

Feasibility Study on Developing Art Therapy Major in Chinese Colleges and Universities

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Abstract: Art therapy is one of the important therapeutic methods in the field of mental health education. It is of great significance to promote students' emotional stability and regulation, and to establish a correct and positive view of life. At present, art therapy has been widely concerned and effectively applied in the industry. It has been established as an independent discipline and continuously improved and popularized, especially in western countries. This paper affirms the positive role of art therapy in the future social development, elaborate the concept and principle of art therapy, as well as the development status of art therapy education at home and abroad, and puts forward the implementation views and specific model design of therapy oriented art education in colleges and universities.

Keywords: Mental Health Education; Art Therapy; Art Education; Discipline Construction

Introduction

It is not uncommon to use art to intervene the patients' injured heart and renew the their confidence in life. In Japan, where earthquakes are frequent, relevant institutions often provide psychological assistance and therapy for the affected people through artistic means such as painting to help them release and eliminate their negative emotions. This means is particularly effective for children's psychological therapy, and it is also one of the purposes of art education to help them through artistic activities such as art, stimulate the operation of children's self-healing and protection mechanism, and assist them to reestablish a sense of security and positive good state. Therapists used painting and psychodrama in post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) population after Wenchuan earthquake, which achieved special effects in relieving mental and emotional stress disorder. Art therapy is also widely carried out in community management abroad, which has a unique effect on the lonely, elderly, disabled, ideological remoulding, and people with impaired social functions.

1. Development Status of Art Therapy and Related Education at China

Art therapy, also known as art psychotherapy, is a form of psychological counseling and therapy by means of art (including music, dance, painting, sculpture, drama, poetry, film, calligraphy, etc.). Because the language function of this method is weakened, and the line, color, melody, pace, rhythm, shape, expression and bearing play an important role in it. This method has increasingly attracted the attention of the society, and it is widely recognized when we pay attention to the sense of experience and visual sense today.

1.1 Current situation of art therapy in China

In China, psychology and psychological counseling and therapy itself started late, and the development of art psychotherapy as a rising star of psychotherapy is even more backward than the European and American countries. Since the 1990s, the research and application in the field of art therapy have been applied in the fields of special education,

psychological medical therapy, post-disaster psychological intervention and auxiliary therapy of mental diseases, which can be specifically reflected in the field of education and medical treatment.

According to data of the 2020 China National Mental Health Development Report (2019~2020), with 7.4% of them being severely depressed. The 2020 national mental health survey conducted by the Institute of Psychology of the Chinese Academy of Sciences shows that the detection rate of high risk of depression among people with undergraduate degree and above was 13.6%. The analysis found that the mental health index, as measured by the China Mental Health Scale, tended to increase each year as we got older. Depression levels tend to decrease with age, suggesting that mental health problems are more prevalent in youth and that excessive anxiety is a key factor causing depression. Therefore, attention should be paid to the prevention and intervention of mental health problems in youth. The reality of changing the social high-frequency occurrence of psychological diseases is to meet the social demand for art therapy, and this situation presents art therapy education with an infinite range of ideas based on the perspective of the task of social development (necessity), the perspective of disciplinary development (opportunity) and the perspective of the integrated use of art resources in schools (feasibility). Moreover, with the deepening and intensification of the open form of society, people communicate and cooperate more, and cross-cultural communication barriers are bound to exist for a long time. The use of art forms based on the perspective of culture and art itself bears the abstract meaning of art therapy, and at the same time concretely solves the communication barriers brought about by personality circumstances and unexpected events in communication and exchange, in order to contribute to the inner needs of local groups or individuals to relieve stress, relax, be recognized and understood. It is not possible for a small group of people to meet such a large social responsibility, and it is only by becoming a research project and building a discipline that we can fundamentally solve the problem and share the social responsibility. In this way, the significance of building the art therapy discipline is deepened.

2. Development Conception of Art Therapy Education

2.1 Theoretical foundations of discipline construction

Art therapy is based on the theoretical knowledge of Anthropology and psychology. With the forms of expression including education, psychodynamics, the theory of cognition and behavior, group interpersonal interaction and other therapeutic modes, art therapy uses evaluation tools as auxiliary means to resolve emotional conflicts, improve emotion regulation and heal mental psychology in experiential teaching. It helps learners to be well equipped to enhance self-awareness, improve social skills and manage behaviour, solve problems, reduce anxiety, and improve the ability to understand and interface with realistic situations. In the research practice of art therapy, the healing effects of art are achieved by immersing people through attention and participation in artistic activities.

2.2 Resource base of art therapy discipline construction

Art majors in colleges and universities have been constructed for a long time, and the enrollment of students has gone from high tide to low tide again and again. This is a reflection of the limitations of the training orientation of art majors, with a large number of art teachers and teaching resources being idle and wasted, so that they are eliminated and abandoned. And it is detrimental to disciplinary resources and cross-disciplinary development. At present, mental health education has been gradually introduced into the curriculum of undergraduates in colleges and universities. At the same time, the art colleges subordinate to many comprehensive colleges and universities are faced with the problems of aging and old-fashioned professional settings, lack of distinctive training objectives, and simple copying of settings of majors and curricula, to a certain extent failing to keep pace with the times. This is why art colleges and universities under comprehensive institutions are adapting to the interdisciplinary path of art, such as the combination of art and market, the combination of art and medicine, psychology and so on. The art therapy major is a new discipline that has been developed to adapt to the development and changes of the times and expand the scope of research in art, psychology, medicine and pedagogy. Exploring new ideas for the promotion of art disciplines and art education resources is an important task for contemporary art education, which is not fully functioning for everyone who needs psychological art. Through art therapy, we can make good use of the theory and teaching resources of art discipline. Art education, as a repository of art therapy, has never been in

short supply, but its hidden function has not been discovered, or it has not been given enough attention, or it has been confined to its own little world and has refused to move forward. In particular, students majoring in painting, music performance and dance have narrow employment channels and a tough employment situation due to the limitations of their majors. Expressive arts therapy as a basis for the development of mental health education courses in colleges and universities is a way to popularize mental health awareness and help university students to improve their mental health but is widely popular and also shows a situation of employment in short supply.

2.3 Feasibility analysis on the construction of curriculum system of art therapy major

For various reasons, each school has different starting points and emphases in the teaching curriculum of art therapy, but the emphasis is undoubtedly on the consolidation of basic theory, the acquisition of professional skills and the gaining of practical experience. The curriculum of art therapy education in China can learn from the advanced experience of foreign universities, but should not be blindly copied. Instead, it should formulate training plans in accordance with the actual situation of our country, specifically from the analysis of national cultural characteristics, from the effective understanding of Chinese psychology, effective solution to mental health as a starting point to build theoretical and technical systems. It is true that the formulation of art therapy comes from the west, but there have been practical cases in China for a long time: the five elements of music in Chinese medicine, Shamanism dancing god, Zhuyou and so on can be classified as the category of art therapy. The Preface to Mao's poem: "Emotions move in the heart and are expressed in words; words are not enough for contempt; contempt is not enough for eternal song; eternal song is not enough for the dance of the hands and the dance of the feet" has also long made the experience of dance therapy clear: the best way to express emotions is to dance. Therefore, when establishing the discipline of art therapy, it is important to tap into the resources of Chinese cultural treasures. Finding out the cultural contribution of Chinese culture to art therapy and integrating it into theoretical construction in the process of technical implementation is not a cultural fortress, but a way of following the path of human psychological formation and thus finding an effective adjustment to abnormal psychology.

3. Conclusion

Art, by capturing and excavating, feeling and analyzing, using a blend and balance of skill, imagination, experience and other integrated human factors as a way of complementing the limitations of language, and will be the symbol of communication as irreplaceable in this age. Intercultural communication is the norm in this era, and the management of the communication gap is also a broad-spectrum issue. Recognizing the mind, reaching a consensus, removing obstacles and gaining understanding through artistic symbols and art forms is the most valuable combination of art and psychology and the beginning of giving art new functions. Symbols are inseparable from the development of human culture, anthropology studies what relates to people and seeks to find the pathways of how that thing is human psychologically and behaviorally. Art therapy is inseparable from an understanding of anthropological theory and cutting-edge research results, and the theoretical system of the art therapy discipline is anthropology and its various psychological theories and schools. There are rich resources for teaching art education in colleges and universities, and it is feasible and useful to develop the art therapy discipline in colleges and universities: every college and university should pay attention to it and establish an effective art therapy curriculum system in combination with local cultural resources, which will play a positive role in the career development of art students and provide new ideas for the development of psychological disciplines and social disciplines such as anthropology. In the 21st century, art therapy is playing a unique role in the development of human history, and it is time for schools with the capacity and foundation to take action to establish the discipline of art therapy.

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Fund project

- (1) Project number:204032101122102,Project name : 2020 Guangdong curriculum teacher administration Demonstration Classroom project: Applied psychology (The art of harmonious development of body and mind), Competent organization: Department of Education of Guangdong Province.
- (2) Project number: K20401210320017, Project name: Research on stress resistance model of college students' healthy growth, Competent organization: Department of Education of Guangdong Province.
- (3) Project name: MR practice in a demonstration classroom for the art of harmonious development of applied psychology (body and mind), Competent organization: Higher Education Division of Ministry of Education.
- (4) Project number: 202102477048: Construction of an immersive VR behavioral psychoanalysis laboratory based on the topic (Applied Psychology - The Art of Harmonious Development of Body and Mind), Competent organization: Higher Education Division of Ministry of Education.