a variety of art creation activities, encourage college students to actively participate, build exchange platforms, encourage teacher-student interaction, and strengthen the construction of mental health education teams. Activities such as art healing workshops and mental health lectures are organized to help college students better cope with psychological challenges and maintain physical and mental health. To sum up, art elements have a positive impact on college students' psychology. Through art education, college students can improve their aesthetic ability[10], relieve pressure, enhance self-confidence, shape a sound personality and promote mental health development. Therefore, colleges and universities should pay attention to the role of art education in college students' mental health education, and provide more art education resources and services for college students.

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