

Effects of Drama General Course on Non-art Major College Students' Drama Knowledge, Involvement, and Viewing Behavior

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Summary

The objective of arts general course for non-art major college students is to instruct systematic arts knowledge while fostering students' interest toward arts. Hence, assessments of effects of arts general course should not only be pencil-and-paper tests and/or in-class presentations, but should also be evaluations about whether the positive cognitions and the actual behaviors toward arts are affected by the course. In the realm of consumer behavior, consumer knowledge, involvement, and buying behavior are critical variables for analyzing people's information search, attitude and actual behavior, which relate to effects of arts general course on cognitions and behaviors toward arts. This research, which is based on the perspective of consumer behavior, aims to exam effects of drama general course on non-art major college students' drama knowledge, involvement, and viewing behavior.

This research applied Solomon four-group design to control the contaminating effect of pretest hence effects of drama general course on research variables could be examined with higher precision. The four groups of subjects were inclusive of: (1) pretested-experimented group (PE): Tamkang University non-art major students who were studying drama general course; (2) pretested-controlled group (PC): Tamkang University non-art major students who were studying management science; (3) unpretested-experimented group (UE): Shu-Te University non-art major students who were studying drama general course; (4) unpretested-controlled group (UC): Shu-Te University non-art major students who were

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studying Chinese literature course. The experimental treatment of this study was drama general course. The teacher, syllabus, course content, and assignments and grading of drama general course of Tamkang University and of Shu-Te University were the same. Pretests for PE and PC were conducted during late February 2011, and posttests for PE, PC, UE, and UC were conducted during mid June 2011.

Because there were no complete and well-verified drama knowledge scales available in existing literature, we invited three theatre arts experts to assist us in developing drama knowledge inventory. The dimensions of drama knowledge inventory were inclusive of world theatre arts, Taiwan theatre arts, purchase knowledge, and consumption knowledge. We had subsumed 50 true-false items into drama knowledge inventory. We applied Personal Involvement Inventory (Zaichkowsky, 1994) on a seven-point semantic differential scale to measure the involvement of subjects for theatre arts. We used RFM (recency, frequency, monetary amount; RFM) to measure the viewing behavior of subjects. We designed the question "Please write down the last date you went to a theatre performance" to collect data for recency. For frequency, the question was: "How many times had you went to theatre performances during last six months?" For monetary amount, the question was: "How much money had you spend on theatre performances during last six months?" All three questions were been designed in open-ended form.

Due to the limitations of course lecture and factors such like instruction quality, teaching schedule, and the fairness for students' right to an education, this research didn't use random assignment for subjects. We applied ANCOVA, set pretest as covariate variable, to examine whether the contaminating effect of pretest existed for post hoc statistical control. Results of ANCOVA showed that the main effects of drama general course on drama knowledge, involvement, and viewing behavior were above significant level after controlling pretest. Hence, the contaminating effect of pretest didn't exist in this research, we could conduct 2×2 ANOVA for further examinations about the main effects on research variables.

Results of 2×2 ANOVA showed that of drama knowledge, involvement, and viewing behavior, the posttest mean of experiment groups (i.e., PE and UE) are significantly higher than control groups (i.e., PC and UC). There were no significant differences in pretest and the interaction effect of all research variables except monetary amount, which indicated that the pretest mean, the posttest mean, and the interaction effect were all above significant level. After

examining the interaction effect and multiple comparisons of monetary amount, we found that: (1) the posttest mean of pretested groups (i.e., PE and PC) was significantly higher than unpretested groups (i.e., UE and UC); (2) the posttest mean of PE was significantly higher than UE, PC, and UC; (3) the posttest mean of UE was significantly higher than PC, and UC; (4) there was no significant difference between PC and UC. Hence, we could infer that the difference between PE and UE might be the probable reason for why the pretest and the interaction effect of monetary amount were above significant level.

This research found that drama knowledge, involvement, and viewing behavior of non-art major college students had been improved significantly after studying drama general course, and had been presented significantly higher statuses compared to students who didn't study drama general course. We could conclude that drama general course could be an effective approach to enhance non-art major students' consumption behavior toward drama. The practical implications of this research could be employed to content designs and result evaluations of drama general course for educational institution, and could also be planning alternatives for inter-institutional integration while promoting theatre arts for government institutions that superintend arts (e.g., Ministry of Culture).

Although limitations of implementation and practical factors made it difficult to use random assignment for experiment groups, further research might randomly select non-art major classes for control groups to enhance internal validity. The experimental condition of this research was unique one teacher instructed the same course content for different students in two schools. Further research might employ the more general experimental condition to improve external validity and explicability. This research examined effects of drama general course on drama knowledge, involvement, and viewing behavior after experiment groups had studied such course. Further research might conduct a trace research after posttest (e.g., six months after posttest) to ensure whether drama general course may result in longer effects and changes on research variables.

Keywords: consumer behavior, involvement, drama general course, drama knowledge, viewing behavior

