
INFLUENCE OF MUSIC APPRECIATION ON SELF-AWARENESS OF COLLEGE STUDENTS BASED ON PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC

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Abstract

The mental health of college students is critical to the future of social and economic development. Based on the philosophy of music, this paper aims to disclose the influence of music appreciation on self-awareness of college students. Firstly, the basic theories were introduced on philosophy of music and self-awareness. Then, 15 college students, 8 males and 7 females, in different ages and majors, were selected to attend the music appreciation course. Their self-awareness levels were measured before and after the course, and compared in details. The results show that the appreciation of music works can effectively improve the self-awareness of college students; the self-awareness level of college students is not greatly affected by factors like gender, age and major. The research findings lay the theoretical basis for improving self-awareness and mental health of college students.

Key words: Music Appreciation, College Students, Self-Awareness, Psychology of Music, Education.

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INTRODUCTION

College students' self-awareness is an important issue that cannot be ignored, and it is one of the best solutions to the mental health problems of contemporary college students. When college students leave their parents for unfamiliar cities, their mental health is extremely vulnerable; certain college students, especially only children, feel it difficult to adapt to the collective life and communicate effectively with classmates; without parents' shelter, some with poor hands-on ability in daily life are prone to inferiority; there are also some other college students lacking self-control ability who can't adapt to the changes from the compulsory education stage to the university education stage, leading to a serious drop in academic performance. All these problems will cause a decline in the self-awareness level of

college students.

At present, China's curriculum reform emphasizes on cultivating college students' aesthetic quality. The music appreciation course is easy to set up, which is in line with the psychological characteristics of college students. It helps to cultivate college students' sentiment and plays an important role in improving students' self-awareness ability. Since the 1990s, some scholars have used experiments and data analysis methods to study the process of human self-awareness, but there have still been few quantitative studies on the influence degree of music appreciation courses on college students' self-awareness level (Pyszczynski & Greenberg, 1987; Bensimon & Gilboa, 2010; Donelan, 2002). A lot of experimentation and in-depth analysis are needed for more reliable conclusions.

This paper compares the changes in self-awareness level of 15 college students at different ages, genders and majors before and after participating in the music appreciation course. The results showed that the music appreciation course for a certain period of time

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can improve the self-awareness level of most college students. The research findings can provide a basis for the mental health security and psychological problem prevention of college students.

PHILOSOPHY OF MUSIC AND SELF-AWARENESS THEORY

Music has a profound impact on the awareness of college students, especially self-awareness.

Philosophy of music

Aesthetics has the nature of philosophy. Music philosophy is fundamentally the philosophicalization of musical aesthetics. Because of the characteristics of rationality and intuition in philosophy, there exist certain correlation and also differences between music philosophy and music aesthetics: the former is partially rational and the latter is partially emotional. The correlation between the two is based on musical sensibility. Human individuals have a perceptual cognition of music, and then produces aesthetic appreciation of music. In addition, after the abstraction of music aesthetics, music philosophy emerges.

Philosophy stresses metaphysics, and music philosophy emphasizes self-centeredness, with particular emphasis on the impact of music on itself. Philosophy combines music with self-awareness. Music philosophy is the process by which individuals explore and recognize the self and self-spiritual realm through musical works.

The concept of self-awareness

The definition of awareness is unsteady and open (Perlovsky, 2008; Olteteanu, 2009; Jamison, 2006). In other words, there is still some controversy about the concept of "awareness" in the academic world. Scholars can give their own definitions based on their own research content. This definition is not uniform and may be altered at any time (Nelson, 1997; Lenggenhager, Tadi, Metzinger et al., 2007; Taylor, 2008). But there is a relatively specified concept of awareness that it is a psychological process involving different psychological stages of perception, memory, analysis, and response (Rieffe & Rooij, 2012).

Self-awareness, as the name implies, is a perceptual process in which the individual itself is the object of study (Lloyd, 2006). Compared with other awareness processes, the self-

awareness also begins with the sensory grasping of information, but the self-awareness process is more subjective and susceptible to psychological state, and has a greater influence on the individual itself. In general, self-awareness can penetrate into all psychological processes; influenced by human thinking, it is not static, but in the constant development, with the specific trajectory unclear.

Development of self-awareness

The self-awareness of people mainly develops in the childhood. At 3 to 6 years old, they begin to have a preliminary self-awareness process; at around 6 to 12 years old, their self-perception begins to be stable and profound; after the age of 12, the scope of human social activity further expands, and peer evaluation and self-evaluation help to deepen their self-awareness. As people grow older, they will gradually deepen their self-evaluation, which in turn will affect their understanding of others and things. In general, human beings subconsciously strengthen the positive qualities of self-awareness; on the contrary, they will suppress the negative ones. Self-awareness in one's lifetime will undergo certain changes in stability, which is a very complicated psychological process.

EXPERIMENTAL DESIGN OF MUSIC APPRECIATION

Experimental subjects

In this study, 15 college students were selected as the experimental subjects, including 8 male students and 9 female students, aged between 18 and 22, and 5 majored in liberal arts majors and 10 in science and engineering. The specific situation is shown in Table 1.

Self-awareness evaluation method

The evaluation method of self-awareness level in this paper is as follows:

- (1) 15 experimental subjects answer the questions in Table 2 with "yes" or "no";
- (2) Randomly select 5 classmates of each subject to answer the same questions in Table 2, and take the modal number of 5 answers as the reference value;
- (3) If the self-assessment value of the subjects is consistent with the reference value, count 10 points, otherwise, count 0 points. This shall be the difference score (D score) of their self-awareness level.

Table 1. Basic information of the subjects

Number of subjects	Gender	Age	Profession
1	Female	18	Liberal arts
2	Male	22	Science and engineering
3	Female	19	Science and engineering
4	Male	20	Liberal arts
5	Female	21	Science and engineering
6	Male	22	Science and engineering
7	Male	21	Science and engineering
8	Female	18	Science and engineering
9	Male	19	Science and engineering
10	Male	21	Science and engineering
11	Male	20	Science and engineering
12	Female	22	Liberal arts
13	Female	21	Science and engineering
14	Male	18	Liberal arts
15	Female	18	Liberal arts

Table 2. Self-awareness evaluation table

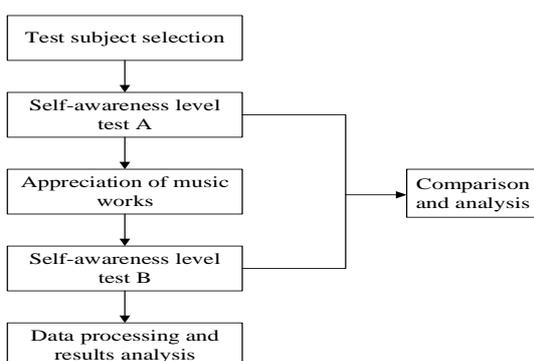
Number of questions	Content of question (Y/N)
1	Is your/his/her academic performance good?
2	Do you/he/she often help other students in study?
3	Do you/he/she often help other students in life?
4	Are you/he/she a good personality?
5	Are you/he/she in shape?
6	Are you/he/she good-looking?
7	Are you/he/she an optimistic person?
8	Are you / he / she good at releasing stress?
9	Are you/he/she a sociable person?
10	Are you/he/she popular among classmates?

Experimental procedure

Firstly, appropriate subjects were selected, and the D score of their self-awareness level were determined according to the above evaluation method. Then, these 15 students in the experiment participated in the one-month music appreciation course, twice per week. Finally, when the course ended, the D scores of the subjects' self-awareness level were re-evaluated.

The specific process is shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1. Experimental flow chart



ANALYSIS OF EXPERIMENTAL RESULTS

Influence of music appreciation courses on self-awareness

Figure 2 and 3 show the scores of the self-awareness level before and after the experimental subjects participated in the music appreciation course. Figure 4 shows the D value between the two. It can be seen from Figure 2 and 3 that before the experiment, the score of self-awareness level was large, i.e., the subject's self-awareness level is not high; after the experiment, the score of their self-awareness level dropped significantly, and the self-awareness level of most subjects were improved. It can be seen from Figure 4 that the D scores of the subjects' self-awareness after participating in the course were lower than those before the experiment, indicating that the self-awareness level of the subjects has increased.

Table 3. Paired sample T test of scores before and after experiment

Mean	Standard deviation	Standard error	95% confidence interval		t	df	p
			Lower limit	Upper limit			
8.0	12.1	3.1	1.3	14.7	2.6	14	0.02

Table 4. Independent sample t test of gender

	Levene test	T test							
		F	p	t	df	p.	M	SD	95% confidence interval
Scores before experiment	Variances are equal	2.2	0.2	-0.3	13.0	0.71	-3.5	9.3	[-23.8, 16.7]
	Variances are not equal			-0.3	11.9	0.70	-3.5	9.1	[-23.4, 16.2]
Scores after experiment	Variances are equal	0.5	0.5	-1.0	13.0	0.29	-4.6	4.2	[-13.9, 4.6]
	Variances are not equal			-1.0	12.9	0.29	-4.6	4.2	[-13.8, 4.5]
Difference between two kind of scores	Variances are equal	3.1	0.1	-0.1	13.0	0.87	-1.0	6.4	[-15.0, 12.9]
	Variances are not equal			-0.1	11.6	0.86	-1.0	6.2	[-14.7, 12.6]

Figure 2. Self-awareness score before experiment

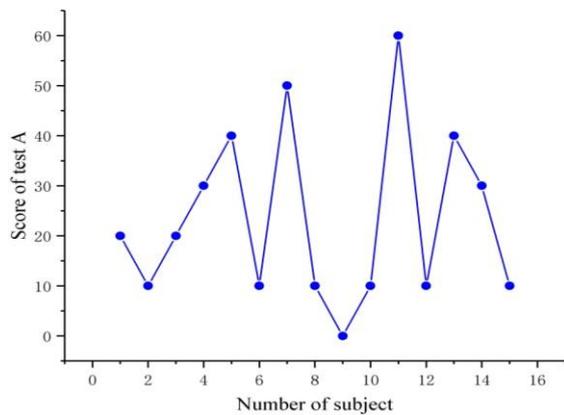


Figure 3. Self-awareness score after experiment

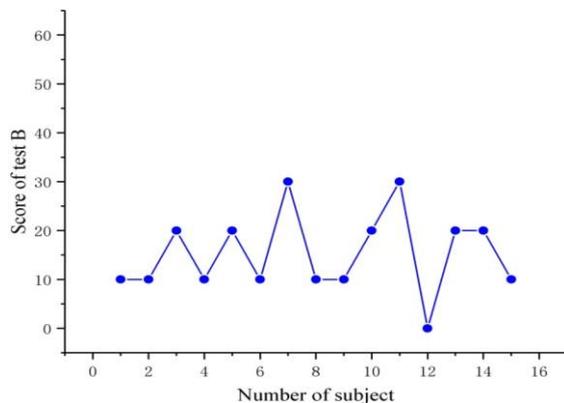
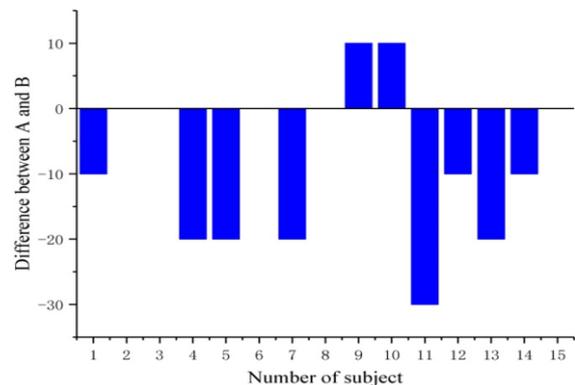


Figure 4. Differences between scores before and after experiment



In order to further verify the results, the data were imported into SPSS, and the paired T test was performed. The results are shown in Table 3, $p < 0.05$, which proved that the D scores of the subjects showed significant differences before and after participating in the music appreciation course.

Influence of gender difference on self-awareness

The independent sample T test in SPSS software was used to analyse the influence of gender on self-awareness. The results found (Table 4) that gender difference did not have a significant influence on the scores of self-awareness level before and after experiment, and difference value of both ($p > 0.05$).

Table 5. Correlation test

		Age	Scores before experiment	Scores after experiment	Difference between two kind of scores
Age	Pearson		0.1	0.0	-0.1
	p	-	0.71	1.00	.59
	N		15	15	15
Scores before experiment	Pearson	0.1		0.8**	-0.9**
	p	0.71	-	0.00	0.00
	N	15		15	15
Scores after experiment	Pearson	0.00	0.8**		-0.5
	p	1.00	0.00	-	0.08
	N	15	15		15
Difference between two kind of scores	Pearson	-0.2	-0.9**	-0.5	
	p	0.59	0.00	0.07	-
	N	15	15	15	

** means significantly correlated at 0.01 level (both sides)

Table 6. Independent sample t test of profession

		Levene test		T test					95% confidence interval
		F	p	t	df	p.	M	SD	
Scores before experiment	Variances are equal	6.2	0.03	-0.5	13.0	0.62	-5.0	9.9	[-26.3, 16.3]
	Variances are not equal			-0.6	12.9	0.54	-5.0	7.9	[-22.1, 12.1]
Scores after experiment	Variances are equal	0.9	0.35	-1.9	13.0	0.08	-8.0	4.1	[-17.0, 1.0]
	Variances are not equal			-1.9	8.9	0.08	-8.0	4.0	[-17.1, 1.1]
Difference between two kind of scores	Variances are equal	7.7	0.02	-0.4	13.0	0.67	-3.0	6.8	[-17.7, 11.7]
	Variances are not equal			-0.5	12.9	0.59	-3.0	5.4	[-14.8, 8.8]

Influence of age difference on self-awareness

The Pearson correlation test in SPSS software was used to analyse the influence of age on self-awareness. The results found (Table 5) that age difference did not have a significant influence on the scores of self-awareness level before and after experiment, and difference value of both ($p > 0.05$).

Correlation analysis also shows that although the appreciation course of music works has a certain improvement effect on the self-awareness level of college students, the correlation between the scores of their self-awareness level before and after the experiment was still as high as 0.8, indicating that for most people, self-awareness level has certain stability; in addition, the difference scores of self-awareness level before the experiment has a great influence on the differences obtained from the two evaluations. After comparison, it is found that the music appreciation course has a higher influence on the students with lower self-awareness level.

Influence of major difference on self-

awareness

The independent sample T test in SPSS software was used to analyse the influence of the major difference on self-awareness. The results found (Table 6) that the major difference did not have a significant influence on the scores of self-awareness level before and after experiment, and difference value of both ($p > 0.05$).

CONCLUSIONS

Based on the basic theories of music of philosophy and self-awareness, this paper compares the differences in self-awareness level of college students before and after participating the music appreciation courses, and analyses the influencing factors. The main conclusions are drawn as follows:

(1) Analysis of the scores in self-awareness level of college students before the experiment shows that their self-awareness level was still relatively low; after the experiment, the difference of their self-awareness level showed a significant decline, indicating that the level of self-awareness has improved, i.e., music appreciation has a positive effect on college

students' self-awareness;

(2) Through correlation analysis, it's found that there is still a significant correlation between the self-awareness differences of college students before and after the experiment, which means that although the appreciation of music works can improve the self-awareness level of college students to a certain extent, it cannot fundamentally solve this problem;

(3) Through the paired T test, independent sample T test and correlation test, it's found that the gender, age and major factors in this paper have no significant effect on college students' self-awareness.

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