

Research on the application of singing therapy based on Taoist culture in college students' mental health

Chunyuan Huang

Music College of Zhaoqing University, Zhaoqing, Guangdong, 526061, China

Abstract: *With the increasing prominence of college students' mental health problems, seeking effective mental health intervention methods has become an important topic at present. Music therapy, as a non-drug intervention method, has attracted much attention in the field of mental health. However, there has been no systematic and in-depth study on the application of singing therapy based on Taoist culture in college students' mental health. This study aims to explore the impact of singing therapy based on Taoist culture on college students' mental health, including the application of Taoist culture in singing therapy and its effect on college students' mental health.*

Keywords: *music therapy, college students' mental health, Taoist culture, singing therapy, applied research*

1. Introduction

In the fast-paced and stressful environment of modern society, the mental health problems of college students have gradually become prominent and have become an issue worthy of attention and solution. Traditional psychotherapy cannot fully meet the needs of college students[1]. Past studies have shown that vocal music and singing have a positive effect on mental health. Many scholars generally believe that singing can improve an individual's emotional state, reduce stress and anxiety, and promote emotional expression and emotional regulation[2]. However, existing research mainly focuses on the study of general groups or specific psychological problems, and there is relatively little research on the specific group of college students. Although some scholars have noticed the potential of singing in college students' mental health, the specific application methods and effect mechanisms have not been discussed in depth. Therefore, singing therapy, which draws on Taoist culture as a new psychotherapy, is of great significance for promoting college students' mental health[3]. Existing studies have explored the application of singing therapy and the problems of college students' mental health in the fields of psychology and music therapy, but there are not many studies on integrating Taoist culture into singing therapy and applying it to college students' mental health[4]. This study aims to deeply study the application of singing therapy based on Taoist culture in the mental health of college students, explore its role in emotional regulation, stress relief and individual growth of college students, and try to answer the following questions: Does singing therapy based on Taoist culture have a positive impact on the mental health of college students? What is the mechanism of this effect? Where is the difference between it and traditional psychotherapy? This study will adopt a practical method to intervene in Taoist culture singing therapy on college students and conduct comparative analysis, in order to make a scientific and comprehensive answer to the above questions. The research innovation of this article is mainly reflected in the combination of Taoist culture and singing therapy, and its application in the field of college students' mental health.

2. Review of current research status and significance

2.1 Review of current research status at home and abroad

The flowing melody uses the emotions such as joy, anger, sorrow, happiness, sorrow, separation and reunion expressed by people in music activities as a means of psychological intervention such as psychological projection, empathy and transformation to achieve the purpose of curing mental illness[5]. Zhang Yong (2020) proposed that in the process of psychological treatment intervention, traditional music therapy focuses on using singing behavior as a method of empathy, so that the patient's negative psychological emotions can be vented, and then promote the patient's cognitive improvement. Han

Yanting (2020) mentioned that from the four aspects of emotional impact, psychological changes, physiological effects and social effects caused by singing on people, people's mental health can be promoted and restored. Diane Austin (2018)'s "Singing Music Therapy", Huang Xianwen (2015) proposed that music therapy is conducive to inducing the generation of positive emotions, proving that singing music is a "panacea" for treating emotional problems, and Quan Hui (2020) proposed that music therapy can achieve healing effects through various ways of changing the patient's psychological emotions in the three mainstream music therapy methods of music therapy, namely, receptive music therapy, creative music therapy and improvisational music therapy[6].

Traditional Chinese medicine theory has long recognized that music is closely related to the physiological or pathological activities of the five internal organs of the human body and changes in human emotions. Different tones will also have different effects on human physiology and psychology. Since the 1980s, many researchers have combined the Yin-Yang theory and the Five Elements theory of Chinese medicine with modern music therapy, and have made important progress in clinical practice. Zuo Zhijian and Peng Guizhen (2018) believe that the essential characteristics of Chinese medicine treatment are not completely equal to the Five Elements music therapy. The idea of "preventing disease before it occurs" in the Yellow Emperor's Classic of Internal Medicine uses music to regulate people's emotions, thereby changing people's negative attitude towards life. Zhang Wenchun (2004) introduced the basic theory of music therapy in the clinical application of Chinese medicine and methods such as music electrotherapy. Xiang Chunyan (2015) has conducted a comparative study of Chinese medicine Five Elements music therapy on hundreds of patients with malignant tumors. The study found that the application of Chinese medicine Five Elements music therapy has an improvement effect on the depression of patients with malignant tumors. Qi Jing (2008) reported the effects of electroacupuncture and five-element music on the behavior and neurotransmitter 5-HT in anxiety model rats. It was believed that five-element music and the combination of electroacupuncture and five-element music could produce anti-anxiety effects in anxiety model rats. This study has found a new way for traditional Chinese medicine to treat anxiety.

As early as ancient times, people have realized the inevitable connection between music, life and nature. Zhang Yong (2016) "Theoretical Framework and Connotation of Ancient Chinese Traditional Music Therapy, Conference Speech" said: "Yin and Yang balance" and other music health care concepts have become the guiding ideology for ancient people to carry out music health care throughout the ages. Wang Li (2016) Ancient health-oriented music therapy derived from this basis the "Liu Zi Jue" Qigong sound health theory and the Guqin health theory. Liu Huan (2013) said that music is born from the "Tai Yi" and is the sound of nature, and singing is the link. When singing, the high and low strength of the notes and the length of the rhythm combined with Qigong singing are beneficial to the movement of Qi and blood. Wu Shen (2016) inherited and explored the ancient Chinese traditional method of prescribing medicine according to the symptoms, and used the energy of "five-note sound waves" to achieve medical effects. It coordinates the yin and yang of the human body, produces sympathetic resonance and physiological changes, and achieves the balance of qi and blood in the human body, combining health care and music.

In summary, traditional Chinese culture has always been an integrated system. Music and medicine, as two important parts of this integrated system, have close connections and cultural sources in many aspects. Various music therapies in the past have provided some theoretical support for this study from the perspectives of theory, psychology, emotion, and the pure five-element theory of music, but they are only simple psychological adjustments and regulating people's emotions from the corresponding organs of the human body. The general psychological therapy method uses the recipient's experience of various aesthetic feelings of music to improve the recipient's physical and mental pleasure, and lacks concrete operational means; traditional Chinese medicine-based singing therapy uses the theory of Chinese medicine to treat diseases before they occur and prevention as the priority. Further health-oriented singing therapy combines the concept of qi theory and Chinese medicine, and uses the energy of sound waves to heal the body and mind, but still lacks concrete operational means; and singing therapy based on Taoist culture, as a form of music therapy, aims to meet the various psychological and physiological emotional needs of patients, and at the same time has specific forms of exercise, and its application field will be very broad.

2.2 Significance of this study

The distinctive characteristics and advantages of music therapy in psychotherapy intervention have attracted people's active attention. Combined with the current development of music therapy, the principles of singing therapy are discussed from the three aspects of physics, psychology and

biochemistry, and the experience of predecessors is studied and analyzed. Through the way of thinking that keeps pace with the times, based on the establishment of singing training methods in Taoist culture, the specific application of music therapy based on singing in college students' mental health education is explored, which has important practical theoretical research and practical application value for inheriting traditional culture.

Singing therapy helps to alleviate college students' anxiety, depression and other mental health problems caused by stress. From the perspective of physics, the application of singing therapy in the field of mental health education in colleges and universities, through listening, singing and other methods, will make the cells, pulse, heart, etc. of the human body produce "vibrations", and these "vibrations" are similar to the melody of music, so that the "vibration" of the human body coincides with the melody of music, and produces a "resonance" effect on the human body, so as to induce college students' positive emotions and release negative emotions to adjust their mood, promote students' cooperation ability, improve social interaction ability, enhance people's aesthetics, improve people's cognitive structure, etc., and finally achieve the purpose of sound personality. This kind of music intervention has a positive effect on college students' mental health problems such as anxiety, depression, sleep disorders and interpersonal sensitivity caused by mental stress. Singing therapy will help improve college students' immunity. When singing, from a biochemical point of view, "Qi is the leader of blood, blood is the mother of Qi, Qi flows, blood stagnates, and blood stagnates". Blood stasis is very harmful to human health. This study uses the holographic law of the universe and a multi-dimensional singing training method to target the blockage of Qi and blood in the human body. In singing, it uses stronger circulation to expand the energy field of singing, open up important meridians and acupuncture points in the human body, and the energy waves of the human body's microcosm resonate with the macrocosm of the external environment. By adjusting the breath, spirit and heart, it promotes better circulation of Qi and blood, guides the body, and puts physiological immunity in an optimal state to achieve the purpose of strengthening the body.

Starting from the core values and perspectives of Taoist culture, this approach incorporates Taoist principles—such as holography, holism, and yin-yang dynamics—into the framework of singing and music therapy. By centering on singing training and music therapy, grounded in traditional Chinese culture, it aims to address the current limitations of music therapy, which often focuses solely on either psychological or physiological aspects. This approach seeks to broaden music therapy theories through a comprehensive exploration of intersections between Taoist culture, singing training, and music therapy, identifying connections rooted in traditional Chinese thought. By employing Taoist concepts, including harmony between humans and nature, the holographic universe, and energy fields, this framework constructs a new model of music therapy that integrates traditional insights with scientific understanding. This fusion of modern and traditional perspectives offers original discourse on singing and music therapy under a Taoist framework, contributing to deeper research in Taoist cultural studies.

3. Research on singing therapy based on Taoist culture in college students' mental health education

3.1 The application value research

Singing therapy based on Taoist culture has important application value in the mental health education of college students. First, Taoist culture emphasizes the flow and balance of "qi". Through singing therapy, students are guided to pay attention to breathing and breath, helping them release inner pressure and relieve anxiety and tension. Secondly, the Taoist concept of "harmony between man and nature" focuses on the harmony of body and mind. Singing therapy can enhance students' self-cognition and promote the harmonious development of body and mind. In addition, the Taoist idea of "ruling by doing nothing" encourages people to follow nature and tolerate changes. Under the guidance of this concept, singing therapy enhances students' psychological resilience and enables them to better cope with setbacks and challenges. At the same time, singing therapy also incorporates the Taoist idea of "introspection". Through vocal exercises and breath control, it helps students enter a state of concentration and improve their self-awareness. Finally, the Taoist concept of "Tao follows nature" inspires students to experience tranquility and joy in singing, thereby cultivating a positive psychological state and having a long-term positive impact on mental health. These values reflect the profound role of singing therapy based on Taoist culture in psychological adjustment, stress management and self-growth, and provide unique cultural and psychological support for college students' mental health education.

3.2 The mechanism construction research

The mechanism construction of singing therapy based on Taoist culture in college students' mental health education is mainly reflected in the resonance field, energy dimension, holographic resonance, meridian dredging and body-mind integration. First, with the help of the Taoist principle of "three births of all things", by dividing the head, chest and abdomen into different levels of Tai Chi structure, a human resonance field is formed during singing, which enhances the resonance of sound and enables students to obtain a deep self-connection in singing. Secondly, according to the Taoist concept of energy wave dimension, by adjusting the frequency and energy fluctuation of singing, students can be helped to stabilize their emotions and relieve stress; thirdly, combined with the "holographic law", the microscopic energy of the human body resonates harmoniously with the external macro environment, generating a sense of belonging to the universe connection, thereby improving mental health. In addition, through deep resonance, the meridians of the human body are activated, the internal "field material" energy is released, and the physical and psychological coordination of students is enhanced; finally, using the experiential healing concept of "body-mind integration", students release emotions and enhance internal energy through singing in their wholehearted dedication, and achieve physical and mental balance. These mechanisms jointly construct a complete singing therapy system based on Taoist culture, which helps to promote students' psychological adjustment, self-awareness and emotional management, and achieve more significant healing effects.

3.3 Comparative study on the effectiveness of singing therapy based on Taoist culture and ordinary music therapy mechanism

General music therapy is mainly based on the theoretical framework of psychology, aesthetics and physiology, focusing on the regulation of individual emotions and physiological regulation of body reactions through music. Its core concept is to use the melody, rhythm and harmony of music to affect the brain and nervous system through auditory stimulation, thereby improving emotional state, reducing stress, relieving psychological problems such as anxiety, and promoting physical relaxation and recovery. The mechanism of action of this therapy usually depends on the subjective perception and physiological response of music, such as changes in heart rate and breathing rate. In contrast, Taoist singing therapy integrates the philosophical ideas of holistic concept, yin and yang balance, and unity of man and nature in Taoist culture, emphasizing the harmonious coexistence of man and nature. It combines the holographic cosmology and energy field theory, believing that all things and energy in the universe are interconnected, and the frequency of sound can directly affect the energy flow of the human body. Through singing training, this therapy resonates the vibration frequency of sound with energy channels such as meridians and acupoints in the human body, activates the self-repair mechanism inside the body, and thus achieves physical and mental balance and healing. This theoretical basis emphasizes the overall regulation of body, mind and spirit, has strong characteristics of Eastern philosophy, and focuses on achieving deep physical health and psychological treatment through the harmonious laws of nature.

Ordinary music therapy usually stimulates emotional changes through music appreciation or performance, thereby achieving the effect of relaxation or emotional regulation. The rhythm, melody and harmony of music can cause psychological and physiological reactions in individuals, help relieve stress, improve mood, and promote physical and mental relaxation. However, this therapy mainly relies on external music stimulation, and does not deeply consider the deep interaction between music and the internal energy and physiological structure of the human body. In contrast, Taoist singing therapy emphasizes the resonance between the sound frequency in singing and the human energy system, directly affecting specific acupuncture points and meridians, regulating the aura, enhancing the body's energy, and promoting the overall regulation of the body and mind. The "qi" theory in Taoist culture believes that the energy flow of the human body is closely related to the external environment. When singing, by adjusting the sound frequency, the microscopic energy of the human body resonates with the macroscopic energy of the outside world, forming a harmonious energy exchange. This resonance effect can not only regulate qi and blood and dredge meridians, but also help individuals achieve deeper psychological and physiological health through deep self-regulation. Therefore, Taoist singing therapy has unique advantages in regulating the body's aura, enhancing energy flow and promoting overall health.

4. Conclusion

Based on interviews with students with mental health problems, a singing training method based on the common "energy waves" of music therapy in Taoist culture is carried out to open the three pans of

the human body. Using some important acupuncture points as support points to establish a window for energy exchange with the outside world is beneficial to the physical and mental health of college students. Through teacher-student cooperative action research, the school has set up a dedicated music therapy room based on music therapy to explore a set of music therapy knowledge system that is conducive to guiding mental health education for college students.

This study studied the application of singing therapy based on Taoist culture in the mental health of college students. It was found that this therapy can significantly improve the mental health of college students and enhance their mental health. It will enrich theoretical research in the field of music therapy, has positive application prospects, offers new ideas and methods for college students' mental health interventions, and holds significant value for promoting innovation and development in modern mental health services through Taoist culture.

Acknowledgements

This paper is supported by the 2022 Guangdong Provincial Department of Education Undergraduate College Teaching Quality and Teaching Reform Project - "Research on the Application of "Pharyngeal Sound Training Method" in the Reform of Vocal Music Teaching System in Normal Colleges", 2023 Guangdong Provincial Education Science Planning Project (Higher Education Special) - Application Research of Singing Therapy Based on Taoist Culture in College Students' Mental Health Education, No.: (2023GXJK525), 2023 Guangdong Provincial Ordinary Colleges and Universities Characteristic Innovation Project (Philosophy and Social Sciences) - Research on the Integration of College Singing Training and Music Therapy under the Perspective of Taoist Culture, No.: (2023WTSCX102), 2021 Zhaoqing College Scientific Research Fund Project - "Research on the Role of Red Songs in College Teaching from the Perspective of Patriotism Education in the New Era", No.: QN202113; 2022 Zhaoqing College Scientific Research Fund Project - No.: (QN202212) and 2023 Zhaoqing City Philosophy and Social Sciences Planning Project - "Research on the Integration of Ideological and Political Literacy Cultivation Mechanism and Red Music Development Path in Zhaoqing Universities" No.: 23GJ-47

References

- [1] Mastnak W. Chinese music therapy and clinical music education to treat anxiety disorders: The PLUS-Model[J]. *Modern Applied Medical Research*, 2022, 2(1): 13-23.
- [2] Demaine K. Musical roots for healing: The role of music as therapy in traditional Chinese medicine [J]. *Therapists creating a cultural tapestry: Using the creative therapies across culture*, 2015: 154-169.
- [3] Pant N. Mind, Mental Health & Psychology in Jyotisha, Vastu Shastra & Samudrika Shastra: Relating Sexuality with Astrology[M]//*Psychology of Sexuality & Mental Health Vol. 1: Indigenous Approaches*. Singapore: Springer Nature Singapore, 2024: 275-300.
- [4] Deng T, Tang J, Li J, et al. Exploring the Role of Traditional Chinese Values in Shaping Health Beliefs and Decision-making Process[J]. *American Journal of Health Behavior*, 2024, 48(3): 1-11.
- [5] Kang Y, Gu M. A Concept Analysis of Yangsaeng (Nurturing Life) Using Rogers' Evolutionary Method[J]. *Holistic Nursing Practice*, 2024: 10.1097.
- [6] Phong C T. Awakening from within: an exploration of self-healing through Buddhist approach[J]. *Journal of Spirituality in Mental Health*, 2024: 1-29.