

Fine Art Education in Modern India: An Overview

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Abstract : *This article discussed the diegesis of fine art education in India from the first art school to the present scenario. It explains the significance of art in human life as well as employment. The article explains the overview of Fine Art Education in Modern India. It also discussed the present scenario of art education at the school and university level, and its impact on the culture of the country and gave some opinions on art education from a therapeutic point of view for a better society. With the advent of rapidly emerging technology and globalization, fine arts education need much encouragement in India, however, it is now occupying a vital role in the National Education Policy (NEP-2020). The NEP-2020 emphasizes the integration of art and design with other subjects, fostering a holistic approach to societal needs. This article is written based on qualitative methods, a survey based on a questionnaire from various experts and faculty members in schools and university departments across India.*

Keywords: *Fine Arts, Education, Design, Industry, Universities, Therapeutic, Policies.*

1. INTRODUCTION :

Unquestionably, education is the only way to exalt human life and the country's future. It enables man from ignorance to enlightenment and a nation from backwardness to progress or underdevelopment to development. As a result, education plays a pivotal role in bringing radical changes in all spheres of the society.

Fine-art education has a hoary past. Visual portrayals, which are part of Fine-art education, have served as one of the ancient forms of education since times immemorial. Concerning this, rock art, primitive man's creativity, is one of the earliest expressions. In the course of human interactions with nature, he depicted his articulations purposefully on the rock shelters, and on the surface of boulders that reflect the primitive man's communicative skills besides his cultural values in the form pictographs, petroglyphs. Though we, modern people, define education as the ability to read and write, primitive man's rock art is the first evidence of human writing ability and artistic talent. Thus, we may comprehend that art is a kind of language that ignites enthusiasm and curiosity among folk of all ages and genders. Creative arts not only instill innovative ideas and make us think beyond the box but also create a mental state of equilibrium. It functions as a stress reliever.

It is at this moment if we see the status of fine-art education at the school and university levels in post-independent India, we can say that, while it has an impact on the culture of the country and is useful as a therapeutic tool, it hasn't received the expected encouragement in the global village.

Of course, certain importance has been given to fine-art education in the NEP-2020. It is undoubtedly very propitious to discuss, but on the other hand, there is a dire need for the propagation of the values and uses of fine-art education even in this globalized phenomenon. Taking this into account, the researcher attempted to emphasize the significance of the same for modern society. Hence, this article provides extensive information about the historicity of fine-art education in modern India as well as an overview of its significance and role in human mental growth in particular.

The Methodology that was adopted for this paper is both survey methods and data collection wherever necessary. A questionnaire was prepared with 20 questions related to issues and conditions about art education in common both at the school and University level. I have randomly chosen some schools and universities and collected data by interviewing the faculty of the same. An emphasis was brought on Andhra Pradesh as a case study.

2. Fine Art Education and its Significance:

Sir Charles Mallet was responsible for establishing the first western oriented art school in Pune. Later the first art education school was opened by Fredrick Corbyn in the year 1839 which was known as "*Calcutta Mechanics Institution*", later it was renamed "*Calcutta School of Art*" in 1854(Mitter, P.1994). In 1885 the school went into the hands of Jobbins. Jobbins invigorated the students of art with several incentives in the form of accolades to reach the objective of the fine arts curriculum. Jobbins emphasized the importance of drawing as a mandatory subject for all students from school to university level education. Jobbins believed that drawing was the basis for acquiring all technical knowledge and for general education too. After Jobbins, E.B. Havell and Abhanindranath Tagore took up the task of making all the instructions at school based on Indian art. The first art school was founded in the year 1850 by Dr. Alexander Hunter in Madras(Tarapor, M.1981). He worked intending to improve indigenous taste through fine arts. The crew of Hunter succeeded to revive indigenous crafts in India. Thus Indian art wear and design received notable praise from England and was noticed by Jijibhai Jamshedji, a Parsi industrialist from Bombay to donate funds to start an Art school in Bombay as JJ School of Art and Industry in 1856. Later it turned into a specialized course in Painting, Sculpture and the term "*industry*" was removed from the title of the school in 1873(Burns, C. 1910). In 1852 Charles Trevelyan proposed the setting up of four art and design schools across India in Madras (1850) Calcutta (1854) Bombay 1856, and Lahore (1875) which is now in present-day Pakistan as these territories were headquarters of British trade(Kantawala,2012).

Since Independence, various education committees have emphasized that Art education is an area of immense importance for the overall development of the child. The report of the Education Commission in 1952-53 emphasized " the release of creative energy among the students so that they may be able to appreciate the cultural heritage and cultivate rich interests which they can pursue in their later life." This has been described as one of the main functions of secondary education which recommends subjects such as art, craft, music, dance etc. should be provided a place of honor in the curriculum(NCERT, 2010). Through hands-on experience, the adolescent learns the dignity of labor and joy in doing constructive work. Even the Kothari Commission report in 1964-66 suggested " adequate facilities for teachers in the music and visual arts do not exist. The neglect of arts in education impoverishes the education process and leads to a decline of aesthetics, tastes, and values." This committee has proposed to the Indian government to set up Bal Bhavans throughout the country.

While discussing art education in India, it can be classified into two levels such as school education and university level which are intertwined. NCERT constituted a committee under the lead of Sri K.G.Saiyidain to examine the whole question of improvement of Art education in schools. In 1967, the committee made emphasis on the aims and objectives of fine art education from Pre –Primary stage. The National Policy of Education (1986) and National Curriculum Frameworks (1975), (1988), (2000) (2005) emphasized that Art education should espouse an integrative application at all stages up to class X. Even Prof. Yash Pal Committee (1992) submitted a report on the emphasis of "learning without burden". It is not only to India but also universal which was uplifted by UNESCO in the year 2000 with an appeal by the Director-General for the promotion of art education and creativity at the school level as part of the development of culture and peace(NCERT,2010,p11). Hamsa Mehta Commission (1962), Kothari Commission (1966), Country Report on Art Education in India (2010), and Training Packages for Art Education (2015) by NCERT emphasized the need and scope of art education at the school level through their recommendations. Those recommendations need to be more focused for better implementation by the governments.

It is observed directly or indirectly that certain schemes of a government are the only hidden causes that are affecting recommendations of education policies in slowing down the implementation. As part of the reforms of financial management, governments have to minimize the burden of expenditure in several ways. Recruitment of human resources is one of those. The education sector is first affected and chosen by the bureaucrats in default as it has much scope for larger-scale employment than any other sector in government. To reduce the number of teachers' posts, the tool of rationalization of posts was brought forth, converting many art teacher posts into SGT (Secondary Grade Teacher Posts) and merging schools for various reasons. As a result, from the year 1989 onwards, art and craft education teacher posts were rapidly subsidized and banned in recruitment tests in later times. In the case of Andhra Pradesh, wherever art and craft teacher posts got vacated through retirements, the posts are suppressed into other subject teaching posts (See table 1) as per (G.O MS No 154) dated 16.09.2022.

S.No	District	Craft	Art/Drawing	Music	Total Suppressed Posts
1	Srikakulam	4	0	0	4
2	Vizianagram	63	44	5	112
3	Visakhapatnam	0	0	0	0
4	East Godavari	80	102	8	190
5	West Godavari	126	78	5	209
6	Krishna	0	0	0	0
7	Guntur	102	67	4	173
8	Prakasam	0	66	6	72
9	SPSR Nellore	35	80	2	117
10	Chittoor	20	105	9	134
11	YSR Kadapa	0	0	0	0
12	Anathapuramu	0	0	0	0
13	Kurnool	56	64	14	134
		486	606	53	1145

Table 1. Suppression of (1145) vacant Art/Drawing/Craft teacher posts in 13 erst while district in Andhra Pradesh

In the state of Telangana, the government is taking care of art education, recruiting art teachers at the school level, conducting recruitment drives regularly, and establishing a specialized art school from class 5th onwards and having three fine Arts Universities and one school of fine arts and performing arts as part of Central University. In Pondicherry, art education teachers post are regularly filling BFA as an essential qualification. This results in the awareness of art amongst youth and local fine arts colleges having 90% seat occupancy and demand. Kerala has nearly 6 fine arts colleges running. Out of six colleges, three are under the Directorate of technical education, Kerala.

Some corporate schools are doing well in promoting fine arts. It is also noticed that the majority of private education institutions are just employing an art education teacher to fulfill the eligibility criteria for the school recognition process but not giving any priority to the development of creative potential among the students. This is much affecting the next step of art education at the university level or higher education levels. As a result, no artistic atmosphere has not been created before stepping out of high school education. On the other hand, art and craft teachers today are in a good position in the accessibility of resources, and use of material compared to the last four decades but the same is not taking place in government schools.

i) Art Education at the University level :

Kothari Commission report in the year 1964-66 recommended that both Visual arts and performing art departments in universities with proper infrastructure and dedicated teachers, be nourished and research to be encouraged. During the '70s to the 20th century, fine arts departments at the University level flourished and students were very crazy eager to choose art as their career in Art. Most of the faculty members have expressed that fine arts departments are losing charm as senior teachers are disappearing from the screen of art education through retirements. The same situation is prevailing in art education at the university level which is subject to the no recruitment in fine arts colleges and facilities even in the existing departments. Art departments need to be considered as specialized departments on campus with ample grants and encouragement. Indeed these departments are a feather in the crown of the university. It is found in data collected from various states.

In Andhra Pradesh, there are three fine arts departments and one architecture and fine Arts Universities are in survival. The fine arts departments at the university level exist at Andhra University at Visakhapatnam Department of Fine Arts, Yogi Vemana University in Kadapa the Department of Fine Arts, Acharya Nagarjuna University at Guntur, Dr.YSR Architecture and Fine Arts University, Kadapa. In Telangana, Jawaharlal Nehru Architecture and Fine Art University, Potti Sriramulu Telugu University and Sarojini Naidu School of Fine Arts in University of Hyderabad were established. The following table describes the status in both Andhra Pradesh and Telangana. The data has been collected from respective university websites and interviews with officials.

S.No	Name of the University/College with courses existed	year of Establishment	Sanctioned posts	Total faculty working	Regular faculty	contract faculty
1	DFA, Andhra University, Visakhapatnam A.P (BFA & MFA)	1976	09	11	02	9
2	DFA, Yogi Vemana University, Kadapa (BFA, & Ph.D)	2010	07	5	01	4
3	DFA, Acharya Nagarjuna University, Guntur (BFA)	2021	0	3	00	3
4	College of Fine Arts, Dr.YSR Architecture & Fine Arts University (BFA)	2021	44	31	00	31
5	Telugu University, Hyderabad, Telangana 9(BFA&MFA)	1986	07	14	02	12
6	College of Fine Arts, JNAFAU, Telangana (BFA, MFA & Ph.D)	1972	30	31	09	22
7	DFA, S. N. School of Fine Arts, HCU	1988	07	0	07	0
Total			104	95	21	81

Table 2: Statistics on vacancies of faculty positions in fine arts colleges in Andhra Pradesh & Telangana states

From the above table, it can be noticed only 20% faculties are working in regular posts and the remaining 80% are working as Contract/ guest faculty. At present, most of the Fine art departments are lacking regular teaching staff; universities are also unable to take up regular recruitments due to several reasons. Due to the financial constraints of the state universities now recruiting teaching staff temporary basis as guest faculty / academic consultants with less pay it is difficult to meet their basic needs. Due to these reasons, university departments and fine arts colleges are unable to employ qualitative teachers, and most of the professionals are not willing to work for less salaries in fine arts colleges. According to the survey report, Fine arts colleges in India are desperately in need of abundant grants from public sector, the private sectors and quality teachers. With the advent of technology such as computer knowledge and multimedia, lacking adaptation into syllabi through updating curriculum, the standards of fine arts schools are falling on the other side. It must be known that adopting technology is apt and contextual to some extent but depending merely on technology it is hazardous to the existence of the art and cultural heritage of a nation. Meanwhile, the present generation is also not showing much importance, giving little importance and priority to aesthetic sensibilities and craving for lucrative careers in software fields. According to analysis from my survey samples collected, it is noticed that occupancy of seats is not crossing over 60% in a majority of fine arts colleges for the last ten years. majority of students are choosing fine arts courses as "earn while learning" due to their poor socio-economic background and to support themselves during the course period.

Though governments emphasize the importance of art and Art education in their art education but not seen in implementation while allocating grants and coordination from time to time. The cultural departments just merely existed with low-profile activities due to budgetary constraints, bureaucratic objections and misappropriations, and unsupported private sectors under Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR). The promotion of fine arts is a very fortunate sign for the welfare of human development and a better society with morals and values. Even the government of India has constituted a high-power committee to find out better ways to improve the art scenario and to make cultural policy, now yielding fruits.

Art educator Ritu Khoda expressed that art education in India is obsolete for teaching in the present scenario. The insight for fine art education must realize its community and its foundations from genesis. In the existing art education, teachers must be updated. The future of art education solely depends on the mentors and their methodologies of the present. Moreover, there is a staunch need for empowering fine art education teachers, meaningful training programs, and exposure to art and cultural resources. There is a perforation between Art education policies, curriculum guidelines, and implementation of strategies.

3. The Role of Cultural Policies:

The governments are continuously trying their level best to give a good set up of cultural administration. In this regard several committees were appointed such as the Bhabha Committee (1964), Khosla Committee (1972), Haskar Committee (1970), and High Powered Committee (HPC) in 2014 (MOC,2014) constituted with the persons of eminence in art and administration. Those committees gave their best recommendations to strengthen the cultural policy of India. High Powered Committee (HPC) in 2014 (MOC 2014) noticed a lack of clarity of vision, Coordination, and strategic implementations at the ground level though the Ministry of Culture supported it very strongly. when compared to other countries like the United States of America, Great Britain, Italy, Singapore, France, Russia, etc Indian cultural policies need to be implemented and refined. The Ministry of Culture, Govt of India need to focus on fine arts colleges with MOUs, assisting the fine art graduate students who are pursuing their first degree with necessary financial support. According to Survey, nowadays most of the fine arts students hail from lower-middle, middle-class families only. Dr. K. Lal from Kerala expressed his view that "Providing incentives and scholarships while pursuing and organizing art activities in the fine arts colleges as venues would elevate the colleges and bring awareness about art in India".

4. Impact of fine arts on the present society:

According to Sigmund Freud, art is a kind of therapy. From the therapeutic point of view, many mental disorders can be rooted in people from children to old aged for good mental health. The suppressed emotions or mental stress stored in the subconscious mind will be released through drawing and painting and the application of colors plays significant roles in controlling human emotions which are not tangible but can be observed keenly. Due to this, whoever associates with fine arts lives happily leads their lives. Character building through the learning of art is possible through aesthetic pleasure. which we can control the abnormalities in society such as the usage of drugs and violent attitudes amongst people in society. The Department of Fine Arts at Yogi Vemana University, in Kadapa, Andhra Pradesh is ideal for achieving the objectives of teaching art and students in spheres of their life during their education period of four years with a crew under Dr. K. Mrutyunjaya Rao an artist, writer and founder faculty of the department.

5. Role of National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in Art Education:

The Government of India has rightly brought the National Educational Policy (NEP)-2020 which has recognized the vitality of art and culture as tools for quality and meaningful education for present Indian society. As part of art-integrated learning, students depict, experiment with, and show a topic using a variety of artistic mediums; it's a creative and constructivist learning strategy. The inclusion of art in the curriculum entails exposing students to academic material (ideas, facts, concepts, procedures, and methodologies) and skill sets via the prism of diverse artistic mediums.

The contemporary classroom needs art-integrated teaching for good output. Integrating arts into the subjects not only brings joy but also makes the learners enthusiastic, and active which eventually leads to the development of 21st-century skills. Creativity and innovation utilized in the artistic process compel children to think creatively & help these skills come more naturally in real life or the future workplace. The advantages of art-integrated classrooms improve the qualities of deeper understanding and long retention, authentic learning, and builds cooperation, collaboration, and confidence which creates a feeling of sense of ownership as well as "One Class- one team" among students. NEP-2020 has the potential to empower fine arts education in India to become more inclusive, dynamic, accessible, and impactful on not only the arts but also society as a whole. It also encourages greater collaboration and exchange between art and other fields.

6. Recommendations for a better society through Art and Art education:

NEP 2020 emphasized the importance of art and culture and their role in the education system. In part 22 of the NEP 2020 document, it can be noticed that the promotion of Indian art is not only important for the nation but also for the individual (Ministry of HRD, 2020,p.53). The aim of Fine Arts concedes the students to realize that there are divergent means of comprehension and the reality of life. Approaching or practicing art can be a good reagent for the stress release of humans and psychologically keeps you prepared for tasks you are going to handle very easily.

The following steps may be taken and suggested as follows.

- Teachers are an integral tool for the smooth running of society who will inculcate values and aesthetic sensibilities from childhood. For this, the governments should impose certain rules to complete orientation and refresher courses/ workshops on various art forms to get promotions and further increments. This must be evaluated strictly and included in the Performance base index procedure.

- Art and craft subjects are to be taught as mandatory subjects, drawing must be given preference, governments should take up recruitments of Art teachers' posts regularly, and teaching art should be extended up to class XII.
- Due to many technical issues, universities are severely facing problems to recruit regular faculty smoothly. It is very essential to strengthen the fine arts departments at the University level in the country with the recruitment of permanent faculty in the place of contract faculty. Because low wages for contract faculty members may yield a negative impact on the teaching profession.
- The University authorities shall be more transparent and careful during regular appointments into fine arts departments as they are very specialized courses with aesthetic sensibility. If not there will be scope for other people with inappropriate qualifications such as those from other disciplines. Such kinds of people just become a burden to the department without any class work, and harmony amongst the staff in the departments, moreover they can be most hazardous for the existence of the courses.
- Encouragement in the form of incentives for the students, additional grants to the departments, and providing scholarships to meritorious students as a special case will work more effectively. This works positively to improve the occupancy rate of admissions in fine arts colleges. Government bodies like Lalit Kala Akademi, Sangita Nataka Akademi under the Ministry of Culture, and State cultural councils are requested to come forward in this regard.
- It has been observed that the majority of registered cultural organizations or societies are inactive, and some with duplication activities are also one of the important factors to be set right or to be educated in this regard. Approximately 60% of such organizations are merely working for procuring funds from donors and public and private sectors. They are just organizing name-sake programs without minimum standards and quality with little objective. Genuine artists are unable to get any promotion and benefit from these kinds of societies. While registering such organizations governments should impose a rule of eligibility that 70% of members must be practicing artists.

7. CONCLUSION:

Since the dawn of civilization art has been playing a pivotal role in human life. From prehistoric man to civilized man its roles are transforming from religious purpose to consumer purpose as well as to inculcate aesthetic sensibilities in the society. The British recognized and established art education more scientific way in the 18th century. The first art education school was opened by Fredrick Corbyn in the year 1839 and was known as "*Calcutta Mechanics Institution*", later it was renamed "*Calcutta School of Art*" in 1854. later Jobbin emphasized the importance of drawing as a mandatory subject for all students from school to university level education. He believed that drawing was the basis for acquiring all technical knowledge and for general education also. After independence, Indian governments identified the role of art in education as recommended by several committee reports. Meanwhile there are some drawbacks in implantations. However, art education in India was revitalized gradually with the introduction of National Education Policy -2020 which emphasized that art integration education and implementation is going very smoothly across India. A change also occurred in parents toward creative application-oriented education. Now universities adapting to NEP and have started recruitments with the strong initiative of the University Grants Commission and Governments at both central and state levels. Hoping that many changes and developments may occur in the scenario of Modern Art Education for a better Indian society.

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Table-1 :Data taken from the G.O MS No 154(2022)

Table-2: Data collected from survey and official information gathered from the GOs and organizations.

*Note *: The vacant positions shown in universities and schools in this article are taken with reference to G.Os pertaining to the concern organizations. They may vary subjected to the rationalization of the departments, posts and other policies.*

Author's Biography

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