

A Study on the Aesthetic idea Change of contemporary Female College students-- Taking Southwest Minzu University as an example

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Abstract: *The formation of aesthetic idea is a changing process, and university is an important stage for college students to develop three views, enrich knowledge and contact multi-culture. This paper studies the aesthetic idea of female college students from three aspects: consumerism, psychological identity and social culture. On the one hand, the aesthetic idea of female college students from different nationalities and regions are gradually standardized and simplified. On the other hand, female college students have their unique aesthetic practice with their cultural imprints in their pursuit of beauty. The author hopes that through the investigation and research on the aesthetic idea of female college students, the society can have a more objective and comprehensive understanding of the aesthetic idea of college students, and provide some suggestions and inspiration for the aesthetic education of college students.*

Keywords: *Aesthetic idea; Consumerism; Psychological identity; Social and cultural*

1. Introduction

In recent years, hot phrases such as "looks association" and "appearance is everything" have appeared frequently, which shows that people's pursuit of beauty is becoming stronger. Meanwhile, "appearance anxiety" has also been trending on Weibo for many times. About 59.03% of Chinese college students suffer from appearance anxiety to some extent, with female students more prevalent, according to a survey published by China Youth Daily on Feb 25, 2021. Appearance anxiety is a kind of social evaluation anxiety directed at appearance^[1], which reflects the aesthetics idea of contemporary female college students to a large extent. Female college students are in the early stage of forming their outlook on life and values, but their families and schools often neglect their attention and guidance. Therefore, the study of female college students' aesthetic idea can understand their cognition of beauty, which can not only help female college students to establish a correct aesthetic idea, but also provide certain reference for aesthetic education in colleges and universities.

2. Basic concept and research review

Aesthetics mainly refers to the subjective aesthetic consciousness of objective things, and is the synthesis of aesthetic feelings, knowledge and ability gradually accumulated in social practice. Aesthetics idea refers to people's aesthetic grasp of the objective world, or people's judgment and evaluation of objective things from the aesthetic point of view.^[2] Under the influence of various factors, female college students form a kind of cognition and feeling of beauty. External beauty includes three aspects: one is the beauty of human body, mainly refers to the beauty of appearance, figure and skin color; Second, the beauty of clothing, mainly refers to wearing different clothing types, style preference; The third is the beauty of temperament, mainly including their own cultivation, character, speech, behavior, etc.^[2] Inner beauty mainly refers to good qualities such as kindness, sincerity and diligence.

In recent years, Chinese scholars have developed different approaches to the study of aesthetic idea. Zhao Yongping and Deng Subi discussed the characteristics and correlation between college Students' aesthetic values and ideal body Self in the paper Related Research on College Students' Aesthetic Values and Ideal body Self.^[3] Lu Jing's Aesthetic Identification of Contemporary Mass Culture and Aesthetic Education of College Students discusses the aesthetic influence of mass culture on college students and puts forward the corresponding aesthetic transcendence path.^[4] Liu Lulu's article "Research on Aesthetic Problems and Countermeasures of Female College Students" investigated and studied the aesthetic standards of female college students, and put forward corresponding countermeasures for some current

problems.^[2]In the article Construction and Status Quo of Contemporary College Students' Aesthetic Values, Wang Xuemmi and Chen Lijun discussed college students' aesthetic values in the context of the collision of eastern and western aesthetic cultures and the Internet era.^[5] Jiang Rujuan analyzed the aesthetic fashion and misunderstanding of College Students from the perspective of Anthropology in the article Aesthetic Fashion, Aesthetic Misunderstanding and Its Optimization, and provided some ideas for improving the aesthetic accomplishment of college students.^[6] In the article "After 00" College Students' aesthetic Status Quo Survey and Aesthetic Education Path Research ", Zhang Ao analyzed the "after 00" college students' aesthetic status quo, and put forward the aesthetic education path through the main problems existing in their aesthetic.^[7] Zhao Hua's Research on the Influence of TikTok Short Videos on College Students' Aesthetic Perception explored the influence of TikTok short videos on contemporary College students' aesthetic perception, considered the relationship between college students' media literacy and aesthetic level, and proposed countermeasures for eliminating the negative influence.^[8] To sum up, the number of studies on the aesthetic idea of college students in China is very rich, but most of the studies are about the aesthetic education of college students, and there is a lack of studies on the aesthetic idea of college students, especially female students.

3. The status quo of aesthetic idea

In order to analyze the aesthetic idea of female college students, this paper adopts the method of convenient sampling and snowball sampling to interview 14 young female students under the qualitative research paradigm. The interviewees are 19-22 years old from Southwest University for Nationalities. The interviewees have different ethnic identities and growing environments, and are at different stages of university.

Table 1: Basic Information of interviewees (Female)

Serial number	Age (subject to interview)	Enrollment Year	Nation	Growing environment or cultural background
1	19	2021	the Zang nationality	Tibetan cultural area/non-city
2	21	2021	the Zang nationality	Tibetan cultural area/non-city
3	21	2019	the Zang nationality	Tibetan culture region/city, educated in Chengdu
4	21	2019	the Zang nationality	Multi-ethnic cultural area/city
5	19	2021	the Zang nationality	Tibetan cultural area/non-city
6	20	2020	the Zang nationality	The Yi nationality cultural area/non-city
7	22	2018	the Naxi nationality	Multi-ethnic cultural area/city
8	20	2020	the Uyghur nationality	Uyghur culture region/city, later went to Guangdong to study
9	20	2020	the Han nationality	Uighur culture region/city
10	21	2019	the Han nationality	Han culture area/city
11	21	2019	the Han nationality	Han culture area/city
12	20	2020	the Yi nationality	The Yi nationality cultural area/non-city
13	22	2020	the Han nationality	Han culture area/city
14	20	2020	the Han nationality	Han culture area/city

In addition, the author also interviewed eight male students of different ages and identities, hoping to form a contrast between the aesthetic idea refracted from male perspective and that of female college students.

Table 2: Basic Information of interviewees (Male)

Serial number	Age (subject to interview)	Enrollment Year	Nation	Growing environment or cultural background
A	19	2021	the Zang nationality	Tibetan cultural area/city
B	19	2021	the Zang nationality	Tibetan cultural area/city
C	19	2020	the Yi nationality	The Yi nationality cultural area/city
D	19	2021	the Naxi nationality	Multi-ethnic Cultural Area/City (Lijiang)
E	48	teacher	the Naxi nationality	Ethnic college teachers
F	22	2019	the Uyghur nationality	Uighur culture region/city
G	21	2019	the Han nationality	Han culture area/city
H	20	2020	the Yi nationality	The Yi nationality cultural area/non-city

According to the survey, the native cultural environment has a significant impact on the aesthetic idea of female college students. 57.14% respondents indicated that their aesthetic idea was greatly influenced by their native culture and region, which greatly affected their aesthetic perception. At the same time, consumerism and market orientation play a certain guiding role in the formation of female college students' aesthetic sense. Under the consumerism market, the visual impression presented by mass media directly or indirectly affects the aesthetic idea of contemporary female college students. 83.33% respondents indicated that their aesthetic idea is directly or indirectly affected by new media. In addition, the change of living environment will affect the aesthetic idea of female college students to a certain extent. Among the interviewees, two female students who had been studying abroad before college said that their aesthetic perception was obviously influenced by their classmates and environment after they divorced from their native culture. Students of grade 20 and above all admitted that their aesthetic standards had changed to some extent since college. In the return visit of "No. 5" student of grade 21 after an interval of one semester, we also observed obvious changes in her dress and makeup.

4. Reasons for change

4.1. Consumerism and market orientation

In the era of consumerism, in order to create the desire to consume, merchants fat with negative images such as "unhealthy" and "sloppy and clumsy", while "white" and "thin" are associated with positive characters such as "self-discipline". The trend of profit makes businesses shape the so-called aesthetic standards in a larger and broader way, and fill them in daily life through short videos, advertisements and other forms. Under the influence of short videos such as Tik Tok and Kuaishou as well as ubiquitous advertisements, college students have unconsciously influenced or changed their aesthetic idea

"I think the main reason is that short videos are so popular, and then people are watching short videos, so they have a herd mentality and think it's better and more beautiful in this way. The other aspect is celebrity obsession, where I feel like I'm attracted to the bodies of female celebrities and then I think I'm like that, I'm a celebrity and then I'm attracted to that and I go on a diet or something." (Ref. No.10)

The "consumer revolution" has arisen and is spreading widely around the world. As a new form of power, capital controls women's bodies. Driven by commercial interests, media make beauty simple and standardized, constantly creating women's dissatisfaction and anxiety about their own body image.

4.2. Psychological identity

Goffman, a sociologist, uses the dramatic metaphor of "Front region" and "Backstage" to express and theorize People's Daily interaction patterns. In everyday life, people are like actors, constantly presenting their own images to different audiences and situations. Such impression performance is spatially and temporally limited. "Front region" refers to the area where audience is present and specific performance is performed, and some behaviors suppressed at the front stage appear in "Backstage".^[9] This concept can be used to illustrate the role transformation and situational performance of female college students

in different social Spaces.

Female college students go back and forth between their hometown and school all the year round, and there are often great cultural differences between the two regions. Interviews revealed that in order to balance the two, they set up their own "Front region" and "Backstage". In order to avoid cultural conflicts and conflicts between generations, they often choose to obey their elders and local cultural customs at home, so as to avoid criticism and rejection because they do not conform to local aesthetic idea.

"Yes, that's true. Because at home, let alone a girl, if I wear a boy short, my parents will say I. It feels like you're out there, and the city is like this, and you can't see the old people at home. The old people think, they must be conservative, and they certainly don't want to see us like this." (Ref. No. C)

"We don't dare to change too much for fear of being told by the old woman from the village." (Ref. No. 5)

And school is their "backstage". On the one hand, without the shackles of elders, they have gained greater autonomy in school. On the other hand, in order to better fit into the new group and gain recognition, they will choose to "keep up with the trend of The Times".

"I think it's normal. It's inevitable, people dress like this now, and society is moving in the same direction, so it's normal. I remember there was a saying in the old days that if you can't use advanced production tools, you're bound to be eliminated by history." (Ref. No. C)

At the same time, in order to enhance their attractiveness and attract men's attention, female college students listen to men's opinions and suggestions to make themselves more popular and likable.

"You have some pressure from the opposite sex, you have to be liked by the opposite sex, so you have to have plastic surgery, and then you have to have a good job, and then you have to have good looks, and then you go back to plastic surgery, and these things exist." (Ref. No. G)

"Identity, originally a concept of individual psychology, was later used in anthropology, sociology, political science and social psychology to refer to a psychological mechanism generated by individuals that connects themselves with ethnic groups, society, country and various groups".^[10] Female college students are seeking recognition from different groups by changing their roles in the "Front region" and "Backstage" and listening to the opinions of the opposite sex. They hope to be a "good girl" in the eyes of their elders and to keep up with the trend of The Times and become a popular person.

4.3. Social and cultural differences

Ancient humans used to decorate animal bone horn products, China's ancient feudal society bound feet, the old European waist and today's plastic surgery... There is a deeper social and cultural logic behind these aesthetic concepts and practices.

The culture of any nation in the world "grows up from its native land with primitive power and takes root in the whole life cycle. Every culture imprints its own image on its materials and its human beings"^[11]. Therefore, if we want to understand the aesthetic sense of a nation, the study of its culture is essential. The religious culture of the Zang nationality, the Yi nationality, the Naxi nationality and other ethnic groups has shaped their aesthetics in the long historical development process. Both the Tibetan Buddhism of the Zang nationality and the Bimo belief of the Yi nationality follow and adhere to the truth, goodness and beauty in nature and humanity.

"What we advocate in Tibetan Buddhism is kindness itself. Kindness is a foundation, and then you add something of character, something that everyone cares about." (Ref. No. A)

"Among buddhists, what we have on our faces is given to us by our parents. There's a superstition that if you cut yourself in the face, you're going to hell." (Ref. No.5)

In the face of different cultural exchanges, the cultural imprint on an individual will be consciously or unintentionally expressed through the choice of ideas and behaviors.

"Our village is very close to the city, just near the edge of the city. In fact, people are in touch with more new things, maybe because we have been developing tourism in Lijiang, there were a lot of tourists in the past, those tourists dress very fashionable, very beautiful, and then slowly influence the women and people here, and learn from them and so on." (Ref. No.7)

In "Rural China" written by Mr. Fei Xiaotong, rural areas are built on the basis of blood families and

are established in accordance with legal, rational and moral order. Individual behaviors are more constrained by morality and surrounding neighbors. Compared with rural areas, individual behaviors in cities are more open and independent, and individual aesthetic idea is more selective and independent.^[12] In addition, the difference in the level of economic development between rural and urban areas also results in the ideological and cultural differences between them.

5. Conclusions

To sum up, there are obvious differences in aesthetic idea between different regions and different ages, and different aesthetic idea is hidden in different cultural concepts. Under the influence of different cultures, female college students from different regions have formed different aesthetic idea, and now their aesthetic standards are gradually standardized and simplified. The reasons for this phenomenon can be analyzed from two different aspects: On the one hand, in the age of consumerism, the media and businesses narrow the definition of beauty driven by interests, and then exaggerate it, leading to the single and one-sided pursuit of aesthetic standards in the society. The definition of beauty tends to be simple, and beauty has a standard. Under the general trend of society, female college students gradually become single and one-sided. On the other hand, in order to pursue psychological identity, be better accepted by the society and become a qualified "social person", female college students will make themselves conform to the "requirements" of the society as much as possible. Female college students are in the early stage of the formation of outlook on life and values. In the process of pursuing this standard, some female college students will adopt some radical ways such as dieting to reduce weight to make themselves reach the standard. However, we can also see that most female college students have rational judgment, they appreciate but do not converge, they understand but do not demand, they are not completely follow the current, but have their own unique pursuit under the unified and standardized aesthetic idea.

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