

# Exploration of Educational Management Approaches for Art Students from a Humanistic Perspective

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## Abstract

**Purpose** – The purpose of this paper is to explore educational management approaches for art students from a humanistic perspective, aiming to improve management effectiveness.

**Design/Methodology/Approach** – Based on the characteristics of art students in Chinese higher education institutions, such as their energetic yet lacking discipline, idealistic yet lacking rational understanding of life, independent yet lacking teamwork spirit, and strong artistic skills yet neglecting comprehensive literacy, this paper analyzes the problems existing in the education and management of art students. It further proposes solutions by applying humanistic theory, emphasizing the development of students' emotions, interests, motivations, and other non-cognitive factors.

**Findings** – This paper studies the application of humanistic theory, emphasizing counselors' professional alignment, affinity, and the role of online education.

**Research Implications** – Adopting a humanistic approach can better suit art students' characteristics, promoting their comprehensive development and highlighting the need for universities to reform educational management methods.

**Keywords:** Humanism, Art student, Educational management

**JEL Classifications:** I20, I21, I23

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## **I. Introduction**

The globalization of the economy has driven the prosperity of cultural industries and a surge in the creative economy, leading to increasing and diversified demands for artistic talents. In response, the number of art students in China's higher education system has grown, reflecting improvements in educational adaptability and alignment with the cultivation of practical artistic talents. However, the "artistic" characteristics of these students pose new challenges for educational management.

### **1. Application of Humanistic Theory in Education**

Humanistic theory, a significant school of contemporary American psychology founded by A.H. Maslow and further developed by C.R. Rogers, emphasizes human dignity, value, creativity, and the pursuit of self-actualization. With strong interdisciplinary relevance, humanistic psychology has been applied to education, social work, and other fields. In education, it focuses on nurturing students' emotions, interests, motivations, and other non-cognitive factors. Teaching should align with individual differences and needs to stimulate students' potential and foster interactions between cognition and emotion, thereby promoting holistic development. Applying humanistic theory to the educational management of art students exemplifies the integration of theory and practice.

## **II. Characteristics of Art Students in Chinese Higher Education Institutions**

### **1. Energetic yet lacking discipline and self-restraint**

Art students, influenced by their professional qualities, often leave a "contradictory" impression of being "outwardly active in thought, enthusiastic and generous, full of vitality, but also showing respect for themselves, being independent and stubborn". And this kind of "contradiction" is manifested in the lack of discipline in collective life, scattered living habits, susceptibility to environmental influences, and full of idealistic feelings. This "contradiction" leads to a lack of reverence for rules among art students, a certain degree of resistance to school rules and behavioral norms, and a lack of sustained motivation for academic pursuit, yearning for a "free and unrestrained" self state.

### **2. Idealistic yet lacking rational understanding of life**

Art students are known for their unique insights and innovative vitality, but at the spiritual level, they sometimes lack a deep understanding of life. Although they have a deep understanding and perception of the superficial world, they are somewhat lacking in shaping a deeper sense of social responsibility and moral

standards. Especially when society is in a special period of globalization and local cultural integration, art students exhibit vague ideal goals, weak moral concepts, and some even deviate from their values. They are immersed in their professional passion, but their attention to social dynamics is relatively limited; They are enthusiastic about practical exercise, but easily fall into the misconception of being self-centered. In the era of information explosion, if they lack critical thinking to discern the authenticity of online information and the ability to see through the essence of complex events, they are more likely to become victims of misinformation, which will have a profound negative impact on their worldview, outlook on life, and values.

### **3. Independent yet lacking teamwork spirit**

Under the influence of art education, art students focus on exploring their individual talents and have a relatively weak understanding of teamwork spirit. They are enthusiastic about individual growth and expression, neglecting the power of the collective, and the spirit of teamwork has not been fully cultivated. The characteristics of art majors encourage them to unleash infinite innovative thinking and rich creative imagination to shape unique artistic personalities. But this tendency can also lead to them showing isolation, poor communication, indifferent collective consciousness, lack of a global perspective, and difficulty in coordinating and balancing the relationship between personal achievements and collective interests, which can have a certain impact on their social life.

### **4. Strong artistic skills yet neglecting comprehensive literacy**

The selection method for the art college entrance examination is mainly based on professional skill tests, adopting a "specialized ranking" approach, which leads to art students investing a lot of time and energy into professional training. Under this admission principle, the grades of professional courses play a decisive role, while the score line for cultural courses is relatively lower compared to non art majors. This situation indirectly affects the insufficient attention of art students to cultural courses, resulting in an unreasonable knowledge structure, shallow thinking, and generally low English proficiency among art students. However, the essence of art is culture, and culture is the root of art. The height of culture determines the height of art (Zhong, 2023). It is gratifying that the admission principle for art students in the 2024 college entrance examination has been reformed from the original "ranking of arts and majors" to "equal distribution of arts and majors", which is crucial for comprehensively improving the comprehensive quality of art students.

### **III. Problems in the Education and Management of Art Students in Chinese Higher Education Institutions**

#### **1. Lack of long-term career planning mechanisms**

Related research data shows that art students generally lack practical career planning and have a negative mindset of "taking one step, watching one step". Of course, this is also a common problem among college students, but art students are particularly prominent in their performance. Art students often have a strong idealistic color towards the future, their dreams are poetic, and their career goals often go beyond the realm of reality, resulting in a disconnect between their career vision and the actual situation. This is because art students have distinct personalities, pursue themselves, lack lasting persistence in their ideals, and are easily influenced by their surrounding environment (Tursunjan & Aliyagul, 2021). In addition, the employment guidance departments of universities also lack a long-term mechanism for targeted career planning for art students, especially in comprehensive colleges.

#### **2.Emphasizing the seriousness and authority of the system, lacking the practice and application of humanistic educational concepts**

Independent thinking is a prominent hallmark of contemporary students. Especially for art students, their way of thinking is unique, they have their own independent opinions on both academics and life, and firmly maintain their personal views, which is not easy to compromise. This is a positive reflection of their growth. However, this trait may also solidify their personality shaping and leave stereotypes in others. On the other hand, art students have to learn both cultural and professional courses from a young age, and their parents take care of all the trivial matters in daily life, resulting in poor life skills. After entering college, they often find it difficult to adapt to the new living environment. Furthermore, due to the self-centered nature of art students, they lack the ability to think from a different perspective in collective life, which may affect their harmonious coexistence with classmates. The university student education management department only emphasizes the seriousness and authority of the system in daily education management, lacking patient and practical humanistic care and education.

#### **3.Lack of a long-term mechanism for comprehensive quality improvement that balances the complementary effects of culture and art**

The enrollment system for art majors in Chinese higher education institutions tends to emphasize the expression of artistic expertise, with relatively relaxed requirements for cultural courses. This often leads students to marginalize cultural courses in the pursuit of artistic achievement. There has also been a misconception in society that 'science is not good for learning humanities, and humanities are not good for

learning arts'. According to a questionnaire survey of art students, most respondents did not fully value the study of cultural courses during high school, and were only satisfied with passing the passing line. Some students even misunderstood the value of cultural courses, believing that they were irrelevant to their career and employment. After entering university, this biased understanding and phenomenon have not changed (Xie & Ziqiu, 2023). Furthermore, the teaching management departments and student education management departments of universities operate independently and do not integrate with each other, without forming a joint force to promote the common improvement of art and culture.

## **IV. Analysis of the Reasons for the Problems in Education and Management of Art Students in Chinese Higher Education Institutions**

### **1. The inherent characteristics of art course teaching**

Compared to cultural courses, art courses have unique teaching characteristics. Cultural courses emphasize interaction and communication, encouraging in-depth discussions between students, peers, and teachers to enhance learning outcomes. However, art disciplines such as painting, with their foundational training in sketching, watercolor, and sketching, tend to cultivate students' concentration, requiring them to immerse themselves in the exploration of artistic beauty in a quiet environment, in order to focus on creation without external interference (Yao, 2021). This learning path may shape students' dependence on peaceful and independent spaces, causing discomfort in noisy environments, and may also weaken their willingness to accept external assistance. In the long run, this may lead to an increase in their individual independence, while the spirit of collective cooperation is relatively weak, which poses certain challenges to students' team management and social skills.

### **2. The objective motivation for art students to choose the path of art**

Objectively speaking, some art students choose the art path mainly for the practical consideration of further education, rather than due to their love for art itself. However, these students do not have a true passion for art, and their learning motivation mainly comes from exam requirements rather than intrinsic interests. In addition, the academic performance of art major students in cultural courses is often poor, leading to a decrease in self-efficacy among some students. They tend to only focus on teaching content that they are interested in, and may choose to avoid parts that they are not interested in, which poses significant challenges for student management. On the other hand, due to social prejudice against art exams and their survival, art students have a weak sense of self-identity, and some even have inferiority complex, which will lead to a series of problems in the education and management of art students (Song, 2020).

### **3. The differences in educational management concepts for art students**

The teaching and student education management departments of universities do not start from the characteristics of art students themselves, but only rely on their existing experience and inherent methods to carry out preaching style ideological and political education and strict institutional management for art students, which causes students' resistance and "non cooperative" attitude. In addition, the education and management of art students lack theoretical guidance, and there is only simple business cooperation between departments, lacking systematic thinking and overall pattern.

## **V. The Application of Humanistic Theory in the Education and Management of Art Students**

In the field of education, humanism emphasizes the development of non cognitive factors such as students' emotions, interests, and motivations in education and teaching. It advocates that teaching should conform to students' individual differences and needs, in order to stimulate students' potential and the interaction between cognition and emotion, and promote students' comprehensive development through this "interaction". The most difficult job in the world is being a human, and human work still requires people to do it. And the counselor is the initiator and engine of this "interaction", which is also the key to the application of humanistic theory in the education and management of art students.

The Ministry of Education's Order No. 43 "Regulations on the Construction of Counselor Teams in Ordinary Higher Education Institutions" clearly stipulates the nine major responsibilities of counselor work, namely ideological and political education, party and class building, academic guidance, daily affairs management, mental health education and consultation, online ideological and political education, crisis response, career planning and employment guidance, and theoretical and practical research. It can be seen that each of the nine functions of counselors must be people-oriented.

### **1. Enhancing counselors' professional alignment**

A survey of art students found that when asked "Which role do you think is most suitable for the position of counselor in art schools?", as many as 51.63% of students strongly prefer to choose "field expert status". Similarly, in the question of "Who are the key figures in personal development?", 36.28% preferred "professional guidance teachers". The outstanding abilities of professional teachers make them play an irreplaceable role in educational management, like a catalyst that can significantly improve teaching efficiency. The relatively small size of art classes provides excellent opportunities for professional teachers to establish deep connections with students. They can better understand students' inner worlds, resonate with their viewpoints and needs more easily, and optimize educational management strategies (Jing, 2019). Therefore,

given the above advantages, if conditions permit, professional teachers should be actively advocated and encouraged to play a role in the ideological and political education and educational management of art students. Of course, hiring individuals with a background in art as full-time counselors for art students is the best choice, allowing professionals to do their professional work.

## **2. Enhance the affinity of counselors in educational management**

Art students have rich creativity and endless imagination space. Counselors should encourage them to join various art related student clubs, showcase and improve their professional skills through extracurricular activities, and also enhance the cohesion and attractiveness of the class. In this participation process, students not only gain practical experience and inspiration, but also gradually transform their personal characteristics into unique personality charm. For individual students, counselors should adopt customized guidance strategies, avoid using overly tough management methods, and strive to understand and approach students, persuade them with rational arguments, and touch their heartstrings with sincere emotions. In addition, the peer effect should be fully utilized, allowing students with good character and strong social skills to interact with them and participate in cultural activities together, which will unconsciously shape their concept of health (Quantong & Ke, 2024). The affinity of counselors stems from respect and understanding of students. On the premise of understanding students' growth background and winning their trust, counselors can touch students' emotions, stimulate their inner resonance, and engage in sincere spiritual communication in the process of educational management, becoming an educational manager who is both a teacher and a friend.

## **4. Fully leverage the role of online ideological and political education in the management of art students' education**

The information transmission in traditional education systems often manifests as one-way and lagging, making it difficult to cope with rapidly changing social dynamics. In today's digital society, network platforms such as Tiktok, Weibo and WeChat are gradually becoming the main windows for students to learn knowledge and interact. The popularity of the Internet has greatly facilitated the communication and learning process between students. In this online environment, the traditional teacher-student relationship tends towards equality, which helps to cultivate a more harmonious teaching atmosphere and encourages students to actively receive education (Shen, 2019). In order to adapt to this change, ideological and political education and educational management should reform their teaching framework, build a network education ecosystem that adapts to modern needs, integrate the internet into various aspects of students' lives, establish dynamic working mechanisms, and strengthen information sharing and interactive communication between schools, teachers, and students through online discussion forums, online activities, and other forms, thus opening up diversified educational paths. Therefore, counselors should actively explore new work models and technological applications, pay attention to new trends and emerging groups, and develop more targeted and effective

strategies to improve work efficiency and educational outcomes.

## VI.Conclusion

In summary, art students in higher education institutions are often labeled as "difficult to manage", which is inconsistent with the facts. The real crux of the problem lies in the lack of practical and effective educational management methods. The application of humanistic theory in the education and management of art students is undoubtedly the fundamental approach to solving this problem. It can not only explore and enhance the unique talents and advantages of art students, but also accurately understand, comprehend, and grasp their inner world and behavioral patterns. As an "engine" counselor, it guides their growth while continuously strengthening their professional abilities and personality charm. Through management and education, humanistic theory is implemented in practice, thereby promoting the comprehensive development of art students.

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