

Importance of Art in Modern Education

Dr. Ashish Kumar Shringi

Assistant Professor, Dept. of Drawing and Painting, Govt. College, Bundi, Rajasthan, India

ABSTRACT: Art education means different things to different people, but the crux of it, is that it imparts knowledge and education in various fields of the arts like music, theatre, dance and visual arts. Society functions in such a way now, that a majority of the manual and technical jobs that were done by people before, can be done by machines. The main demand lies in innovation and creativity, thinking outside the box and having good interpersonal skills. Just like mathematics or science, art requires regular practice and is not something that can be achieved through sporadic learning. Regular engagement and education in the arts has to be imbibed in the school curriculum for it to have an effect on the students. Some of the most obvious benefits of art education is that it encourages creativity and engagement in a different way from what is usually taught in the school. Instead of being fed facts they can explore their interests and indulge in what excites them the most. Apart from this, art has a wide range of uses and influences on its students. It improves motor skills, simple things like mastering a paint brush or using crayons and pencils help develop finer motor skills, especially in younger children. Studying the arts also helps improve academic performance, not just through creativity, but it improves learning in areas like math and science as well as the literary field. Art education also fosters collaboration and group learning. Often times, it brings people and children together, helping them learn from, and aid each other as they persevere towards creating something. It improves emotional balance and helps kids become team players. It also improves accountability, as kids claim responsibility for their mistakes and accept their faults when working together. When creating something, the decision of what colors and what medium to use is left entirely to our own choices and preferences. Art education helps improve decision making, boosts the self confidence and makes children more self-assured, as they learn about what appeals to them, and they directly influence how their final product will look. They can become self-learners, constantly challenging themselves, and become more focused on achieving their goals. Today's world is steeped in the Information Age. With all kinds of knowledge so readily available at our fingertips, it doesn't matter what you know, but rather how you use what you know. Every academic and professional institution is looking for what you bring to the table in terms of ideas, innovation and team-playing. An education in the arts is integral in developing these fundamental, yet abstract components of human knowledge and skill. Learning about art in all its forms makes students challenge the world they see around them, looking for multiple ways to solve problems and create something new. The true talent of man now lies in his ability to draw from many wells", and art is the medium through which we can access those wells.

KEYWORDS: education, art, importance, students, emotional, creative, innovation, talent, medium

I. INTRODUCTION

In October 2014, the British street artist known as Banksy opened an online store called Gross Domestic Product and issued a challenge: to make a purchase from the shop's selection of items like a Banksy-branded aerosol paint can, a brick handbag, and a vest worn in concert by the rapper Stormzy.¹ Customers who wished to be considered for the opportunity to make a single purchase first had to answer the question: "Why does art matter?" That deceptively simple, four-word query confronts a topic that's occupied some of the world's greatest creators and philosophers since Plato. How we answer this question can have much bigger consequences than whether you get to buy a piece of artwork from Banksy's online store. The issue of art's value becomes far more pressing when policymakers and administrators decide how to allocate time and funding for art education in schools.² Art teachers must be ready to advocate for committing the necessary resources to prioritize the value of creativity in the classroom. You may have to explain the importance of art education in a school's curriculum and present the research to back up those claims. We can become powerful advocates for the power of art and improved student outcomes by investigating the many benefits that come out of integrating more creativity into the school day and improving our classroom strategies.³ Anyone who's passionate about the arts recalls formative moments of experiencing a work of art pushing through a creative challenge. When we're exposed to remarkable artworks or have opportunities to create, we find that art is crucial to individual

International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering, Technology & Management (IJMRSETM)

(A Monthly, Peer Reviewed Online Journal)

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Volume 3, Issue 11, November 2016

growth and development and can even impact our health. A literature review from *Frontiers in Psychology* outlined several studies linking aesthetic experiences with broad improvements in subjects' emotional states that promote physical and psychological well-being. Giving learners the time, space, and materials for creative expression can lower stress, improve memory, and make them feel more socially connected.⁴ Instructors can build their careers on bringing those experiences to students in a variety of settings, like galleries, museums, or events organized by nonprofit and community organizations. Appreciation for art also makes a significant difference in people's lives on a macro level. Entire societies may stand to gain from an investment in the arts. Drawing on data from the General Social Survey, researchers from the University of Illinois at Chicago's Department of Public Administration linked participation as either an audience member or creator to higher levels of civic engagement and social tolerance. This work suggests that learning how to draw, paint, sing, or just appreciate the works made by others can help us become not just happier and healthier, but also better people. When surveyed by the nonprofit organization Americans for the Arts, members of the U.S. public overwhelmingly agreed that the arts are one aspect of a well-rounded K-12 education. Yet, participation in the visual and performing arts is often treated as merely supplemental to other aspects of learning. As a result, there are major differences in access to art and music classes across the country.⁵

The findings from the National Assessment of Educational Progress showed that eighth graders in the Northeast were much more likely to report being enrolled in a visual arts course than those in the South. Disparities were also tied to race, ethnicity, family income, and whether a school is located in a city, suburb, town, or rural area. Meanwhile, the Nation's Report Card shows that U.S. students continue to score lower than many of their peers in Europe and Asia on standardized tests despite years of pressure on educators to close the achievement gap. But seeking to improve student performance in math and reading does not have to come at the expense of art education.⁶ In fact, researchers from the Johns Hopkins University School of Education, argue that instruction becomes more effective when educators integrate creative activities and make them central to academic development. Across disciplines, including STEM, there's room to reimagine classes with a strong emphasis on drawing, painting, playing music, performing drama, and other creative pursuits. Encouraging students to use their imagination can help them actively engage with new concepts and discover connections between ideas as well as provide advantages for their social and emotional well-being. One example of effectively integrating creative expression with other fields as a pedagogical strategy can be seen in the collaboration between University of Florida faculty members Susan K. Jacobson, who studies wildlife ecology and conservation,⁷ and Robert C. Mueller, who teaches printmaking. The UF professors collaborated on an interdisciplinary project in climate change communication in which groups of graduate students from both the School of Natural Resources and the Environment and the College of the Arts visited the university's Seahorse Key Marine Laboratory. The students participated in learning activities like scientific lectures, discussions, and making collages before working in small groups to create environmental communication materials for visitors.⁸ As this example shows, students benefit from learning to embrace insights from multiple disciplines, and this can be valuable when they go on to pursue jobs. A 2014 survey from the National Association of Colleges and Employers showed that employers are interested in hiring professionals with skills that can be strengthened through participation in the arts, such as written communication, problem-solving, teamwork, and taking initiative. Art teachers can help students become more well-rounded and capable individuals by teaching them to develop original ideas through creative projects and practices. It's never too soon to introduce kids to the possibilities of creative expression.⁹ As outlined in a literature review from the National Endowment for the Arts, a variety of studies demonstrate the value of embedding artistic practice into early childhood education. Imaginative activities for young learners can lead to better skills in social interactions and emotional regulation. Lessons in the arts introduce K-12 students to problem-solving techniques, which help them to see the world in new ways, and provide access to creative ways of knowing. Kids discover how art can communicate their own ideas and may become interested in creating increasingly realistic depictions and mastering new techniques. By high school, young artists can think critically about their own work and that of others, establishing a unique point of view and a sense of community with other creative individuals. The National Core Arts Standards provide a framework for advancing students' artistic understanding.¹⁰ This structure breaks down the developmental stages from Pre K through high school into 10 anchor standards. In each stage, students build creative habits as they learn to:

- Generate and conceptualize artistic ideas and work
- Organize and develop ideas and work
- Refine and complete artistic work
- Select, analyze, and interpret artistic work for presentation

International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering, Technology & Management (IJMRSETM)

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Volume 3, Issue 11, November 2016

- Convey meaning through the presentation
- Perceive and analyze artistic work
- Interpret intent and meaning
- Apply criteria to evaluate work
- Make art by synthesizing and relating knowledge and personal experiences
- Deepen understanding by relating artistic ideas to societal, historical, and cultural contexts¹¹

Pediatrician Dr. Perri Klass outlined the benefits of art education in schools in the New York Times, noting improvements for overall motivation, thinking, and academic achievement. An arts-integrated curriculum that asks students to draw or sing as part of the learning process may enhance their ability to recall material such as scientific principles or vocabulary. Foregrounding creativity can be especially effective for students who struggle to retain information from traditional lectures and reading assignments alone. Art does matter in the classroom, delivering a wide range of advantages for students.¹² Educators can make the most of that potential by equipping themselves to offer creative practice as a central feature in the curriculum and show decisionmakers how these initiatives can achieve transformative results. The University of Florida's online Master of Arts in Art Education (MAAE) program helps teachers make a difference. This program features courses that prepare educators to work in a variety of learning environments, support students of all ages, incorporate digital tools into their pedagogy, and foster critical thinking.¹³

II.DISCUSSION

Education in the arts is an integral part of the development of each human being. Those who have studied learning processes throughout the ages, beginning with Plato, have emphasized the importance of the arts in the education process. Arts education refers to education in the disciplines of music, dance, theatre, and visual arts. Study in the arts is integral to our society. They are a part of the cultural heritage of every American. The arts are what make us most human, most complete as people.¹⁴ The arts cannot be learned through occasional or random exposure any more than math or science can. Education and engagement in the fine arts are an essential part of the school curriculum and an important component in the educational program of every student. Sufficient data exists to overwhelmingly support the belief that study and participation in the fine arts is a key component in improving learning throughout all academic areas. Evidence of its effectiveness in reducing student dropouts, raising student attendance, developing better team players, fostering a love¹⁵ for learning, improving greater student dignity, enhancing student creativity, and producing a more prepared citizen for the workplace for tomorrow can be found documented in studies held in many varied settings, from school campuses, to corporate America¹⁶. Evidence from brain research is only one of many reasons education and engagement in the fine arts is beneficial to the educational process. The arts develop neural systems that produce a broad spectrum of benefits ranging from fine motor skills to creativity and improved emotional balance. One must realize that these systems often take months and even years to fine-tune. In a study conducted by Judith Burton, Columbia University, research evidenced that subjects such as mathematics, science, and language require complex cognitive and creative capacities "typical of arts learning"¹⁷. "The arts enhance the process of learning. The systems they nourish, which include our integrated sensory, attentional, cognitive, emotional, and motor capacities, are, in fact, the driving forces behind all other learning"¹⁸.

The fine arts also provide learners with non-academic benefits such as promoting self-esteem, motivation, aesthetic awareness, cultural exposure, creativity, improved emotional expression, as well as social harmony and appreciation of diversity. These are the very fibers of the fabric known as our American culture. The following are findings reported in Champions of Change: The Impact of the Arts on Learning¹⁹ that should be noted by every parent, teacher, and administrator:

- The arts reach students not normally reached, in ways and methods not normally used. (This leads to better student attendance and lower dropout rates.)
- It changes the learning environment to one of discovery. (This often re-ignites the love of learning in students tired of just being fed facts.)
- Students connect with each other better. (This often results in fewer fights, greater understanding of diversity, and greater peer support.)

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- The arts provide challenges for students of all levels. (Each student can find his/her own level from basic to gifted.)
- Students learn to become sustained, self-directed learners. (The student does not just become an outlet for stored facts from direct instruction, but seeks to extend instruction to higher levels of proficiency.)²⁰
- The study of the fine arts positively impacts the learning of students of lower socioeconomic status as much or more than those of a higher socioeconomic status. (Twenty-one percent of students of low socioeconomic status who had studied music scored higher in math versus just eleven percent of those who had not. By the senior year, these figures grew to 33 percent and 16 percent, respectively, suggesting a cumulative value to music education.)²¹

Is the study of fine arts important? They engage many areas of the brain and also have far-reaching effects on the learner's mind. The arts promote the understanding and sharing of culture. They promote social skills that enhance the awareness and respect of others. The fine arts enhance perceptual and cognitive skills. The Burton study of more than 2000 children found that those in the arts curriculum were far superior in creative thinking, self-concept, problem-solving, self-expression, risk-taking, and cooperation than those who were not. The arts have the capacity to engage everyone.²² All levels of American society can and do participate in the fine arts. There are no barriers to race, religion, culture, geography, or socioeconomic levels. Today's world is witness to the Information Age. The primary sources of information content are no longer teaching lectures or textbooks. Learning is not limited to what you know, but is dependent upon how to find information and how to use that information quickly, creatively, and cooperatively.²³ "We are in the twilight of a society based on data. As information and intelligence become the domain of computers, society will place a new value on the one human ability that can't be automated: emotion. Today's students are inundated with data but are starving for meaningful learning. Workplace demands are for students to understand how to solve problems, what makes arguments plausible, how to build teams and coalitions, and how to incorporate the concept of fairness into everyday decisions. Students need to be thinkers, possess people skills, be problem-solvers, demonstrate creativity, and work as a member of a team. We need to offer more in-depth learning about the things that matter the most: order, integrity, thinking skills, a sense of wonder, truth, flexibility, fairness, dignity, contribution, justice, creativity and cooperation."²⁴ The arts provide all of these. Perhaps the most fundamental element to education one should consider is the manner in which we perceive and make sense of the world in which we live. An effective education in the fine arts helps students to see what they look at, hear what they listen to, and feel what they touch. Engagement in the fine arts helps students to stretch their minds beyond the boundaries of the printed text or the rules of what is provable. The arts free the mind from rigid certainty.²⁴ Imagine the benefits of seeking, finding, and developing multiple solutions to the myriad of problems facing our society today! These processes, taught through the study of the arts, help to develop the tolerance for coping with the ambiguities and uncertainties present in the everyday affairs of human existence. There is a universal need for words, music, dance, and visual art to give expression to the innate urgings of the human spirit. The premier organizations in the corporate world today recognize that the human intellect "draws from many wells." Arts education gives access to the deepest of those wells.²⁵

III.RESULTS

Painting as a fine art means applying paint to a flat surface (as opposed for example to painting a sculpture, or a piece of pottery), typically using several colours. Prehistoric painting that has survived was applied to natural rock surfaces, and wall painting, especially on wet plaster in the fresco technique was a major form until recently. Portable paintings on wood panel or canvas have been the most important in the Western world for several centuries, mostly in tempera or oil painting. Asian painting has more often used paper, with the monochrome ink and wash painting tradition dominant in East Asia. Paintings that are intended to go in a book or album are called "miniatures", whether for a Western illuminated manuscript or in Persian miniature and its Turkish equivalent, or Indian paintings of various types. Watercolour is the western version of painting in paper; forms using gouache, chalk, and similar mediums without brushes are really forms of drawing.²⁶

Drawing is one of the major forms of the visual arts, and painters need drawing skills as well. Common instruments include: graphite pencils, pen and ink, inked brushes, wax color pencils, crayons, charcoals, chalk, pastels, markers, stylus, or various metals like silverpoint. There are a number of subcategories of drawing, including cartooning and creating comics. Mosaics are images formed with small pieces of stone or glass, called tesserae. They can be decorative or functional. An artist who designs and makes mosaics is called a mosaic artist or a mosaicist. Ancient Greeks and Romans created realistic mosaics. Mythological subjects, or scenes

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of hunting or other pursuits of the wealthy, were popular as the centrepieces of a larger geometric design, with strongly emphasized borders.^[12] Early Christian basilicas from the 4th century onwards were decorated with wall and ceiling mosaics.²⁷ The most famous Byzantine basilicas decorated with mosaics are the Basilica of San Vitale from Ravenna (Italy) and Hagia Sophia from Istanbul (Turkey). Printmaking covers the making of images on paper that can be reproduced multiple times by a printing process. It has been an important artistic medium for several centuries, in the West and East Asia. Major historic techniques include engraving, woodcut and etching in the West, and woodblock printing in East Asia,²⁷ where the Japanese ukiyo-e style is the most important. The 19th-century invention of lithography and then photographic techniques have partly replaced the historic techniques. Older prints can be divided into the fine art Old Master print and popular prints, with book illustrations and other practical images such as maps somewhere in the middle.²⁸

Except in the case of monotyping, the process is capable of producing multiples of the same piece, which is called a print. Each print is considered an original, as opposed to a copy. The reasoning behind this is that the print is not a reproduction of another work of art in a different medium – for instance, a painting – but rather an image designed from inception as a print. An individual print is also referred to as an impression. Prints are created from a single original surface, known technically as a matrix²⁹. Common types of matrices include: plates of metal, usually copper or zinc for engraving or etching; stone, used for lithography; blocks of wood for woodcuts, linoleum for linocuts and fabric in the case of screen-printing. But there are many other kinds. Multiple nearly identical prints can be called an edition. In modern times each print is often signed and numbered forming a "limited edition." Prints may also be published in book form, as artist's books. A single print could be the product of one or multiple techniques. Calligraphy is a type of visual art³⁰. A contemporary definition of calligraphic practice is "the art of giving form to signs in an expressive, harmonious and skillful manner".^[13] Modern calligraphy ranges from functional hand-lettered inscriptions and designs to fine-art pieces where the abstract expression of the handwritten mark may or may not compromise the legibility of the letters.^[13] Classical calligraphy differs from typography and non-classical hand-lettering, though a calligrapher may create all of these; characters are historically disciplined yet fluid and spontaneous, improvised at the moment of writing.^{[14][15][16]} Fine art photography refers to photographs that are created to fulfill the creative vision of the artist. Fine art photography stands in contrast to photojournalism and commercial photography. Photojournalism visually communicates stories and ideas, mainly in print and digital media. Fine art photography is created primarily as an expression of the artist's vision, but has also been important in advancing certain causes.³¹ Depiction of nudity has been one of the dominating themes in fine-art photography. Sculpture is three-dimensional artwork created by shaping hard or plastic material, commonly stone (either rock or marble), metal, or wood. Some sculptures are created directly by carving; others are assembled, built up and fired, welded, molded, or cast. Because sculpture involves the use of materials that can be moulded or modulated, it is considered one of the plastic arts. The majority of public art is sculpture. Many sculptures together in a garden setting may be referred to as a sculpture garden.³²

Sculpture in stone survives far better than works of art in perishable materials, and often represents the majority of the surviving works (other than pottery) from ancient cultures; conversely, traditions of sculpture in wood may have vanished almost entirely. However, most ancient sculpture was brightly painted, and this has been lost.^[18] Conceptual art is art in which the concept(s) or idea(s) involved in the work take precedence over traditional aesthetic and material concerns. The inception of the term in the 1960s referred to a strict and focused practice of idea-based art that often defied traditional visual criteria associated with the visual arts in its presentation as text. However, through its association with the Young British Artists and the Turner Prize during the 1990s, its popular usage, particularly in the UK, developed as a synonym for all contemporary art that does not practice the traditional skills of painting and sculpture.^[19] Performance art is an artwork or art exhibition created through actions executed by the artist or other participants. It may be witnessed live or through documentation, spontaneously developed or written, and is traditionally presented to a public in a fine art context in an interdisciplinary mode.^[1] Also known as artistic action, it has been developed through the years as a genre of its own in which art is presented live. It had an important and fundamental role in 20th century avant-garde art.^{[2][3]}

It involves four basic elements: time, space, body, and presence of the artist, and the relation between the creator and the public. The actions, generally developed in art galleries and museums, can take place in the street, any kind of setting³³ or space and during any time period.^[4] Its goal is to generate a reaction, sometimes with the support of improvisation and a sense of aesthetics. The themes are commonly linked to life experiences of the artist themselves, or the need of denunciation or social criticism and with a spirit of transformation.^[5]

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IV.CONCLUSIONS

In European academic traditions, fine art is made primarily for aesthetics or creative expression, distinguishing it from decorative art or applied art³⁴, which also has to serve some practical function, such as pottery or most metalwork. In the aesthetic theories developed in the Italian Renaissance, the highest art was that which allowed the full expression and display of the artist's imagination, unrestricted by any of the practical considerations involved in, say, making and decorating a teapot. It was also considered important that making the artwork did not involve dividing the work between different individuals with specialized skills, as might be necessary with a piece of furniture, for example.^[1] Even within the fine arts, there was a hierarchy of genres based on the amount of creative imagination required, with history painting placed higher than still life.³⁵

Historically, the five main fine arts were painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and poetry, with performing arts including theatre and dance.^[2] In practice, outside education, the concept is typically only applied to the visual arts. The old master print and drawing were included as related forms to painting, just as prose forms of literature were to poetry. Today, the range of what would be considered fine arts (in so far as the term remains in use) commonly includes additional modern forms, such as film, photography, and video production/editing.³⁶

One definition of fine art is "a visual art considered to have been created primarily for aesthetic and intellectual purposes and judged for its beauty and meaningfulness, specifically, painting, sculpture, drawing, watercolor, graphics, and architecture."^[3] In that sense, there are conceptual differences between the fine arts and the decorative arts or applied arts (these two terms covering largely the same media).³⁷ As far as the consumer of the art was concerned, the perception of aesthetic qualities required a refined judgment usually referred to as having good taste, which differentiated fine art from popular art and entertainment.^[4]

The word "fine" does not so much denote the quality of the artwork in question, but the purity of the discipline according to traditional Western European canons.^[6] Except in the case of architecture, where a practical utility was accepted, this definition originally excluded the "useful" applied or decorative arts³⁸, and the products of what were regarded as crafts. In contemporary practice, these distinctions and restrictions have become essentially meaningless, as the concept or intention of the artist is given primacy,³⁹ regardless of the means through which this is expressed.^[7] The term is typically only used for Western art from the Renaissance onwards, although similar genre distinctions can apply to the art of other cultures, especially those of East Asia. The set of "fine arts" are sometimes also called the "major arts", with "minor arts" equating to the decorative arts. This would typically be for medieval and ancient art.⁴⁰

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International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research in Science, Engineering, Technology & Management (IJMRSETM)

(A Monthly, Peer Reviewed Online Journal)

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Volume 3, Issue 11, November 2016

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