

A STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEARNING SATISFACTION AND COLLEGE-GOING INTENTION AMONG MUSIC CLASS STUDENTS AT A MIDDLE SCHOOL IN HUNAN PROVINCE, CHINA

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Abstract: This study aimed to explore the relationship between learning satisfaction and college-going intention among music class students at A middle school in Hunan Province, China, and determine whether there are significant differences between learning satisfaction and college-going intention among music class students under different background variables. A total of 120 valid questionnaires were collected through convenient sampling in the form of questionnaire survey. SPSS 26.0 software was used to make statistics on the data, including descriptive statistics, independent sample T-test, One-way ANOVA analysis and Pearson correlation analysis. It was found that the overall level of learning satisfaction of students was above moderate, students' College-Going Intention is high. and there were significant differences in the Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music class students in different genders, different grades, and different locations. Finally, the author made reflection, discussion and suggestion on the results of this research, and put forward some strategies to improve the Learning Satisfactions of middle school students.

Keywords: Students at A Middle School in Hunan Province, China, Learning Satisfaction, College-Going Intention

Introduction

Internationally, in the context of globalization, Hassan (2025) highlighted that music education, as a vital part of arts education, had gained growing international attention. With the rapid development of the music industry, the demand for musical talents increased significantly, making the learning satisfaction and further education aspirations of music class students an important research topic. Learning satisfaction referred to students' subjective evaluations of their learning process, teaching quality, and school environment. For music class students, it not only affected their motivation and

interest but also directly influenced their academic outcomes and future development. Bi, X. (2025) noted that globally, many renowned music conservatories and universities strove to enhance learning satisfaction by optimizing curricula, improving teaching quality, and upgrading facilities to provide better educational experiences. Aspiration for further education reflected students' plans and expectations for their academic and professional futures. For music class students, this aspiration demonstrated their passion for music and shaped their learning goals. Chan (2025) emphasized that international music institutions offered diverse pathways for advanced studies, including undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral programs, as well as joint programs with prestigious conservatories worldwide.

In China, Zhang (2024) pointed out that, with the deepening development of holistic education and the continuous improvement of public aesthetic awareness, music education, as a critical component of arts education, garnered increasing attention and prioritization. The Chinese government introduced a series of policies to encourage arts education, such as the Opinions on Deepening Education Reform and Comprehensively Improving the Quality of Compulsory Education (issued by the CPC Central Committee and the State Council) and the Guidelines on Strengthening and Enhancing School Aesthetic Education in the New Era. These policies emphasized the critical role of arts education in the national education system and created a supportive policy environment for music class students' learning and academic advancement. Xiao (2024) pointed out that these measures aimed to promote the accessibility and quality of arts education while fostering the healthy development of the music training market. With the rise in household education spending and parents' growing emphasis on their children's artistic development, demand for music classes remained robust. Kong (2024) noted that survey data indicated parents' strongest preference for their children's participation in instrumental music training, followed by dance and fine arts, with instrumental programs accounting for the largest share. This substantial market demand provided music class students with abundant learning resources and opportunities.

Research Objectives

- (1) To identify the current status of Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music program students at A Middle School in Hunan, China.
- (2) To explore the differences in Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music class students at A Middle School in Hunan Province, China, under the demographic backgrounds (gender, grade, location).
- (3) To identify the relationship between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music class students at A Middle School in Hunan Province, China.

Literature Review

Research on student learning satisfaction

The theoretical research on the learning satisfaction of middle school music class students had

been relatively extensive. Wang (2023) argued in her "Participation-Satisfaction" theory that there was a positive proportional relationship between students' participation engagement in music learning and their learning satisfaction. Specifically, the more actively students engaged in music learning, the higher their satisfaction levels. Building upon this foundation, Liu (2023) proposed the "Practice-Effect" theory, which emphasized the practical experiences gained through effective music learning as the core mechanism driving satisfaction improvements. This theory posited that meaningful learning participation directly enhanced learning outcomes, thereby increasing satisfaction.

Regarding the construction of learning satisfaction among music class students. First of all, Satisfaction with educational support was a core indicator measuring music students' recognition of educational resources provided by schools, families, and society, directly influencing their professional motivation and artistic development potential. Given the highly practical and personalized nature of music education, the comprehensiveness and suitability of educational support emerged as critical determinants of student satisfaction. Secondly, Satisfaction with Curriculum Perception. Music programs needed to balance professionalism with general education. Yuan (2024) proposed a "three-dimensional curriculum model," advocating that skill-based compulsory courses (e.g., instrumental majors), theoretical expansion courses (e.g., Western music history), and interdisciplinary integration courses (e.g., music psychology) should be allocated in a 5:3:2 ratio to synchronize technical refinement and humanistic literacy development. Finally, Satisfaction with Self-Growth. Satisfaction with self-growth reflected students' comprehensive evaluations of personal capacity development, identity formation, and career planning confidence during music learning, representing the ultimate manifestation of art education's educational effectiveness. Music students universally aspired to become "technically proficient and expressive" artists. Chen (2023) proposed a "double-helix evaluation model," emphasizing synchronous assessment of technical proficiency (e.g., scale speed, intonation accuracy) and artistic expressiveness (e.g., phrasing, emotional conveyance).

Analysis of Influential Factors on Middle School Music Students' Learning Satisfaction. Music education imposed significantly higher demands on physical environments compared to general subjects. Wang (2024) noted that professional music classrooms required acoustic designs with reverberation times controlled within the optimal 0.8–1.2-second range to avoid timbral distortion. Regarding instrument allocation, a 1:3 ratio of 88-key weighted pianos to electronic synthesizers was recommended to accommodate both classical and contemporary music teaching needs. Music instruction required teachers to balance technical expertise with pedagogical wisdom. Guo (2024)'s "three-stage feedback model" offered critical guidance. Motivational differences drove behavioral divergences. Gong (2024)'s structural equation modeling identified aesthetic experience ($\beta=0.32$) and achievement motivation ($\beta=0.28$) as core predictors of satisfaction, with external reward motivation showing negative effects ($\beta=-0.15$).

Research on Methods for Enhancing Learning Satisfaction of Middle School Music Students.

Western countries had restructured music education ecosystems through technological means. Ragar, (2024) systematically demonstrated the value of MIT AI composition assistant "Musi Coach" which used machine learning to analyze performance data (intonation deviation, rhythm stability, emotional expression intensity) and generate real-time personalized training plans. Chinese music education sector had developed a trinity approach of policy-driven, technology-integrated, and culturally rooted strategies with distinct local characteristics.

Research on College-Going Intention

The theoretical research on middle school music students' College-Going Intention had been relatively extensive. Wang (2022) "Effort-Willingness" theory posited a positive proportional relationship between students' dedication to music learning and their College-Going Intention. Specifically, the more effort students invested in music studies, the stronger their motivation to pursue higher education.

Research on the cultivation of college-going intention among music class students. Clarity of College-Going Goals represented a core dimension measuring music students' cognitive precision regarding future educational pathways, directly influencing the systematicity of their academic planning and the effectiveness of resource allocation. Hori (2024) emphasized that music students' college goals needed to align deeply with their career visions. Adequacy of College-Going Motivation reflected students sustained effort, focus, and stress tolerance during college preparation, with intensity determined by the synergy between internal drivers and external incentives. Simon (2024) highlighted that college competition pressure could both drive and hinder motivation. Physiological monitoring revealed that students effectively using mindfulness training and cognitive restructuring reduced stage anxiety by 34% and preparation errors by 28%. Selectivity of College-Going Pathways reflected students' mastery of domestic/international college channels, assessment methods, and resource access strategies, directly impacting admission success rates. Cámara (2024) noted that music college preparation had evolved beyond traditional audition models into a diversified system of "unified exams + school-specific auditions + international programs + gifted student schemes."

Analysis of the Influencing Factors of Students' Willingness to Pursue Higher Education in Middle School Music Classes The first was the core driving role of individual traits. Lei (2019) pointed out that the college admission decisions of students in middle school music classes were first and foremost systematically influenced by their intrinsic traits. The second was the dual constraint of family capital and educational resources. Wang (2017) held that family capital shaped the boundaries of educational choices through three paths: economic, cultural and emotional. The third was the guiding role and structural constraints of the social environment. Yang (2022) pointed out that the macro social environment regulated the path of further education selection through multiple mechanisms. The signals from the job market directly stimulated the demand for further education. After the educational qualification threshold for recruitment by art groups was raised to a bachelor's degree, 88% of students

gave up direct employment and chose to pursue further education.

Research on Methods for Enhancing College-Going Intention of Middle School Music Students. Internationally, it was widely acknowledged that cultivating college decision-making capabilities among art students required dual innovations in systemic institutional design and technological empowerment. Davies (2024) proposed that Finland established the social service attributes of arts education through legislation and built a lifelong arts career education system spanning K-12 stages, with its core lying in the synergy of early intervention and resource compensation. Domestically, efforts to enhance college-going intention focused on policy adaptation and educational ecosystem optimization, forming localized improvement pathways.

Research on the Relationship between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention

Chen, M. (2024) noted in a 2021 study that as specialized music education in secondary schools deepened and advanced, students' cognitive understanding of artistic learning gradually improved. This learning satisfaction not only reflected students' psychological identification with professional training but also directly influenced their subsequent developmental choices, such as learning persistence, professional competency enhancement, and college decision-making. As demonstrated by Almulla (2024) in their 2024 research, school curriculum design and instructional support significantly impacted music-track students' college-going intentions, with students' emotional experiences in music courses playing a particularly prominent role in shaping choices. This indicated that the sense of achievement and belonging students gained during specialized learning were core elements in strengthening their motivations.

Yin (2024) revealed in a 2024 survey targeting music-track students that both learning satisfaction and college-going intention were at moderate levels, with a significant positive correlation between the two. Specifically, Yoon (2024) explained that higher satisfaction with teaching quality and curriculum content correlated with stronger intentions to pursue further studies at arts-focused higher education institutions. This further emphasized the critical importance of educational quality in shaping students' future choices.

According to a study by Ahoto (2024), learning satisfaction exhibited a mediating effect between academic pressure and college decision-making. Similarly, Zhan (2022) validated this mechanism, finding that music program students' learning satisfaction not only buffered the negative effects of academic workload but also fostered college-going intention by enhancing professional confidence. Zhao (2024) further demonstrated through analysis that satisfaction with teaching environments and teacher-student interaction quality were key dimensions influencing enter which higher school. High-quality arts practice platforms and positive teacher-student relationships effectively strengthened students' confidence in entering a higher school. Reitumets (2024) argued that these findings underscored the profound impact of educational environments on students' learning attitudes and future planning.

Methodology

A Middle School in Hunan Province, China has 12,00 students. According to the convenient sampling standard of Morgan Table (Krejci & Morgan, 1970), 120 full-time students majoring in music should be sampled. As a reference, this study adopted convenient sampling method to send questionnaires to the students participating in the survey in A Middle School, Hunan, China. After the questionnaire was collected and sorted out, the invalid questionnaires were eliminated, and finally 120 valid questionnaires were determined, the effective rate reached 100%.

In this study, the International General Scale of Students' Learning Satisfaction Measurement Scale, created by Yuan (2024), was used to measure individual Learning Satisfaction. The scale contains 15 questions, which were divided into three parts: Satisfaction with Educational Support, Satisfaction with Curriculum Perception, Satisfaction with Self-Growth.

The higher education student College-Going Intention scale designed by Tao (2023) was used. The scale covered three aspects of Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation, Availability of College Pathways as well as corresponding evaluation items, with a total of 15 evaluation items.

Results

Demographic Analysis of Questionnaire Participants

A total of 120 valid questionnaires were collected from full-time students majoring in music of A Middle School, Hunan Province, China. According to the statistical results, among the gender variables, there were 62 males, accounting for 54.7%, and 58 females, accounting for 48.3%. In the variable of grade, 31 Senior 1 students accounted for 25.8%, 44 Senior 2 students accounted for 36.7%, 45 Senior 3 accounted students for 37.5%; In the variable of location, 69 urban students accounted for 57.8%, 51 rural students accounted for 42.2%.

Descriptive Statistics on the Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention of Middle School Students

1) Using descriptive statistical analysis, examine the overall level of Learning Satisfaction of students in A Middle School in Hunan Province, China. According to the analysis results in Table 1, it could be seen that the Learning Satisfaction of students in A Middle School had reached the upper medium level ($M=3.331$), and each dimension was at the upper medium level. Among them, the mean score of Satisfaction with Curriculum Perception was the highest ($M=3.514$), followed by Satisfaction with Educational Support, Satisfaction with Self-Growth. Their mean values were $M=3.481$, and $M=3.113$, respectively. In conclusion, the overall level of Learning Satisfaction of students in A Middle School in Hunan Province of China was above mean.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistical of Learning Satisfaction of Middle School Students

	N	M	SD	Interpretation
Satisfaction with Educational Support	6	3.48	0.591	Intermediate
Satisfaction with Curriculum Perception	6	3.51	0.685	high
Satisfaction with Self-Growth	6	3.11	0.707	Moderate
Learning Satisfaction	18	3.33	0.586	Moderate

2) Using descriptive statistical analysis, examine the overall level of College-Going Intention of middle school students. According to the analysis results in Table 2, it could be seen that the score of students' College-Going Intention was at a high level ($M=3.521$). Among the scores of various dimensions, Clarity of College Goals was the highest ($M=3.780$), followed by Availability of College Pathways ($M=3.412$), and Adequacy of Middle School Motivation was the lowest ($M=3.372$). In a word, the College-Going Intention of A Middle School in Hunan Province of China was at a high level.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistical of College-Going Intention of Middle School Students

	N	M	SD	Interpretation
Clarity of College Goals	5	3.78	0.713	High
Adequacy of College Motivation	5	3.37	0.896	Moderate
Availability of College Pathways	15	3.41	0.850	Moderate
College-Going Intention	15	3.52	0.668	High

Differences Analysis on Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention of Middle School Students

SPSS software was used to analyze the differences in Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music class students under different background variables by using independent sample T-test and One-way ANOVA. Pearson correlation analysis was conducted to explore the relationship between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music class students.

There were significant differences in Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention of Middle School Students with different demographic backgrounds. There were significant differences in Learning Satisfaction of Middle School Students of different genders, grades, and locations. There were significant differences in College-Going Intention of Middle School Students of different genders, grades and locations.

Correlation Analysis between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention of Middle School Students

There was a significant positive correlation between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going

Intention among music class students at middle school. The overall relevant situation was shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Correlation between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention of Middle School Students

	IV1	IV2	IV3	IV	DV1	DV2	DV3	DV
IV1	1							
IV2	.628**	1						
IV3	.633**	.771**	1					
IV	.808**	.881**	.915**	1				
DV1	.359**	.486**	.486**	.503**	1			
DV2	.456**	.502**	.511**	.550**	.531**	1		
DV3	.328**	.481**	.401**	.459**	.643**	.331**	1	
DV	.477**	.602**	.574**	.614**	.864**	.769**	.803**	1

Note: * $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, *** $p < .001$

IV1: Satisfaction with educational support, IV2: Satisfaction with curriculum perception, IV3: Satisfaction with self-growth, IV: Overall learning satisfaction, DV1: Clarity of college goals, DV2: Adequacy of college motivation, DV3: Availability of college pathways, DV: Overall college-going intention

According to the test results, Pearson correlation analysis was used to investigate the correlation between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among music class students. According to the data in Table 3, the correlation coefficients between Satisfaction with Educational Support and College-Going Intention, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation, Availability of College Pathways of middle school students were 0.349、0.466、0.318 and 0.467, respectively, all of which were significantly correlated. The correlation coefficients between Satisfaction with Curriculum Perception and College-Going Intention, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation, Availability of College Pathways of middle school students were 0.496, 0.501, 0.480, 0.604 respectively, which also met the requirement of significance. The correlation coefficients between learning satisfaction and College-Going Intention, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation, Availability of College Pathways of middle school students were 0.503, 0.550, 0.459, 0.614. respectively, and all reached significant levels. In conclusion, the learning satisfaction and its dimensions were significantly positively correlated with the dimensions of College-Going Intention among music class students.

Discussion

Current Situation of Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among Music Class Students

The survey results of this study found that the number of tested students increased gradually from Grade 10 to Grade 12, with Grade 12 students being the largest group. In terms of gender, the proportion of male and female students was relatively balanced; regarding the students' place of origin, the ratio of urban to rural students was also relatively balanced. Overall, the overall levels of learning satisfaction and college entrance intention among music students at School A in Hunan Province were high. Consistent with the perspective of Alojail (2024), the findings of this study indicated that parental involvement, learning satisfaction, and students' artistic persistence intention were positively correlated. However, excessive intervention could trigger rebellious psychology.

Differences between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among Music Class Students

By comparing the differences of middle school students of different genders, different ages, different grades, different locations, the following findings were made:

(1) There was a significant difference in the Learning Satisfaction among music class students at middle school of different genders. The study found that traditional perceptions often associated music with certain "masculine traits," such as strength, sense of control, and competitiveness, which might implicitly shape students' perceptions and attitudes toward music learning. This study's findings align with Hassan(2024), who noted that certain teaching methods in current music education systems might better cater to boys' learning styles and interests—for example, emphasizing technical displays, improvisation, or leadership roles in teamwork. Girls, however, may prefer nuanced emotional expression, in-depth theoretical exploration, or personalized learning paths.

(2) There was a significant difference in the Learning Satisfaction among music class students at middle school with different grades. This study found that there were significant differences in learning satisfaction among middle school music class students of different grades, specifically manifested as high school seniors having higher learning satisfaction than high school sophomores, and high school sophomores having higher satisfaction than high school sophomores. The results of this study were consistent with the research conclusion of Yuan (2024). He believed that the differences in learning satisfaction among middle school music students of different grades were the result of multiple factors working together.

(3) There was a significant difference in the Learning Satisfaction among music class students at middle school with different locations. This study found that there were significant differences in learning satisfaction among middle school music students from different origins. The research results of this article were consistent with the research conclusion of Gong (2024). The manifestation of differences in learning satisfaction among students from different origins required us to pay more

attention to the diversity of regional cultures and the actual needs and difficulties of students from different origins in music education practice.

(4) There was a significant difference in the College-Going Intention among music class students at middle school of different genders. This study found that there were significant differences in the willingness of students of different genders to pursue further education, with male students generally having a higher willingness to pursue further education than female students. This viewpoint was consistent with the conclusion drawn by Hu's (2020) research. Boys in music classes often exhibited a stronger desire to continue their education and pursue higher levels of music education.

(5) There was a significant difference in the College-Going Intention among music class students at middle school with different grades. Senior high school students had the strongest willingness to pursue further education, followed by sophomore high school students, while first-year high school students had relatively weaker willingness to pursue further education. This conclusion was consistent with the research viewpoint of Zhu (2022) mentioned earlier. As a group of high school seniors who were about to enter the threshold of the college entrance examination, their willingness to further their education was particularly firm. Their persistent pursuit of music and art had been internalized into clear career ideals, and they aspire to enter higher levels of music through further education, further honing and enhancing their musical talents. This strong desire for further education had become an inexhaustible driving force for them to climb new heights and pursue excellence.

(6) There was a significant difference in the College-Going Intention among music class students at middle school with different locations. Urban students had a higher willingness to pursue further education, while rural students had a relatively lower willingness to pursue further education. The research conclusion of Liu (2024) was consistent. The manifestation of differences in student origins in terms of academic aspirations required music educators to pay more attention to the diversity of regional cultures, as well as the actual needs and difficulties of students from different origins. By providing targeted guidance and support for further education, we aimed to help every student make the most suitable choice based on their actual situation and interests, allowing the light of music to illuminate their future path.

Relationship between Learning Satisfaction and College-Going Intention among Music Class Students

With the deepening of the concept of quality education and the increasing demand for artistic talents in society, middle school music classes were increasingly valued, aiming to cultivate students' music literacy and enhance their professional skills. Learning satisfaction and willingness to pursue further education were not only important reflections of students' educational experience, but also key indicators for measuring the effectiveness of music education. They covered students' evaluations of teaching content, teacher level, learning environment, and other aspects, as well as their clarity and pursuit motivation for future career paths. The education of music classes provided students with a

systematic learning and professional training platform, but whether it could effectively promote students' learning satisfaction and enrollment willingness depended on the scientific and targeted nature of the education model.

Firstly, the music class helped students master a solid foundation in music through systematic teaching arrangements, such as music theory knowledge, performance skills, and music history. These knowledge were the foundation of music learning, but classroom teaching alone was not enough to comprehensively improve students' learning satisfaction and willingness to further their education. Secondly, opportunities for practical training were crucial. Participating in concerts, music competitions, art practices, and other activities could allow students to experience the charm of music in real performance situations, enhance stage performance, and accumulate valuable practical experience for further education. In addition, music education should also focus on stimulating students' interest in learning and motivation for further education. Through personalized guidance, career planning lectures, and other methods, students should be guided to clarify their music dreams and academic goals. This viewpoint was consistent with Yang (2024) .

However, the educational effectiveness of music classes was also influenced by various factors. For example, did the teaching staff have rich teaching experience and artistic achievements? Were the music education resources in schools sufficient? What were the students' personal interests and learning attitudes? All of these would directly affect students' learning satisfaction and willingness to pursue further education. Therefore, when designing and implementing music class education in middle schools, attention should be paid to closely integrating with students' personality development and social needs, ensuring that the educational content is highly correlated with students' learning satisfaction and willingness to further their education. This viewpoint was similar to the research results of Hu (2022). In summary, the education of middle school music classes had a positive impact on students' learning satisfaction and willingness to advance, but its effectiveness depended on the quality of education design and implementation, as well as students' actual participation and experience.

Conclusions

1) The overall level of Learning Satisfaction of students in A Middle School in Hunan Province of China was above mean, in which the mean score of Satisfaction with Educational Support was the highest, followed by Satisfaction with Curriculum Perception and Satisfaction with Self-Growth. The overall College-Going Intention of students in A Middle School in Hunan Province was high, with Clarity of College Goals being the highest, followed by Adequacy of College Motivation, and Availability of College Pathways being the lowest.

2) There were significant differences in the Learning Satisfaction of middle school students of different genders, and male students are higher than female students.

Students with different grades had significant differences in Learning Satisfaction and all

dimensions. The level of Learning Satisfaction and all dimensions of the level of learning satisfactions among upperclassmen was higher than that of underclassmen.

The overall and all dimensions of Learning Satisfaction of students with different locations showed that urban students had higher Learning Satisfaction and all dimensions than rural students.

3) There were significant differences in College-Going Intention, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation and Availability of College Pathways among middle school students of different genders. Male students had higher College-Going Intention than female students.

There were significant differences in overall College-Going Intention, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation and Availability of College Pathways among students of different grades. The College-Going Intention of senior students was higher than that of junior students.

There were significant differences among students with different disciplines in overall ability, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation and Availability of College Pathways.

There were significant differences in the overall College-Going Intention, Clarity of College Goals, Adequacy of College Motivation and Availability of College Pathways of middle school students with different locations. The College-Going Intention of urban students was higher than that of rural students.

4) Middle school students' Learning Satisfaction and its dimensions were significantly positively correlated with the dimensions of College-Going Intention.

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