

## Factors Influencing the Decision-Making of Aesthetic Courses

A case study of one local university at Ji Ning,

Shandong Province China

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Received April 4, 2023 & Revise October 23, 2023 & Accepted December 31, 2023

### Abstract

The research article of study objective to investigate the factors that influence students decision-making in attending aesthetic education courses, with the ultimate goal of enhancing their aesthetic ability, cognition, and creativity. Given the significance of aesthetic education in shaping students' personalities and providing them with quality education, it is crucial to identify and address the challenges that hinder the implementation of such courses in local colleges and universities. Use quantitative research methods There is an online platform survey that is consistent with the research objectives. The sample consisted of students from 16 university colleges in Shandong Province. Select specifically and the sample size was predetermined to be 400 people. The collected data were analyzed using SPSS software, analyzed and the results presented in descriptive statistics. To this end, this research project focuses on two main objectives: first, to identify the factors that affect students' attendance rates in aesthetic education courses, and second, to propose strategies that can enhance students' attendance rates. The study employs a quantitative research design, and data is collected through a questionnaire survey administered to students in a local university in Shandong, China. The survey measures personal, social, and psychological factors, among others, that may influence students' decision to attend aesthetic education courses. By combining this data with the theory of consumer behavior, the study analyzes the current situation of the attendance rate of aesthetic education courses in colleges and universities, highlights the importance of such courses, and proposes ways to improve attendance rates. The results of this study contribute to the theoretical understanding of aesthetic education in local colleges and universities and provide practical recommendations for improving students' access to quality education.

**Keywords:** local colleges and universities, aesthetic education in colleges and universities, attendance rate, quality education.

## introduction

The present study aims to investigate the factors and considerations that affect the attendance rate of aesthetic education courses. The pursuit of "beauty" has been an ongoing human endeavor, and as material civilization develops, it has become an increasingly pressing need. This driving force inspires individuals to engage in continuous creation. (Noonan & Rizzo, 2017) In recent years, China has shown increasing interest in aesthetic education within schools. Integrating the teaching method of aesthetic education can cultivate students' ability of analysis and judgment, develop their potential for visual acquisition of information, diverge their way of understanding things, and improve aesthetic ability, thereby enhancing their realization of aesthetic cognition and creativity, ultimately leading to the development of more sensitive learning styles and thinking habits. (Gurkan & Dolapcioglu, 2020) (Georgiou, et al., 2022) However, low class attendance remains a pressing issue in domestic aesthetic education courses. Student attendance forms the basis for colleges and universities to carry out classroom teaching, and while various measures have been implemented to improve the class attendance rate of college students, the problem of skipping classes remains common and prominent (Devadoss & Foltz, 1996). According to statistics, 87.6% of colleges and universities across the country offer public art courses for all students. Educational institutions continue to optimize resource allocation and improve management mechanisms to increase the rate of aesthetic education courses. Nevertheless, few studies have investigated the class-to-class rate of aesthetic education. In this study, we apply consumer behavior theory and sample students from a local university in Shandong Province based on three factors: personal, social, and psychological. Our research examines and explores the influencing factors of the attendance rate of aesthetic education courses. (Santosa, 2021)

## Objective

This study aims to explore the factors that influence the attendance rate of aesthetic education courses. Specifically, it examines the impact of students' personal, social, and psychological factors on their attendance rate. By conducting an in-depth investigation on these factors, this study aims to provide a clearer understanding of the issue of low attendance in aesthetic education courses. The findings of this study will enable us to identify strategies to increase class attendance and enhance the value of aesthetic education.

## Previous Research Findings

Aesthetic education has been a topic of pedagogical theory since ancient times, with debates about the role of art and beauty in shaping the individual. Plato regarded aesthetic education as a fundamental aspect of training or educating free men (Denac, 2014). In modern times, Schiller's bourgeois aesthetic education thought differs from ancient thought not only in historical content, but also in its understanding of the value of aesthetic education. (Matherne, & Riggle, 2020) (D'Olimpio, 2021) Schiller's important work on aesthetics, "Letters on Aesthetic Education" (Kooy, 2002), discusses aesthetic education from a broader

perspective of transforming society and restoring human nature. (Wilson, 2003) He identified the dryness of human nature caused by capitalist material civilization and proposed to cultivate fully developed human beings through free aesthetic activities. He stated that "the transition process from the passive state of feeling to the active state of thought and will can only be realized through the intermediate state of aesthetic freedom" and "the only way to turn emotional people into rational people is to make them an aesthetic person first." (Schiller, 2017, April 21) (Maftei, 2014)

Previous research in this area has primarily focused on the concept path of aesthetic education curricula. (Kong, 2020) studied aesthetic knowledge education and aesthetic practice activities, while Sun examined the necessity of strengthening aesthetic education in colleges and universities. In addition, (Hsu & Wu, 2014) analyzed the current problems of aesthetic education in colleges and universities, outlining the necessity of implementing aesthetic education courses. (Eslamian, et al., 2017) (van Baalen, et al., 2021)

**Table 1** provides an overview of previous research on aesthetic education courses.

Representative Scholars (Year)	Definition
(Uştu, et al., 2021) (Douglas et al., 2019),	Aesthetic education is an integral part of quality education and an important aspect of spiritual civilization construction. Its main contents include aesthetic knowledge education and aesthetic practice activities, which aim to address issues related to people's aesthetic concepts, sensibilities, appreciations, and creativity. Through the infiltration of aesthetic education in various subjects, lectures can become more engaging, and the purpose and effect of subject teaching can be achieved, leading to the enlightenment of wisdom through beauty.
	As an important component of national education policy, aesthetic education is critical in cultivating individuals' ability to feel, appreciate, and create beauty. Within the context of quality education, aesthetic education plays an irreplaceable role in the cultivation of individuals' qualities. Furthermore, the importance of innovative talents in economic and social development has become increasingly apparent, and the competition for these talents has become more intense. In this regard, aesthetic education plays a vital role in developing college students' innovative consciousness, thinking, and ability. To this end, colleges and universities should prioritize the construction of aesthetic education courses, create a campus culture that fosters aesthetic appreciation, and accelerate the emergence of innovative talents.
(Comunian, et	The purpose of aesthetic education in colleges and

al., 2015), (Banks & Oakley, 2016) (Stokrocki, 2017) (Rao, 2020) universities is to cultivate students' aesthetic abilities, establish correct worldviews, life outlooks, and values, and develop well-rounded personalities. Aesthetic education serves the task of quality education and personality shaping of college students, and is an indispensable compulsory subject in higher education.

(Hatfield, et al., 2006) (Ulger, 2019) Aesthetic education is an integral part of quality education and an important aspect of spiritual civilization construction. Its main contents include aesthetic knowledge education and aesthetic practice activities, which aim to address issues related to people's aesthetic concepts, sensibilities, appreciations, and creativity. Through the infiltration of aesthetic education in various subjects, lectures can become more engaging, and the purpose and effect of subject teaching can be achieved, leading to the enlightenment of wisdom through beauty.

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### Unnoticed Problems by Predecessors

Despite numerous research results, there are still unresolved problems in the field of aesthetic education. For instance, it remains unclear which factors are significantly associated with attendance rates in aesthetic education courses. Additionally, there are deficiencies in the implementation process of aesthetic education courses that need identification, reflection, and improvement to enhance students' sense of identity and increase attendance rates. Hence, it is evident that further in-depth research is needed in this area.

### Main Research Questions

This study aims to investigate the "Influencing Factors of Aesthetic Education Course Attendance Rate" and examine the current status of aesthetic education implementation at a university in Shandong Province, China. The study seeks to explore the importance of

implementing aesthetic education in this institution and how to encourage students to accept aesthetic education courses. The specific research objectives are as follows:

First, to use a questionnaire survey to examine the impact of personal, social, and psychological factors on students' attendance rates.

Second, to analyze the survey results and propose strategies to improve students' attendance rates.

### **Contributions and Innovations of this Study**

This study contributes to academic research in the following ways:

First, it adopts a questionnaire design that focuses on personal, social, and psychological factors to provide effective data support for aesthetic education research in local universities.

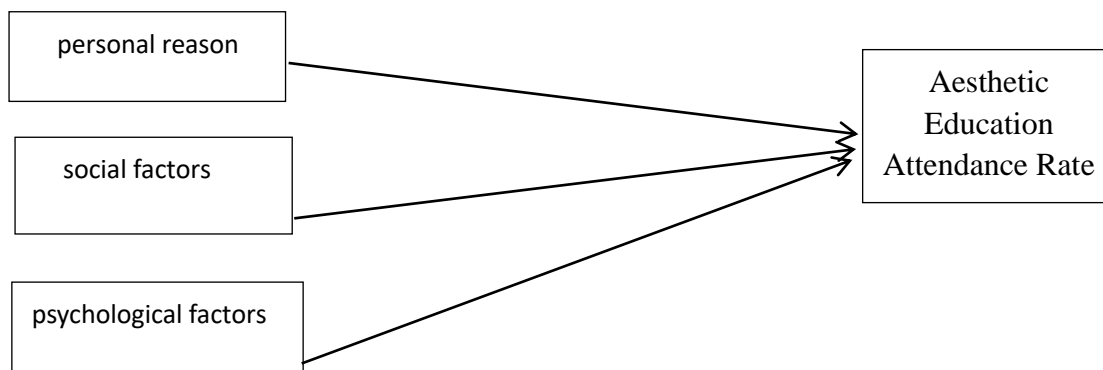
Second, it analyzes the problems and causes of the current aesthetic education model in local colleges and universities based on students' attendance rates and proposes corresponding countermeasures and suggestions.

This study also has several innovations:

First, it takes the student's perspective as an independent variable, which is relatively rare in studies on the attendance rates of aesthetic education courses.

Second, it focuses on the attendance rates of aesthetic education in local colleges and universities, which is an area with relatively few studies in the literature.

Third, it employs the theory of consumer behavior and quantitative research methods to design questionnaires and investigate students' aesthetic education attendance rates.



**Figure 1** Research Framework

## **Literature Review**

### **1. Aesthetic Education**

According to the term "aesthetic education" originated from Schiller's "Introduction to Aesthetics". Aesthetic education involves the combination of aesthetic teaching and aesthetic feeling, through which individuals can improve their ability to understand, appreciate, and

create beauty. Aesthetic education plays a crucial role in shaping individuals' hearts, enhancing their spiritual quality, and promoting their comprehensive and free development. Particularly, aesthetic education has irreplaceable value in terms of fostering sound personality and healing the division of human nature, among other cultural forms. However, aesthetics remains the weak link in the educational chain. In recent years, social problems such as loss of confidence, emptiness of value, and moral degradation have gradually emerged under the influence of the market economy. Among college students, phenomena such as value confusion, ideological distortion, and mental fragility have emerged, making research on aesthetic education increasingly significant. The development direction of aesthetic education in colleges and universities in the new era is to strengthen its implementation, promote the five major education, and achieve the educational goal of "cultivating people" simultaneously. (Palincsar, 1998)

Moulin-Stožek, (2020) argues that modern society increasingly recognizes the need to introduce spiritual, cultural, and personal practices that perform an educational function in the formation and development of the individual. Aesthetic education, defined as the formation of a particular aesthetic attitude towards reality, is an important factor in the spiritual, emotional, and artistic development of today's students. (Tugalov, 2022)

## **2.Current Status of Aesthetic Education Application**

Since aesthetic education was put forward, it has been applied in many fields. Since 40 years of reform and opening up, Chinese aesthetic education has been divided into three stages. In the first stage, from 1978 to 1986, the development of aesthetic education in China was very poor. Research, more without matching funding. Zhu, a famous contemporary esthetician and educator, and others jointly wrote to the Ministry of Education, demanding to restore the independent status of aesthetic education in education policy. (Haeryun & Piro, 2009)The second is the recovery stage from 1986 to 2000. At that time, the Chinese government had recognized the importance of aesthetic education and issued a series of policy documents to restore aesthetic education, marking the recovery stage. In the third stage, after 2000, with the national implementation of quality education and education policies for the comprehensive development of morality, intelligence, body, aesthetics, and labor, several national aesthetic education and art education curriculum systems were established. From kindergarten, primary school, middle school to university, a complete art education system has gradually formed.

The following article provide us more detail about the development of aesthetic educationin China. (Pang, et al., 2020) article provides a comprehensive overview of the development of aesthetic education in China's universities, including its historical evolution and current status. It also discusses the challenges and innovations of aesthetic education in higher education and provides recommendations for its future development. Pang's,(2020) article focuses on the current situation of aesthetic education in China's primary and secondary schools, including the challenges and problems facing the implementation of aesthetic education. It also proposes several countermeasures for improving aesthetic education in these schools. Hickman's (1990) article provides a critical reflection on the development of aesthetic education in Chinese higher education, including its theoretical



foundation, curriculum design, and teaching methods. It also discusses the challenges and opportunities facing aesthetic education in higher education and provides suggestions for its future development.

### **3.Consumer Behavior Theory**

The theory of consumer behavior was first proposed by Gerson, Jevons and Walras, who defined the theory of consumer demand from the perspective of utility maximization. Its content is mainly that the study is the law of consumer behavior, and its focus is on consumer choice theory. (Walras, 1954) Consumer theory includes: utility theory, usefulness theory, demand theory, consumer choice theory and a series of theories. Later, Marshall made a further detailed exposition. Slutsky (1915) proposed a series of properties of utility maximization demand in 1915, Hicks (1946), (Ackerman, et al., 2004), Wall Germany and others followed Slutsky's work in 1934-1944 and conducted in-depth research. Therefore, consumer behavior theory seems to be a middle school in this research field. (Jevons, 1871) (Clark, 1891; Vongchavalitkul, et al., 2017)

### **4 Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior in Consumer Behavior Theory**

In their book Marketing Management, Kotler and Kel (2016) state that there are four factors that influence consumer decision-making. (Vongchavalitkul, et al., 2017)

1. Cultural factors: Culture is the most fundamental determinant of desires and behaviors that derive values, perceptions, preferences, and behaviors from other important institutions.

2. Social factors: Social class is a relatively homogeneous and permanent social division that is hierarchically structured and whose members share similar values, interests, and behaviors. Social class is determined by a single factor, such as income, but it is measured as a combination of occupation, income, education, wealth, and other variables.

3. Personal factors: Personal factors are defined as the psychological characteristics of a person that differ from others, and which produce relatively consistent and persistent responses to the environment. Purchasing decisions are also influenced by personal characteristics, namely age and life cycle stage, occupation, economic status, lifestyle, personality and self-concept. Kotler and Keller (2016) believe that there are several indicators among personal factors, including work, economic ability, lifestyle, and personal character.

4. Psychological factors: Psychological factors are part of the influence of the environment in which he lives and lives now, without neglecting past influences or his expectations for the future.

## **Research Methods**

### **1.Research Methods**

A quantitative research method was employed for this study. Questionnaire survey was conducted through an online platform, with the topics designed to align with the research objectives. The survey questionnaires were distributed to students from 16 colleges within a certain university in Shandong Province, and the sample size was predetermined as 400. The

data collected was analyzed using SPSS software.

## 2. Questionnaire Design

The questionnaire used in this study was adapted from Santosa, R. (2021) "The Influence of Cultural, Social and Personal Factors on the Purchase Decision of Customers Using Wedding Service Organizers in Surabaya," Factors Affecting Consumer Behavior Design Questionnaire in International Journal of Review Management Business and Entrepreneurship. ( Elwalda & Lu, 2016) (Semesta, et al., 2020) The questionnaire comprised of 20 topics, categorized into personal factors, social factors, and psychological factors. The original questionnaire was reviewed and modified based on feedback from teachers and peers, and topics that were deemed inappropriate or irrelevant were removed. Specifically, the questionnaire consisted of 5 questions relating to personal factors, including students' interest and attitudes towards aesthetic education courses. The social factors section comprised of 5 questions relating to family conditions, peer popularity, and social identity. The psychological factors section included 5 questions regarding psychological needs, and the attendance rate of aesthetic education classes was also assessed with 5 questions.

In this study, the research participants were selected from a local university in Shandong Province. A total of 406 questionnaires were submitted, of which 6 invalid questionnaires were excluded due to inadequate answering time, leaving 400 valid questionnaires. The sample group has a balanced representation of genders and colleges, and is distributed reasonably across different years, making it suitable for this study.

## Results

### 1. Questionnaire reliability analysis

To analyze the reliability of the questionnaire, the Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient was calculated. Generally,  $\alpha$  coefficients above 0.9 indicate very good reliability, between 0.8-0.9 indicate good reliability, between 0.7-0.8 indicate acceptable reliability, and values between 0.6 and 0.7 indicate average reliability. Values between 0.5 and 0.6 indicate that the reliability is not ideal, and values below 0.5 suggest that the questionnaire may require reorganization.

In this study, the  $\alpha$  coefficient values for personal, social, psychological factors, and attendance rate were 0.8, 0.81, 0.81, and 0.81, respectively, all of which fall between 0.8-0.9, indicating good reliability of the questionnaire.

**Table 2** Cronbach's  $\alpha$  coefficient table

variable	number of items	$\alpha$
personal reason	5	0.8
social factors	5	0.81
psychological factors	5	0.81
Attendance rate of aesthetic education class	5	0.81



## Regression Analysis of Questionnaire

**Table 3** Regression analysis table

Model	R	Model Summary		
		R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.870a	.757	.755	.41390

a. Predictors: (Constant), Sum Psy, Sum Social, SumPerson

**Table 4** ANOVAa table

ANOVAa						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	211.191	3	70.397	410.929	.000b
	Residual	67.839	396	.171		
	Total	279.030	399			

a. Dependent Variable: SumAtt

b. Predictors: (Constant), SumPsy, SumSocial, SumPerson

**Table 5** Coefficientsa table

Model	Coefficientsa				
	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.206	.065		3.155	.002
SumPerson	.267	.048	.262	5.528	.000
SumSocial	.375	.047	.378	8.045	.000
SumPsy	.288	.046	.291	6.202	.000

## Discussion

The study aimed to investigate the impact of personal, social, and psychological factors on the attendance rate of aesthetic education classes among college students. The dependent variable, SumAtt, was analyzed using linear regression in SPSS. The results indicated a good

fit, with an R Square of 0.757 and a degree of fit greater than 0.6. The ANOVA test revealed a significant effect (Sig. value <0.05), and further analysis of the coefficient matrix revealed that the three independent variables had a significant impact on academic performance, with social factors having the greatest influence, followed by psychological factors and personal factors. The equation derived from the analysis was: Student aesthetic education class attendance rate =  $0.206 + 0.267$  (personal factors) +  $0.375$  (social factors) +  $0.288$  (psychological factors).

The study's findings showed that aesthetic education played an important role in improving students' aesthetic and humanistic qualities and promoting their all-round development. However, the low attendance rate of aesthetic education classes was a common phenomenon in many schools, especially local schools. Through the analysis of the questionnaire results, students' personal awareness and interest in aesthetic education, the aesthetic education curriculum mechanism, the influence of family and peers, the aesthetic education environment, and students' psychological needs were found to play a vital role in the attendance of students in aesthetic education classes.

Regarding social factors and aesthetic education attendance rate, among the three independent variables, social factors had the greatest influence, including school aesthetic education curriculum mechanism, family and peer influence, and other factors. Although colleges and universities have always been the centers and highlands of aesthetic education teaching and research, the study found that aesthetic education in local colleges and universities was relatively weak. To improve the situation, colleges and universities should enhance their understanding of aesthetic education courses, formulate aesthetic education curriculum mechanisms, learn from excellent experience and examples of aesthetic education at home and abroad, improve the strength of teachers, and enhance the atmosphere of aesthetic education on campus.

Regarding personal factors and attendance rate of aesthetic education, students' personal factors played a decisive role in the attendance rate of aesthetic education classes, as students' long-term practice of exam-oriented education, lack of understanding of "aesthetic education," and insufficient ability to appreciate and appreciate beauty were found to be important factors that affected the attendance rate. To increase attendance, students should deepen their awareness of aesthetic education, study aesthetic education-related knowledge, and strengthen their theoretical knowledge to establish correct aesthetic concepts.

Regarding psychological factors and attendance rate of aesthetic education, the study found that mental health and aesthetic education were inseparable, as aesthetic education classes could promote the development of students' psychology, cultivate students' noble moral sentiments, and even perfect their personalities. The study also found that external environmental factors affected students' physical and mental development, making them prone to misconceptions and psychological problems. Therefore, aesthetic education should be integrated into all aspects of study and life, providing a relaxed and pleasant environment that promotes students' psychological development.

## Suggestions

The results of the study found that the mechanism of the aesthetic education curriculum Influence of family and co-workers Aesthetic education environment and the psychological needs of students The role and importance of participation in aesthetic education should be promoted through personal awareness and interest in aesthetic education. By support and awareness

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