

The Study on the Relevant Factors Influencing Senior Students' Attitudes toward Arts in Elementary Schools in Tainan County

Joungyol Lin¹, Chih-Lan Kao^{2*}, Meihsiang Yang³

¹ Dept. of College of Management, Asia University, Taiwan

^{2*} Dept. of Business Administration, Asia University, Taiwan

³ Dept. of Business Administration, Asia University, Taiwan

* Email Address of Contact Author: waters.waters@msa.hinet.net

Abstract

The purpose of this study is to understand the attitudes of senior students in elementary schools in Tainan County with arts and analyze possible factors that influence their attitude, such as urban and rural difference, sex, a piano at home or not, the socioeconomic position of their parents, and the number of times they participate in performances, among others. Based on the results, the study goes further to explore the correlation among the three vectors in the students arts attitude, "preference for arts," "art-learning attitude," and "art-learning environment" to come up with strategies that help consolidate arts education in a school setting. The study begins with literature review and theoretical analysis and depicts the prototype attitude with arts. Then, based on the prototype, a questionnaire to scale the arts attitude is developed as the study tool. Fifth-grade and sixth-grade students in 170 public elementary schools in Tainan County are interviewed with the questionnaire and their answers are quantified. Information obtained through the survey is analyzed with SPSS.13 software to obtain descriptive statistics and t-test, One-Way ANOVA, and the Pearson Product-Moment Analysis are carried out to verify against the study assumption.

Keyword: attitudes toward arts, preference for arts, art-learning attitude, art-learning environment.

1. Introduction

The emerging industry under government's development planning in 2008 was focused on cultural creativity industry. Taiwan, moving into globalization, emphasized in local cultural viewpoint and independent arts education initiative. However, practical implementation of arts education depends on the students' Attitudes toward Arts. Not only arts education can promote national competitiveness facing this new economic era of knowledge, it will improve the product value and increase productivity. Taiwan can no longer be an outsourced sub-industrial country. We should learn from the western country's arts education experience to seek for

breakthrough. The researcher of this Study is based on senior students in Tainan County elementary schools; analyzes the differences of Attitudes toward Arts from students of various background variables and explores the correlation of their in-depth Attitudes toward Arts, in order to present the results to the schools as a reference to establish practical basic arts education strategy.

2. Questions and Assumptions in the Study

(1) Study Questions

In accordance to the Purpose of this Study, following questions are proposed:

1. What is the current condition of senior students' Attitudes of Arts in Tainan County elementary schools?
2. Is there a difference in Attitudes toward Arts among the senior students of Tainan County elementary schools from different background variables?
3. Is there a correlation between "Preference for Arts," "Art-learning Attitude," and "Art-learning Environment" among the senior students in Tainan County elementary schools.

(2) Study Assumptions

In processing rigorous statistical test to accomplish the goal of quantification in this Study, based on above questions, following assumptions are proposed:

Assumption 1: There is not a significant difference in the Attitudes toward Arts among the senior students in Tainan County elementary schools based on different background variables (urban and rural, sex distinction, family social and economical status, number of participation in arts exhibition and performance activities).

Assumption 2: There is not a significant correlation between "Preference for Arts," "Art-learning Attitude," and "Art-learning Environment" among the senior students in Tainan County elementary schools.

3. Literature Research Overview

Literature research of this Study, first of all, makes a description of the definition, scope and purpose of arts education followed by concludes the functions of arts education in order to grasp the foundation for the students to establish Attitudes toward Arts and manifests the importance of arts education. Next, from our national culture, it explores the trend of recent international arts education in developing children arts education in Taiwan and understands the correlation between the trend of arts education and the Attitudes toward Arts. In addition, it introduces current condition of Taiwan arts and cultural facilities and its educational implication and practical application for the teachers' reference when engage in arts and cultural teaching activities. It also directs the students in recognizing multi-dimensional arts and cultures, respecting, concerning, and demonstrating proper Attitudes toward Arts as

intellectuals of the society, as the basis of this Study. Furthermore, according to Havighurst (1972) adolescence stage is the most important period of time to build worldview, Piaget’s “Period of Formal Operations” and Lowenfeld’s “Pseudo-realistic Stage” are the most critical period of building up Attitudes toward Arts and exploring in-depth Attitudes toward Arts. Finally, it collects and consolidates related Attitudes toward Arts studies from domestic and international scholars and correlates them to individual background.

4. Study Design and Structure Description

The Study analyzes questionnaire with reliability and validity, processes with Statistical Analysis, studying based on quantification of questionnaire survey and randomly sampled 850 fifth and sixth graders from Tainan County elementary schools. Independent variables include urban and rural, sex distinction, family social and economical status, number of participations in arts exhibition and performance. Dependent variables are defined in three vectors as Preference for Arts, Art-learning Attitude, and Art-learning Environment. All are compiled into survey questionnaire called “Tainan County Elementary School Senior Students’ Attitudes toward Arts Survey Questionnaire” and passed validity test and sampling pre-test by experts. Upon completion of the questionnaire survey, return of quantification data was analyzed using Statistics Software Package SPSS Version 13.0. Study Structure in relationship between independent and dependant variables is in Diagram 4-1.

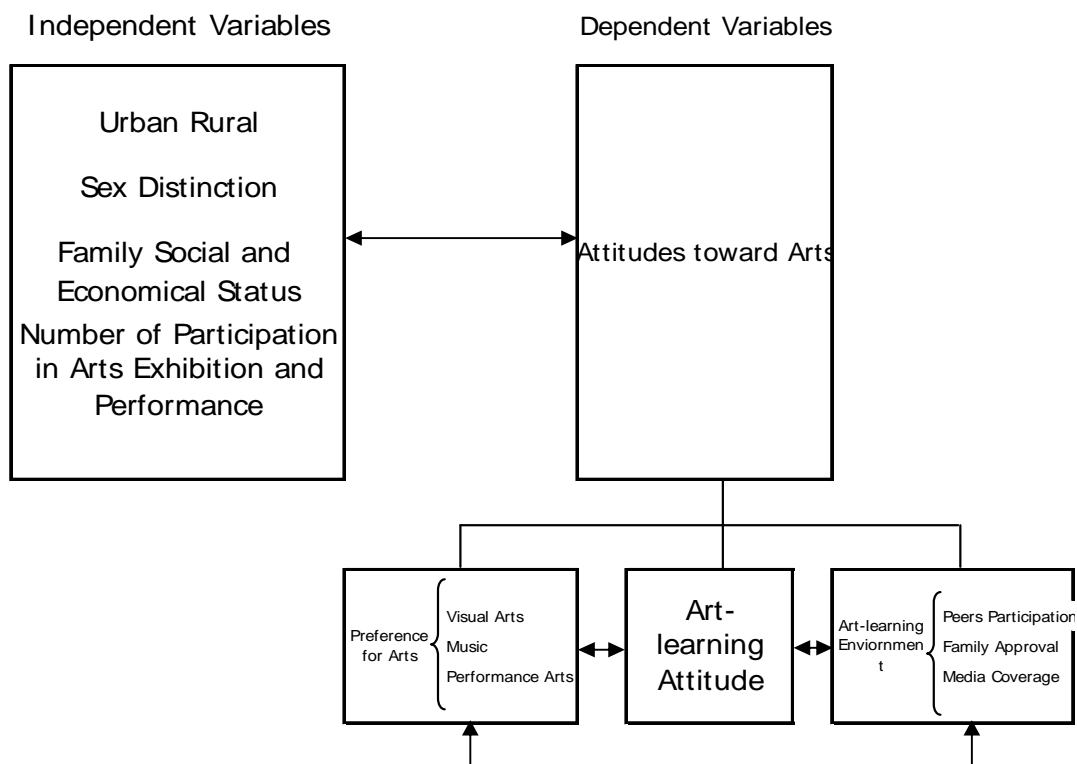


Diagram 3-1 Study Structure Diagram

5. Study Results – Statistical Data Analysis

(1). Data Analysis of Current Students' Attitudes toward Arts

1. Concerning overall Attitudes toward Arts as observed from the samples collected in this Study, students' Attitudes toward Arts has positive inclination. Total average value of 3.53 from this Study in comparison with total average value of 3.92 from Hui-Lan Kuo's (2003) "A Study of Attitudes toward Arts and the Related Factors of Elementary School Students in the Middle Areas of Taiwan", this Study showed relatively lower positive value. Although Attitudes toward Arts in Tainan County elementary schools senior students trends positively, it is not yet achieving the ideal level.
2. Concerning various areas included in Attitudes toward Arts as observed from the samples collected in this Study, students' Preference for Arts are mainly in popular music. Art-learning Attitude shows positive enthusiasm. In the area of Arts-learning Environment, the Study reveals that students' Attitudes toward Arts are deeply influenced by the media and peers. In addition, lack of supports in Art-learning Environment weakened their Attitudes toward Arts.

(2). Analysis of Background Variables

1. The Study uses t-test to test the differences in Tainan County urban and rural elementary school senior students' Attitudes toward Arts. The Study reveals that there is not a significant difference in Tainan County urban and rural elementary school students' Attitudes toward Arts. Because of convenient transportation and promotion of arts and cultural activities in the community that narrowed the gap of arts and cultural accomplishment between urban and rural students, thus, there is not a difference in Attitudes toward Arts.
2. The Study uses t-test to test the differences in Tainan County elementary school male and female senior students' Attitudes toward Arts. The Study reveals that the Attitudes toward Arts in the students of different sex has a total quantitative scale of $t=-10.132$, $df=618$, $p<.001$, which means significant differences in Attitudes toward Arts between male and female students. Female students are more positive than male students in Attitudes toward Arts. And, female students prefer music and male students' Attitudes toward Arts are often influenced by the media.
3. The Study uses t-test to test the differences in Attitudes toward Arts in Tainan County elementary school senior students with different family social and economical status. The Study reveals that the Attitudes toward Arts in the students from different family social and economical status has a total quantitative scale of $t=8.345$, $df=618$, $p<.001$, which means significant differences in Attitudes toward Arts among the students from different family social and economical status. Among them, students from higher social and economical status family achieve more positive Attitudes toward Arts.

4. The Study uses One-way ANOVA to test the differences in Attitudes toward Arts in Tainan County elementary school senior students with different numbers of participation in arts exhibition and performance. The Study reveals that the Attitudes toward Arts in the students having different numbers of participation in arts exhibition and performance has a total quantitative scale of $F=12.938$, $df=616$, $p < .001$, which means significant differences in Attitudes toward Arts among the students with different numbers of participation in arts exhibition and performance. Most of them have participated one to two times in arts and cultural activities.

The core of Arts Education is closely linked to “Students’ Participation”. Artists involve in society with arts and students care for the society with participating in arts and cultural activities to promote cultural “tender power” cultivated deeply in Taiwan, learning from each other through participation in arts and cultural activities, communicating information and enable inspiration of their Attitudes toward Arts.

(3). Data analysis of Correlation between Preference for Arts, Art-learning Attitude and Art-learning Environment.

The Study is based on Pearson Correlation to test the correlativity between Preference for Arts, Art-learning Attitude, and Art-learning Environment, using Pearson Correlation to process integrated analysis. The Study reveals that in the area of Preference for Arts, Art-learning Attitude and Art-learning Environment among Tainan County elementary school senior students, there is a close interactivity and mutual influential correlation.

1. Positive Correlation presented between Art-learning Attitude, Visual, Music, and Performance Arts as in following table:

Table 5 - 1 Pearson’s Correlation Analysis and Abstract Table for Various Vectors of Preferences for Arts and Art-learning Attitudes in Surveyed Tainan County Elementary School Senior Students

	Art-learning Attitude	Preference for Arts		
		Visual Arts	Music	Performance Arts
Art-learning Attitude	1	.389**	.460**	.425**
Visual Arts	.389**	1	.548**	.588**
Music	.460**	.548**	1	.498**
Performance Arts	.425**	.588**	.498**	1

** $p < .01$; $N=620$

Pearson Correlation Analysis shows, through the areas of Art-learning Attitude and Preference for Arts, there is a close interactivity and mutual influential relationships between Art-learning Attitude and Preference for Arts. Furthermore, both r values of .460 and .425 are exceeding significant level of .01, indicating music and performance arts are most significant in relation to Art-learning Attitude, presenting a medium level correlation.

2. Positive Correlation presented between the areas of Peers Participation, Family Approval, Media Coverage and Preference for arts, Art-learning Attitude.

Table 5 - 2 Pearson's Correlation Analysis and Abstract Table for Various Vectors of Preference for Arts, Art-learning Attitude and Art-learning Environment in Surveyed Tainan County Elementary School Senior Students

	Preference for Art-learning		Art-learning Environment		
	Arts	Attitude	Peers Participation	Family Approval	Media Coverage
Preference for Arts	1	.470**	.395**	.265**	.417**
Art-learning Attitude	.470**	1	.787**	.423**	.721**
Peers Participation	.395**	.787**	1	.530**	.710**
Family Approval	.265**	.423**	.530**	1	.465**
Media Coverage	.417**	.721**	.710**	.465**	1

** $p < .01$; $N=620$

Pearson Correlation Analysis shows, through the areas of Art-learning Environment and Preference for Arts and Art-learning Attitude, there is a close interactivity and mutual influential relationships between Art-learning Environment, Preference for Arts and Art-learning Attitude. Furthermore, both r values of .787 and .721 are exceeding significant level of .01, indicating peers participation and media coverage are far greater correlated than family approval, which means peers and media have greater influences to the students' Art-learning Attitude than the family has. It is clear that the Attitudes toward Arts in elementary school senior students' are deeply influenced by the peers group and mass media.

6. Conclusions and Suggestions:

(1). Conclusions:

1. Positive viewpoints were expressed in the Attitudes toward Arts constructed in this Study by Tainan County elementary school senior students; however the results are not yet ideal.
2. There are significant differences in the Attitudes toward Arts among Tainan County elementary school senior students in the areas of sex distinction, family social and economical status, and number of participation in arts exhibition and performance; however there is not a significant difference between urban and rural residents.
3. Tainan County elementary school senior students expressed close interactivity and mutual influential relationships between all areas of Attitudes toward Arts constructed by this Study, particularly in the areas of peers participation and media coverage correlated to Arts-learning Attitude most significantly with high level of positive correlation. It clearly indicates that the Attitudes toward Arts in elementary school senior students are deeply influenced by peers group and mass media.

(2). Suggestions:

1. Suggestions in Practical Application:

(1) Arts and Cultural Learning may be integrated with community to achieve the results of strengthening students' aesthetic ability and application in arts and culture. Therefore, arts and cultural learning should expand outside of school, better utilizing community resources close to students' daily lives to help students applying what they learned about arts and culture in their daily lives in order to elevate their levels of aesthetics and appreciation for arts. Those suggestions are in agreement with the discussions of integration between arts education and community advocated by McFee (1970) 、Blandy and Hoffman (1993) in their publications "Community-based Art Education" and "Toward an Art Education of Place". (2) Support and approval from parents to their children's arts and cultural learning are lower than expected. Communication to raise attention to the value of arts education should be conducted. (3) Attention should also be paid in sex distinction with proper guidance to promote male students' Attitudes toward Arts.

2. Suggestions for Future Studies:

(1) Study Target: Establish Youth Attitudes toward Arts Development Model in Taiwan. (2) Study Variables: Expand Study in Correlated Variables in Attitudes toward Arts. (3) Study Methodology and Tools: Synchronize Quantification and Qualitative Research in order to observe the overall view of Attitudes toward Arts.

References

- Blandy, D. & Hoffman, E. (1993). Toward an art education of place. *Studies in Art Education*, 35(1), 22-23.
- Chia-Pei Liu (2006) “A Study of Using Community Resources in Arts and Humanity Curriculum and Instruction on the Fourth Graders of the Elementary School – Take Tai-Ping Community of Taichung County as an example“ - National Hsinchu University of Education, Graduate Institute of Human Resource Development (MBA), Fine Arts and Crafts Education, Graduate Thesis, Not yet published.
- Council for Cultural Affairs (2008). Culture Policy White Paper. Taipei
- Havighurst, R. J. (1972). *Developmental tasks and education* (3rd ed.). New York: David McKay.
- Hsin-Yi Deng (2008) “A Study on Elementary School Children’s Attitudes toward Art Exhibition Visiting – Based on Changhua County Study” - Dayeh University, Department of Plastic Arts, Graduate Thesis. Not yet Published.
- Hui-Lan Kuo (2003) “A Study of Attitudes toward Arts and the Related Factors of Elementary School Students in the Middle Areas of Taiwan” - National Hsinchu University of Education, Fine Arts and Crafts Education, Graduate Thesis, Not yet published.
- McFee, J. K. (1970). *Preparation for art*. Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Publishing Co.
- Su-Hui Chuang, (2007) “A Study of Changhua County Elementary School Student’s Attitude toward Arts and Influencing Background Factors”- Dayeh University, Department of Plastic Arts, Graduate Thesis. Not yet Published.
- Yang-Hsiu Lin (2003) “A Study on Elementary School Children’s Art Museum Visiting Experience” - National Hsinchu University of Education, Fine Arts and Crafts Education, Graduate Thesis, Not yet published.
- Yin-Che Wang (2006) “Case Study of Elementary School Principal’s Belief of Art Education and Style of Administration Leadership” - National Hsinchu University of Education, Fine Arts and Crafts Education, Graduate Thesis, Not yet published.
- Yu-Huei Su (2005) “A Study of the Correlation among Popular Music Preference, Attitude and Environment in Adolescence” – Arts Education Monthly, 9, 9-32.