



AROUSED BY THE ODES, ESTABLISHED BY THE RULES OF PROPRIETY, PERFECTED BY MUSIC: INTEGRATING AESTHETIC EDUCATION IN CONTEMPORARY MUSIC EDUCATION THROUGH CONFUCIAN AESTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

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Abstract: Integrating traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy into contemporary music education has recently become a burgeoning research focus within domestic academia. A study of Confucian theories and connotations of aesthetic education reveals the importance of aesthetic philosophy embodied in “Aroused by the Odes, Established by the Rules of Propriety, Perfected by Music” in music education. By analyzing the manifestation of Confucian aesthetic philosophy in contemporary music education, this study elucidates its value in cultivating temperament, enhancing character, and promoting social harmony and moral education. Furthermore, by combining the practice of aesthetic education courses in higher education, it explores the insights and innovative approaches of the Confucian perspective on ritual and music in aesthetic education curricula. Delving deeply into the modern value of traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy, strengthening interdisciplinary research in aesthetic education and constructing a scientific evaluation system for aesthetic education are all significant for advancing contemporary music education. It is hoped that the progressive deepening of relevant research will further enrich the theoretical connotations of music education in higher education institutions and provide valuable references for the reform and innovation of aesthetic education courses in universities.

Keywords: Confucianism. Aesthetic Philosophy. Music Education. Aesthetic Education.

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Resumo: A integração da filosofia estética tradicional confucionista na educação musical contemporânea tornou-se recentemente um foco de investigação crescente no meio acadêmico nacional. Um estudo das teorias confucionistas e das conotações da educação estética revela a importância da filosofia estética incorporada em “Despertado pelas Odes, Estabelecido pelas Regras de Propriedade, Aperfeiçoado pela Música”, na educação musical. Ao analisar a manifestação da filosofia estética confucionista na educação musical contemporânea, este estudo elucidava o seu valor no cultivo do temperamento, no reforço do carácter, na promoção da harmonia social e na educação moral. Além disso, ao combinar a prática dos cursos de educação estética, no ensino superior, explora os conhecimentos e as abordagens inovadoras da perspectiva confucionista sobre o ritual e a música nos currículos de educação estética. Aprofundar o valor moderno da filosofia estética tradicional confucionista, reforçar a investigação interdisciplinar em educação estética e construir um sistema de avaliação científica da educação estética são fatores importantes para o avanço da educação musical contemporânea. Espera-se que o aprofundamento progressivo da investigação relevante enriqueça, ainda mais, as conotações teóricas da educação musical nas instituições de ensino superior e forneça referências valiosas para a reforma e a inovação dos cursos de educação estética nas universidades.

Palavras-chave: Confucionismo. Filosofia estética. Educação musical. Educação estética.

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Abstract: Integrating traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy into contemporary music education has recently become a burgeoning research focus within domestic academia. A study of Confucian theories and connotations of aesthetic education reveals the importance of aesthetic philosophy embodied in “Aroused by the Odes, Established by the Rules of Propriety, Perfected by Music” in music education. By analyzing the manifestation of Confucian aesthetic philosophy in contemporary music education, this study elucidates its value in cultivating temperament, enhancing character, and promoting social harmony and moral education. Furthermore, by combining the practice of aesthetic education courses in higher education, it explores the insights and innovative approaches of the Confucian perspective on ritual and music in aesthetic education curricula. Delving deeply into the modern value of traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy, strengthening interdisciplinary research in aesthetic education and constructing a scientific evaluation system for aesthetic education are all significant for advancing contemporary music education. It is hoped that the progressive deepening of relevant research will further enrich the theoretical connotations of music education in higher education institutions and provide valuable references for the reform and innovation of aesthetic education courses in universities.

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INTRODUCTION

In the long course of a thousand years of Chinese civilization, Confucian thought, as an integral part of traditional Chinese culture, has profoundly influenced the Chinese people’s spirits and lifestyle with its unique aesthetic philosophy and moral principles. The classical statement, “Aroused by the Odes, Established by the Rules of Propriety, Perfected by Music” (Feng, 2021, p. 36), not only summarizes the core views of Confucian aesthetic education, but also provides valuable intellectual resources for integrating aesthetic education in contemporary music education. In today’s society, with the rapid development of technology and the deepening of globalization, music education has gradually shifted from mere skill training to the comprehensive cultivation of individual qualities. As an important component of music education, aesthetic education aims to cultivate students’ aesthetic

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sensibilities, creativity and humanistic spirit through musical art. Therefore, an in-depth exploration of integrating traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy into contemporary music education holds significant practical significance and theoretical value.

Confucianism emphasizes being “Aroused by the Odes,” suggesting that students’ musical perception and aesthetic emotions can be cultivated through appreciating and creating musical works. “Established by the Rules of Propriety” highlights that music education should integrate aesthetic education with moral education, especially cultivating moral sentiments (Li, 2023a, p. 123). Moreover, Traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy provides rich educational resources and cultural soil for contemporary music education. The deep exploration of Confucian musical thought contributes to a better understanding and inheriting the Chinese nation’s musical and cultural traditions, and integrating these elements into modern music education to enrich its content and form (Lu; Liu, 2022, p. 89). This integration research facilitates innovation and development in music education. In the context of globalization, music education faces the challenges and opportunities of multiculturalism. By drawing on the wisdom of traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy, the aesthetic characteristics of music, in different cultural backgrounds, can be gained comprehensively, with the promotion of intercultural exchange and integration in music education. Combining Confucian aesthetic philosophy with modern music education concepts can also provide new ideas and directions for the innovation and development of music education.

In contemporary music education, the development of aesthetic education not only inherits Traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy, but also innovates its application in modern society. In China, the status of aesthetic education in music education is gradually elevated with the continuous deepening of educational reform. More scholars and educators focus on integrating aesthetic elements into music teaching to cultivate students’ sentiments and virtues. Confucian aesthetics emphasizes the harmony between individuals and society, and the unity of social and ethical norms and individual emotional-psychological needs, providing a profound theoretical basis for contemporary music education (Liu, 2022, p. 5). In music education, teachers emphasize guiding students to feel the beauty of music through melody and rhythm training, and to appreciate the literary beauty of lyrics, thereby achieving the goal of aesthetic education.

There is also rich research and practice of aesthetic education in music education abroad. The concept of aesthetic education, proposed by the German philosopher Schiller, has received widespread attention and application in Western education (Huang, 2016, p. 593). Although foreign aesthetic education theories differ from Chinese Confucian aesthetic philosophy, both emphasize cultivating emotions and morals through arts education. Foreign music education pays more attention to innovation and diversity, encouraging students to

express themselves and realize their self-worth through music creation and performance (Xie; Gao, 2009, p. 38).

Overall, there have been achievements worldwide in integrating aesthetic education into music education, but further in-depth research and practice are still needed. Traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy possesses profound ideological connotations and unique aesthetic concepts, which are significant for contemporary music education.

1 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

1.1 ORIGINS AND DEVELOPMENT

Aesthetic philosophy has been integral in Confucian culture since ancient times. As early as the pre-Qin period, Confucian sages, such as Confucius and Mencius, presented unique insights into aesthetic education.

Confucius said “It is by the Odes that the mind is aroused”. “It is by the Rules of Propriety that the character is established”. “It is from Music that the finish is received”. He believed that poetry, rites and music were the fundamental ways to cultivate one’s character. His aesthetic philosophy emphasizes the beauty of “neutrality”, that is, beauty should be harmonious and balanced, and meet the requirements of morality and ethics. It is believed that the pursuit of beauty is not only about external form, but more importantly, it is the embodiment of internal morality. Confucius advocated “Natural substance and ornamentation duly blended make a superior man”, which means that a person should cultivate both inside and outside, with both internal moral qualities and external elegance. The harmonious unity of the two constitutes the ideal realm of Confucian aesthetics. Mencius further emphasized its significant role in shaping human nature and enhancing moral qualities. With the continuous development of Confucianism, the thought of aesthetic education has been inherited and deepened among generations of Confucian scholars, forming a distinctive Confucian aesthetic education system (Chai, 2020, p. 78).

From the Confucian perspective, aesthetic education is not only a form of education, but also a way of life cultivation and education. It emphasizes cultivating temperament and purifying the mind through appreciation activities, thereby achieving the perfection and sublimation of personality. Therefore, Confucian aesthetic thought focuses on cultivating individuals’ aesthetic emotions, judgments and abilities, enabling them to discover, appreciate and create beauty daily.

1.2 INTERPRETATION OF “AROUSSED BY THE ODES, ESTABLISHED BY THE RULES OF PROPRIETY, PERFECTED BY MUSIC”

“Aroused by the Odes, Established by the Rules of Propriety, Perfected by Music” is the core expression of Confucian aesthetic education, which is profoundly revealed in personality development. “Aroused by the Odes” emphasizes the unique role of poetry in enlightening wisdom and stimulating emotions. “Established by the Rules of Propriety” underscores the critical role of rituals in regulating behavior and shaping character. “Perfected by Music” highlights the ultimate value of music in nurturing sentiments and elevating the state of mind.

Music is significant among the six arts in Confucianism, serving not only as an essential means of aesthetic education, but also as an important component of ritual and music culture. From the Confucian perspective, music is not merely an art form, but also a manifestation of social ethics and morality. It can evoke deep emotional resonance through melody, rhythm, harmony and other elements, leading to an enlightened mind and transformed societal customs. The Confucian ritual and music culture emphasize the complementary relationship between them. Rituals represent behavioral norms, regulating people to meet social, ethical and moral requirements. Music serves to refine the temperament, making the human community more harmonious. Thus, the inheritance and development of ritual and music culture are significant for social order and harmony.

1.3 CORE CONNOTATIONS OF CONFUCIAN AESTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

The core concepts of Confucian aesthetic philosophy include, but are not limited to, “the beauty of harmony”, “the pursuit of perfectness” and “the ideal of gentleness and elegance”. These concepts profoundly reveal the unique understanding and pursuit of beauty in Confucianism and provide important theoretical support for integrating aesthetic education into contemporary music education.

“The beauty of harmony” is one of the fundamental principles. Confucian aesthetics emphasizes the concept of “harmony” and believes that beauty should be harmonious and balanced. This harmony is not only reflected in the form of artistic works, but also in the relationship between man and nature, man and society, and man and their inner world. Confucianism pursues a neutral and balanced aesthetic ideal and opposes extremes and radicalism.

“The pursuit of perfectness” represents the highest ideal of beauty in Confucianism. Confucianism believes that beauty and goodness are closely related, and beauty should be the external manifestation of goodness. In the view of Confucianism, beautiful things can guide

people to be good and improve their moral cultivation. Therefore, Confucian aesthetics is not only a question of aesthetics, but also a question of moral cultivation.

“The ideal of gentleness and elegance” demands a combination of aesthetic and moral cultivation. It requires individuals to pay attention to the graceful and appropriate external appearance and the pure and noble inner qualities in aesthetic activities. This combination of aesthetic and moral cultivation ensures that people continuously elevate their moral state while appreciating beauty (Yan, 2021, p. 79).

Western aesthetics originated in ancient Greece and has gone through multiple stages of development, including the Renaissance and the Enlightenment. In contrast, Confucian aesthetic philosophy pays more attention to the combination of morality and aesthetics, emphasizing the embodiment of inner spirit and moral sentiment, while Western aesthetics emphasizes the objective standard of beauty and the freedom of personal expression. Both have formed their unique aesthetic systems in historical development, and have a profound impact on the development of world aesthetics.

2 AESTHETIC CONNOTATIONS AND EDUCATIONAL FUNCTIONS

2.1 MUSICAL AESTHETIC CHARACTERISTICS AND MANIFESTATIONS

Music, as an art form, possesses unique aesthetic characteristics, deeply reflected in Confucian philosophy, forming an important foundation for Confucian musical aesthetic thought.

Firstly, music embodies the beauty of harmony. Confucianism emphasizes harmony and balance in music, considering harmony the core of musical beauty. This harmony is not only reflected in the unity among elements, such as melody, rhythm and timbre, but also the harmonious resonance between music and human emotions, as well as social ethics and morals. For example, in *Liji: Yueji*, it is mentioned that “[...] music is the harmony of heaven and earth” (Zhang, 2010, p. 65), emphasizing that music can harmonize people’s body and mind and achieve harmony with nature and society. Another example is the guzheng piece *High Mountains and Flowing Water*, which, with its smooth melody and balanced phrase structure, shows the magnificence of natural landscapes and the tranquility of human hearts, allowing listeners to feel the beauty of the harmonious resonance between music and nature. Secondly, music serves the function of emotional expression. Confucianism views music as a carrier of emotions, capable of profoundly expressing human feelings, such as joy, anger, sorrow and happiness. Through music, individuals can express their inner emotions and share emotional experiences with others, thereby achieving emotional exchange and communication. This function of emotional expression grants music a unique position in Confucian aesthetic philosophy, making it an important bridge for emotional connection among people.

Lastly, music has the power of moral education. Confucianism emphasizes the educational function of music, believing that music can subtly influence a person's thoughts and behaviors. Through the cultivation and influence of music, individuals can gradually develop good moral qualities and behavioral habits. This educational function makes music an irreplaceable part of Confucian education, especially for cultivating virtues and personalities.

The three aspects of harmonious beauty, emotional expression and moral education in Confucian music aesthetics complement one another and together constitute the core value of music aesthetics. Harmonious beauty pursues the resonance between music and the universe, nature and human emotions. The lyrical function realizes the transmission and resonance of emotions through music, and moral education uses the appeal of music to cultivate individual virtues. These three aspects are not only reflected in the practice of music creation and appreciation, but also in the far-reaching influence of music education and cultural inheritance, which play an indispensable role in promoting personal cultivation, social harmony and moral development.

2.2 TEMPERAMENT AND PERSONALITY CULTIVATION

From the Confucian perspective, music is not only an art form, but also a means of spiritual cultivation, playing an important role in cultivating temperament and personality. Nowadays, people often feel tired and anxious due to the busy and stressful modern life. As an art form that can directly touch the heart, music quickly evokes emotional resonance among people. Beautiful melodies and harmonious rhythms can refresh and delight the mind. By appreciating music, people can forget their worries, relax and allow their minds to be cleansed and purified. Music can guide people into a transcendent state, allowing them to feel the beauty and harmony of life, thus refining their temperament and cultivating virtues.

Confucianism emphasizes the cultivation of inner virtue and moral qualities, and music is precisely an art form that can subtly influence one's moral cultivation. By appreciating music, people can experience the noble thoughts and beautiful emotions contained within it, thereby guiding themselves to pursue truth, goodness and beauty, and to stay away from falsehood, evil and ugliness. The influence and infection of music can subtly affect people's thoughts and behaviors, gradually forming good moral qualities and habits (Tang, 2022, p. 159). Additionally, music can enhance one's aesthetic taste and appreciation ability, making people more capable of appreciating and respecting art, thereby improving personal cultural attainment and comprehensive quality. In the process, people need to use their imagination and creativity to understand and feel the emotions and artistic conception expressed in musical works. This exercise of creativity and imagination not only enhances one's aesthetic level, but also cultivates one's innovative ability and thinking skills.

In Confucianism, music plays a significant role in. Through appreciating music, individuals can experience its beauty and harmony, leading to inner resonance and joy that brings mental rejuvenation, refines temperament and cultivates an elegant sentiment. Additionally, music improves one's personality and virtues. Confucianism views music as a refined art form that guides people toward the pursuit of truth, goodness and beauty, distancing them from falsehood, evil and ugliness. Immersing in music helps individuals gradually develop virtues, behavioral habits and personality. Moreover, music stimulates creativity and imagination, through which individuals understand and feel the emotions and imagery within musical works. This process enhances one's aesthetic level and cultivates innovative abilities and thinking skills.

2.3 SOCIAL HARMONY AND MORAL EDUCATION

In traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy, music is also a tool for promoting social harmony and moral education. With its unique charm and influence, music plays an important role in maintaining social order and enhancing social harmony. Confucianism emphasizes the beauty of harmony in music, believing that harmonious music can evoke deep resonance within individuals, thereby strengthening emotional connections among people. Through sharing music and participating in appreciating activities, individuals exchange feelings and deepen communication, thereby increasing social cohesion and solidarity (Feng; Zhang, 2022, p. 23). Confucianism also asserts that music has an educational function, conveying moral and value concepts through its forms and content. Individuals can be subtly influenced by music works with moral significance, gradually forming virtues and behavioral habits (Zeng, 2023, p. 59). This vivid teaching method can gain ground and have profound impacts.

3 PRACTICES

3.1 ANALYSIS OF CONTEMPORARY MUSIC EDUCATION

In contemporary society, music education is increasingly valued as an important means of cultivating students' comprehensive qualities and aesthetics. However, there are still some actual challenges and issues. Current music education tends to overemphasize skill training while neglecting aesthetic cultivation. Firstly, students are often required to master various techniques and theoretical knowledge, but insufficient attention is given to their ability to appreciate music aesthetically and emotionally. This skill-oriented educational model significantly reduces the effectiveness of music education in enhancing students' overall qualities and aesthetics.

Secondly, the relatively monotonous teaching materials and methods lack innovation and diversity. Many universities still use traditional teaching materials and models, such as focusing only on the teaching of Western classical music, while ignoring the introduction of various music styles, such as pop music and folk music. Without exploring and introducing emerging music styles and creative concepts, it is impossible to stimulate students' interest and creativity, thus limiting the development space of music education (Li, 2018, p. 38). Thirdly, the contemporary society's cultural diversity poses new challenges. With the acceleration of globalization and the widespread use of Internet technology, students are exposed to increasingly diverse musical and cultural forms and styles that contemporary music education often lacks. Therefore, it is difficult for students to understand and appreciate music works from different cultural backgrounds.

3.2 MANIFESTATION OF CONFUCIAN AESTHETIC PHILOSOPHY

Traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy regards aesthetic education as a crucial pathway for cultivating individuals. Nowadays, it is essential to guide students to appreciate the beauty and artistic value of musical works. By appreciating music from different styles and periods, students can gradually develop their aesthetic tastes, thereby enhancing their personalities and comprehensive literacy. Confucian aesthetic education believes that music can enlighten the mind and nurture sentiment. Therefore, we should fully explore the moral function of music to cultivate students' virtues and behavioral habits (Wang, 2018, p. 114). For instance, introducing moral significance into music teaching allows students to receive moral education while enjoying music. Additionally, Confucian aesthetic education also emphasizes the practicality and innovation of music education, especially the unity of knowledge and action. The Great Learning states: "When you know where to stop, you have stability. When you have stability, you can be tranquil. When you are tranquil, you can be at ease. When you are at ease, you can deliberate. When you can deliberate you can attain your aims" (Liu, 2015, p. 45). It shows the importance of practice and thinking. Therefore, in contemporary music education, we should focus on students' music practice activities, such as organizing concerts and participating in music competitions, allowing students to experience the charm and value of music in practice. At the same time, we should encourage students to unleash their imagination and creativity in music composition and performance, cultivating their innovative awareness and practical abilities.

3.3 VALUES AND SIGNIFICANCE

Confucian aesthetic education thought that music helps enhance students' aesthetic literacy and comprehensive abilities. Through learning and appreciating music, students can

cultivate refined aesthetic tastes and good comprehensive qualities, thus better adapting to the needs of social development. As a highly influential art form, music can spread positive energy in society, and promote interpersonal communication and emotional exchange. Confucian aesthetic education emphasizes the educative function of music, contributing to the cultivation of individuals' virtues and sense of social responsibility, promoting social harmony and stability. Meanwhile, Confucian aesthetic education also focuses on the inheritance and development of traditional music culture, helping to protect and promote China's excellent music-cultural heritage. The education concept advocated by Confucians, centered on individuals and comprehensive development, provides direction and goals for the development of music education (Zeng, 2017, p. 89). We should pay attention to students' differences and comprehensive development in music education, focus on students' emotional experiences and aesthetic needs, and strive to create a system with Chinese characteristics that meet the requirements of the times.

4 ENLIGHTENMENT

4.1 ENLIGHTENMENT FOR AESTHETIC EDUCATION IN HIGHER EDUCATION

Firstly, the Confucian view on the system of rituals and music suggests that we should emphasize the comprehensiveness and interdisciplinarity of aesthetic education courses. The system of rituals and music highlights the integration of music with rituals, reflecting the comprehensive and interdisciplinary nature of the arts. Therefore, university aesthetic education courses should break down disciplinary barriers, integrating knowledge and skills from different artistic fields to create a comprehensive and interdisciplinary curriculum, broadening students' horizons and knowledge, and cultivating their overall qualities and innovative abilities.

Secondly, the Confucian views on the system of rituals and music encourage us to value the practical and experiential aspects of aesthetic education courses. The system emphasizes cultivating moral sentiments and aesthetic abilities through musical practice. Hence, aesthetic education in universities should strengthen practical teaching components, guiding students to actively participate in artistic creation and performance activities, allowing them to experience the charm and value of the arts firsthand. For example, by participating in music creation, concerts, music competitions and other activities, students can experience the charm and value of music in practice, while cultivating the spirit of teamwork and social responsibility.

Moreover, the Confucian view on the system of rituals and music highlights the moral educational function of aesthetic education courses. Scholar Zhu Gang pointed out that traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy believes that music has the power to

educate the mind and nurture sentiment (Zhu, 2021, p. 94). Therefore, aesthetic education courses in universities should fully explore the moral educational functions of the arts, using the emotional expressions and ideological content in artistic works to guide students in establishing correct values and morals. This approach not only enhances students' moral qualities, but also promotes their overall development.

Finally, the Confucian view on the system of rituals and music inspires us to innovate the evaluation system of aesthetic education courses. Traditional evaluation systems for aesthetic education often focus too much on exam results and skill levels, neglecting the assessment of students' aesthetic abilities and comprehensive qualities. Therefore, we should draw on the evaluation concepts from the Confucian system of rites and music to build a diversified evaluation system that emphasizes the assessment of students' learning processes, innovative abilities and aesthetic sentiments. This comprehensive approach can better reflect students' learning outcomes and aesthetic levels, providing stronger support for their future development.

4.2 INNOVATIONS AND PRACTICES EXPLORATION

Inspired by the Confucian views on the system of rituals and music, we can explore innovations and practices in aesthetic education courses in higher education. We can attempt to construct a comprehensive and interdisciplinary curriculum of aesthetic education that organically integrates knowledge and skills from different artistic fields. For example, comprehensive art appreciation courses can be offered to guide students in appreciating artworks from various styles and periods, thereby cultivating their aesthetic and critical abilities.

Secondly, we can enhance the practical teaching components of aesthetic education courses, focusing on students' active participation and experiential learning. Organizing activities, such as art creation and performances, allows students to experience the charm and value of the arts firsthand. Additionally, inviting artists and experts to hold lectures and performances on campus can provide students with broader perspectives and learning opportunities.

Moreover, we can actively explore the moral educational functions of aesthetic education courses by guiding students to establish correct values and morals through emotional expressions and ideological content in artistic works. For example, courses themed around patriotism can be offered, enabling students to feel the nation's greatness and the people's pride through their creative processes.

Finally, we need to innovate the evaluation system of aesthetic education courses, emphasizing the assessment of students' learning processes, innovative abilities and aesthetic

sentiments. A diversified evaluation approach can be adopted, including methods, such as work exhibitions, performance evaluations and classroom discussions, to comprehensively reflect students' learning outcomes and aesthetic levels.

5 SUMMARY AND PROSPECT

5.1 SUMMARY

By deeply analyzing the traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy of “Aroused by the Odes, Established by the Rules of Propriety, Perfected by Music” and combining it with the current state and issues of aesthetic education courses in higher education, we can find that traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy emphasizes an integrated aesthetic education system of poetry, rituals and music. This provides a profound theoretical foundation for constructing modern aesthetic education courses. In aesthetic education, it is essential not only to focus on the cultivation of students' artistic skills and knowledge, but also to enhance their aesthetic emotions, moral sentiments and personality development.

Based on the summary of the current state of music aesthetic education in higher education institutions, we believe that aesthetic education courses in colleges and universities need continuous innovation and improvement to meet the demands of the times and the students' needs. This includes updating and expanding course content, innovating teaching methods, and making the evaluation system more scientific and diversified. Additionally, interdisciplinary aesthetic practices should be strengthened, integrating aesthetic education into students' daily lives and studies, allowing them to experience and create beauty through practice. Music, as a vital medium of aesthetic education, should fully exert its role in cultivating sentiments and enhancing character (Li, 2023b, p. 137). In music education, it is crucial to focus not only on the teaching of musical skills and knowledge, but also on the exploration of the emotional expression and ideological content of musical works, guiding students to establish correct aesthetic views and values.

5.2 PROSPECTS AND SUGGESTIONS

When exploring the relationship between traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy and the integration of aesthetic education into contemporary music education, we have identified several directions and fields worthy of in-depth research. For the future of music aesthetic education in higher education institutions, the following areas require significant attention and thorough investigation by educators:

As a treasure of Chinese culture, traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy has shone with wisdom through the ages. Its profound ideological foundation and practical

wisdom have not only guided aesthetic activities in ancient society, but also hold significant modern value. In contemporary society, with the deepening of aesthetic education, the modern value of traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy becomes increasingly prominent. In-depth research into Confucian aesthetic philosophy can not only provide theoretical support for modern aesthetic education, but also guide people in forming correct aesthetic concepts and enhancing their aesthetic literacy. Specifically, we can delve into the core concepts of Confucian aesthetic philosophy, such as aesthetic emotion, conception and character. Confucian aesthetic philosophy emphasizes the sincerity and harmony of emotions, viewing beauty as the expression and sublimation of emotion. This profound insight into emotions can provide inspirations for designing the aesthetic education curricula in novel methods, guiding students to focus on the expression and transmission of emotions in the process of appreciating and creating beauty.

Aesthetic education is a comprehensive discipline involving multiple fields, requiring collaboration among scholars from different areas. Future research can strengthen interdisciplinary aesthetic education studies, integrating knowledge and methods from various disciplines to explore the essence and functions of aesthetic education more comprehensively and deeply (Zeng, 2023, p. 59). For example, cross-disciplinary research in areas, such as art and humanities, and art and technology, can be conducted to investigate the role of aesthetic education in cultivating students' overall qualities and innovative abilities.

Music education is a crucial component of aesthetic education and an effective way to develop students' aesthetic abilities and creativity. Future research can focus on innovative practices in music education, exploring new teaching methods and approaches to improve the quality and effectiveness of music education. For example, modern technological tools, such as virtual reality and artificial intelligence, can be used to assist music teaching, providing students with richer learning experiences and practical opportunities.

Aesthetic education evaluation is a vital aspect of aesthetic education practice and a crucial means of assessing its effectiveness. Future research can focus on constructing and improving the aesthetic education evaluation system, exploring scientific, objective, and comprehensive evaluation methods and standards. For instance, a multidimensional evaluation system on student performance, creative works and aesthetic emotions can be established to reflect students' aesthetic education achievements and progress.

CONCLUSION

In summary, traditional Confucian aesthetic philosophy provides valuable intellectual resources and practical guidance for integrating aesthetic education into contemporary music education. Future research should delve into its modern value, strengthen interdisciplinary

aesthetic education research, focus on innovative practices in music education, construct a scientific aesthetic education evaluation system, and enhance international exchanges and cooperation to promote the prosperity and development of aesthetic education. Through these efforts, we aim to cultivate more outstanding talents with noble character, profound cultural literacy and innovative abilities, contributing to the society's progress and development.

It is important to emphasize that aesthetic education is not an overnight process, which requires long-term persistence and continuous effort. Therefore, both the academic and educational communities should maintain enthusiasm towards the cause of aesthetic education, continually promoting the innovation and development of related theory and practice. Additionally, we must recognize that aesthetic education is a comprehensive project that requires the families' and the society's joint participation and effort at large, and the ones of schools. Only through the entire society's collective efforts, we can create a better aesthetic education environment for the younger generation, allowing them to grow under the influence of beauty. Furthermore, with the rapid development of technology and the society's continuous progress, the forms and methods of aesthetic education will also continuously evolve and expand. Therefore, we need to maintain an open mindset and a forward-looking vision, actively embracing new technologies and methods to inject new vitality and momentum into the development of aesthetic education.

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