

# PERCEPTION OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS IN 'ART IN EDUCATION'

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## ABSTRACT

*It has been explored that Art plays many roles in the educational setting -in and out of schools and for learners of all ages. Benefits of art education exist beyond the art room. If the society is encompassing diversity in its cultural characteristics, it makes the educational system accountable for developing the personality of the learner, which would help him /her to adjust. This huge responsibility is on the shoulder of the teachers. And it is observed that teachers are very apprehensive when we discuss the role of arts in education. 'Art in Education' is usually misinterpreted as drawing and painting only. A need was felt to conceive the idea of arts in the mind of prospective teachers and how they relate to their teaching considering their subject specialization. The current research was carried out to investigate the perception of prospective school teachers in 'art in education'. This descriptive-analytical study was conducted on 100 prospective school teachers studying in the Aligarh Muslim University, UP. The age ranged from 22 to 28 years. The findings indicated the prospective female teachers' perception of Art in education was higher than the prospective male teachers but as far as career is concerned the male respondents favoured Art as a career, and it is also seen that men dominate the career fields in Arts.*

**Keywords:** Art Education, Art in Education, Perception in Arts, Prospective teacher

## 1. INTRODUCTION

**“The limited form of the creative power of God, which we get for perception is art.” (Jai Shankar Prasad)**

The beauty that is manifested in nature always surpasses our imagination. History has proved that man has enlivened his own drab's existence by wondering and marvelling at nature. Man has continuously taken inspiration and sought ways of capturing nature's divine beauty through music, drama, plays, poetry, painting, Sculpturing as well as dancing. The area related to all this may commonly be known as 'Aesthetic' or 'art'. Though there is a wrong conception that art education is Art found in art galleries, museums, and exhibitions but also the graphic Art found in different media like radio, television, websites, architecture etc. Art education is different from other subjects as it caters the affective domain, i.e. it educates the society about different emotions, and the educators must begin to recognize the place that aesthetic dimensions hold in educational activities. Arts and aesthetic go hand in hand. It is essential to know about aesthetic value when studying the arts. Aesthetic values are understood either in terms of what they can impart to individuals in enhancing the beauty of their surroundings, or the impact they may exercise on the quality of life. In the educational system, it is found that educators place art education in their curriculum as an essential source of joy and fulfilment in life because it is considered to be a leisure activity or a hobby. Many educators think that by painting, sculpturing, dance, poetry and music and the emotions that are produced because of it, is a result of the natural beauty of its own kind. And if these emotions are not stirred up, life would lose its charm. Earlier it was observed that Art was a passion and leisure activity of the rich. History is painted with facts on how wealthy indulged in artistic activities which were usually performed by a common man. This no doubt created a gulf and gap between the common man, who manifested all terms of Art and rich who appreciated it by their aesthetic sense. As time passed, these activities were named as 'cultural activities' which related that a person who indulged in artistic activities because he had time and money was supposedly more cultured than others.

Art education has lost its hold in a common man's day to day living; as a result, art became a luxury and an object of indulgence for the one who could afford it. Humans begin to experience creativity right from the very early stages of their life. And if this creativity is not nurtured and drawn out, it kills the inherent creativity as human gradually proceeds in the later stages of life. Our educational system is organizing the role of Art in the development of personality. Because of this death of aesthetic appreciation, there is an urgent need over and revolutionize the educational system. There is a very intimate relationship between nature and Art. The

more children are pushed away from the mother nature because of anthropogenic activities and heavy indulgence of science and technology. It is found that they have lost the observation skills to see how creativity manifest itself in its best form when it is carried out in the spirit of togetherness and living together as seen in the pattern of the nature surrounding us. This nature in all its glory is manifesting harmony, equilibrium and rhythm. These have to penetrate in our mind and take hold of our imagination and unleash the creativity within, especially in the young and fresh minds of the young generation.

### **Art in Education**

It has been explored that Art plays many roles in educational settings — in and out of schools and for learners of all ages. The flexibility of *Art in Education* offers one the ability to design an individualized course of study based on one's interests and needs. It also develops analytical skills and reflective practices, forges powerful creative partnerships, and explore the relationship of the arts to other sectors in education. *Art in education* may be used to improve reading skills as the benefit of art education exists beyond the art room. Reading comprehension activities using Art especially helped left-handed children. The reason is that being left-handed indicates that a child is probably right-brained. And this indicates that the child may learn differently than left-brained classmates. In simplistic terms, the left brain is interested in logic, whereas the right brain is interested in beauty. The right brain seeks and appreciates aesthetics - music, drama, dance, and Art. (Teacher Supports Force)

*Art in education* is an expanding field of educational research and practice informed by investigations into learning through arts experiences. In this context, the arts can include performing arts education (dance drama, music), literature and poetry, storytelling, visual arts education in film, craft, design, digital arts, media and photography. It is distinguished from art education by being not so much about teaching Art, but focused on:

- How to improve learning through the arts.
- How to transfer learning in and through the arts to other disciplines.
- Discovering and creating an understanding of human behaviour, thinking, potential, and learning especially through the close observation of Art and various forms of involvement in arts experiences.

It is used to destroy the monotony of a regular school day; Arts-related activities are crucial for so much more than just keeping your child busy or relaxed. They've been proven to boost a child's self-image. The self-esteem, confidence and pride that come from '*Art in Education*' is genuinely incredible, and each child should be able to experience that.

### **1.1 Reviews of Related Literature**

Art in education refers to education in the discipline of music, dance, theatre and visual Art. Study in arts is integral to our society. Henry (2002) reported that the Art Education Partnership reveals that schoolchildren exposed to drama, music and dance or often more proficient at reading, writing and maths. Students who received more arts education did better on standardized tests, improved their social skills and were more motivated than those who had reduced or no access. Arts allow kids to express themselves better than math or science, Guggenheim (2006) conducted a pilot program called 'Learning Through Art' which sent artists into school to teach students and helped them create their masterpiece. Kids who took part in the program performed better on six different categories of literacy and critical thinking skills than those who did not.

Arts education can help close the gap between socioeconomic groups, creating a more level playing field between children who may not be exposed to these enrichment experiences outside of school and some of their more privileged peers. (Rand Corporation 2005). Previous research studies have discovered a strong correlation between Art and Education in this regard, Hillel and Schupp (2013) This study examined how long-term music training during childhood and youth affects the development of cognitive skills, school grades are more conscientiously, open and ambitious. The issues of dropout and stagnation are widespread in the education sector there are so many reasons of dropouts at different level like (low income, family pressure etc.) and art education may be helpful to solve these types of problems.

Thomas and Klopfontstenen (2015) studied the problem of high school dropout in the United States by tracking approximately 175000 first time 9<sup>th</sup> grade for 5 years and findings that quality education in the arts can engage at-risk students in ways other subjects cannot and maybe an essential tool in high school dropout prevention. *Art in education* not only proved beneficial for students, but also it has proved constructive for a teacher. By using Art in their classroom teacher can push boundaries and take risks. They recognized obstacles and challenges to arts use but made choices that helped them maintain a sense of independence and creativity in teaching. They also articulated the importance of arts-based professional development in enabling them to make the arts an essential component of their education. (Oreck 2006). There is a substantive relationship between art involvement and social, cognitive and artistic development among students with disabilities. Arts may assist special need or differently-abled students in demonstrating knowledge of academic content and skills. Moreover, teachers and artists cited examples of how the arts provided both access to learning and opportunities for students to express preferences and interests. (Manson 2008).

### 1.2 Significance of the study

Education prepares the individual to become an integral part of the value system that the society has built over a long period with the help of the behavioural pattern of its members. These behavioural patterns represent the cultural characteristics, philosophy and the ideals of that particular society. If the society is encompassing diversity in its cultural and aesthetic characteristics, it makes the educational system accountable for developing the personality of the learner, which would help him /her to adjust. This huge responsibility is on the shoulder of the teachers. And it is observed that teachers are very apprehensive when the discussion is made about arts in education. This is usually misinterpreted as drawing and painting. A need was felt to conceive the idea of arts in the mind of prospective teachers and how they relate to their teaching irrespective of their subject specialization. This not only would clear the concept of 'art in education' but will draw out some conclusion which will help in the inclusion of 'aesthetic education' and 'art in education' in the teacher training institutions.

### 1.3 Objectives of the study

The objectives formulated for the study are:

1. To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Art in Education'.
2. To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Art as a Career'.
3. To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding the use of 'Visual Arts in Teaching process'.
4. To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding the use of 'Art in Teaching Aid'.
5. To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding the use of 'Music in Teaching Process'.
6. To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding the importance of 'Art in School Curriculum'.

### 1.4 Research Questions

The following questions crossed the mind of the investigator related to the variable under study:

1. What is the general attitude regarding Art?
2. Why is 'arts' as a subject marginalized in school education?
3. Does the subject specialization of the prospective teacher encourage them to use 'Art' in Education'?
4. Do teachers with an inclination in arts use this ability in their teaching process?
5. Why are prospective teachers reluctant to use Art in their practice teaching?

## 2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The research is a descriptive type of research. It is based on a survey of the sample. A questionnaire was used as a tool in the survey.

### Sample

Data was collected from 100 prospective teachers studying at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, UP. The age ranged from 22 to 28 year. The sample was obtained randomly, in which 65% were female participants, and 35% were male participants. 22% belonged to Arts stream, 31% from Science stream, 23 % with commerce background, and 24% with social science specialization through random sampling. Data was collected by a valid and reliable questionnaire, consisting of six dimensions with 27 items.

### Tool

The tool used for the present study was 'Perception of 'Art in Education' Scale, which was developed by the investigators. The data was collected using a five-point scale that the investigator designed for the research purpose. The tool consisted of total 27 items. It had (19 positive and 8 negative) statements. The Cronbach's alpha coefficient assessing the internal consistency of the instrument for the total scale was found to be **0.750**, indicating an acceptable degree of internal consistency for analysis. The investigators ensured the face and content validity of the tool by keeping in mind the views of experts. The reliability coefficient of the present scale is **0.750**, which indicates that the index of reliability is  $\sqrt{0.750}$  or **0.866**. This means that test correlates 0.866 with true measures of itself-these true measures constituting the criteria (Garrett 2009)

### Statistical Techniques

The data analyzed through simple statistical techniques like arithmetic mean, standard deviation with respect to the objectives framed for quantitative data.

## 3. RESULT

**Objective 1: To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Art in Education'**

**Table 1:** Mean score of the general attitude of the respondent towards Arts

S. No.	Sample	No. of Students	Arithmetic Mean
1.	Total	100	26.89

2.	Male	35	26.4
3.	Female	65	26.94
4.	Arts	22	27.19
5.	Commerce	23	26.33
6.	Science	31	27.06
7.	Social Science	24	26.2

Q. No.	Statements
1.	I encourage my students to make their own greeting cards on any occasion (teacher's day or any festive occasion).
10.	It is a challenging job to teach Art to differently-abled children.
11.	I know how to bring together different forms of Art (music, dance, drama, etc.) in education.
17.	Performing arts like drama, dance etc. help students in their holistic development.
21.	A fine arts teacher can only have an aesthetic sense.
23.	I am reluctant to draw and colour because I know I will make lots of mistakes.
25.	I believe that Art can be inspired by anything, anywhere.

According to Table 1, the female subsample had a slightly higher mean ( $M=26.94$ ) on the general attitude towards arts than male ( $M=26.4$ ) when comparing the sub-sample according to stream the arts group had the highest mean ( $M=27.19$ ), then science group ( $M=27.06$ ) and then commerce group ( $M=26.33$ ). The least mean score was of social science group ( $M=26.2$ ).

**Objective 2: To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Arts as a Career'**

**Table 2: Mean score of the respondents on the dimension 'Arts as a career.'**

S. No.	Sample	No. of Students	Arithmetic Mean
1.	Total	100	7.5
2.	Male	35	7.2
3.	Female	65	7.14
4.	Arts	22	7.45
5.	Commerce	23	8.66
6.	Science	31	6.93
7.	Social Science	24	6.7

Q. No.	Statements
18.	I believe that there are fewer opportunities or career scope for art students.
22.	Art/Music teacher job is not as equally reputed/respectable job as other subject teachers.

Table 2 sheds light on the dimension 'Art as a career' for this dimension; the male respondents had a slightly higher mean ( $M=7.20$ ) than the female respondents ( $M=7.14$ ). Among respondents of different stream, commerce group had the highest mean ( $M=8.66$ ) followed by arts group ( $M=7.45$ ) then social science group ( $M=6.93$ ) and then least mean ( $M=6.7$ ) was of science group.

**Objective 3: To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Visual art in the teaching process.'**

**Table 3:** Mean score of the respondents on the dimension of 'Visual art in the teaching process.'

S. No.	Sample	No. of Students	Arithmetic Mean
1.	Total	100	19.36
2.	Male	35	18.4
3.	Female	65	19.46
4.	Arts	22	19.28
5.	Commerce	23	20.66
6.	Science	31	19.48
7.	Social Science	24	19.16

Q. No.	Statements
2.	It is easy for me to draw a diagram on the blackboard.
6.	Images of the natural landscape always fascinate me.
8.	I prepare charts as my teaching aid rather than 3D models.
16.	I am impressed when students use more than one coloured pen or sheets in their assignments.
26.	I think students who make an effort in making their assignment attractive by including colours, creative art and concept maps deserve more marks.

According to data tabulated in Table 3, the female respondents scored higher on the dimension 'Visual Art in the Teaching Process.' (M= 19. 46) than male respondents (M=18.4). With respect to the stream subsamples, the highest mean was found to be in commerce group (M= 20.66) followed by minor difference in rest of the three groups, i.e. science group (M= 19.48), arts group (M= 19.28) and social science group (M= 19.16).

**Objective 4: To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Arts in Teaching Aid.'**

**Table 4:** Mean score of the respondents on the dimension 'Arts in teaching aid'.

S.No.	Sample	No. of students	Arithmetic Mean
1.	Total	100	10.19
2.	Male	35	11.1
3.	Female	65	10.95
4.	Arts	22	11.35
5.	Commerce	23	8.33
6.	Science	31	10.51
7.	Social Science	24	11.2

S. No.	Statements
13.	I feel confident to include arts in my teaching aids.
15.	I prefer not to use colours in my teaching aids.
24.	I can teach well when someone helps me in making required teaching aids.

Table.4 throws light on respondents scores on dimension 'Arts in teaching aids' The male respondents scored higher average (M=11.1) than the female respondents (M=10.95).In the subsamples according to the streams, the respondents in art group had the highest mean(M=11.35) followed by social science with a slight difference in the mean (M= 11.2 ), science group respondent had a mean of (M=10.51) and the least mean was of commerce group (M=8.33).

**Objective 5: To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Music in the teaching process.'**

**Table 5:** Mean score of the respondents on the dimension 'Music in the teaching process.'

S. No.	Sample	No. of Students	Arithmetic Mean
1.	Total	100	7.98
2.	Male	35	7.14
3.	Female	65	8.04
4.	Arts	22	8.16
5.	Commerce	23	6.66
6.	Science	31	8.2
7.	Social Science	24	7.58

S. No.	Statements
3.	I prefer to supplement my teaching work with music (for example, preparing PPT with audio files).
4.	Music is helpful in emotional catharsis.

In Table 5, the female respondents had a higher mean ( $M=8.04$ ) than the male respondents ( $M=7.14$ ) on the dimension 'Music in Teaching process'. According to the subsample the science group had the highest mean ( $M=8.2$ ) followed by arts group ( $M=8.16$ ) the least group that has the least mean was commerce group ( $M=6.66$ ) after social science group ( $M=7.58$ ).

**Objective 6: To find out the perception of prospective teachers regarding 'Place of Art in the Curriculum.'**

**Table 6:** Mean score of the respondents on the dimension 'Place of Art in the Curriculum.'

S. No.	Sample	No. of Students	Arithmetic Mean
1.	Total	100	28.83
2.	Male	35	27.2
3.	Female	65	29.01
4.	Arts	22	29.21
5.	Commerce	23	28.66
6.	Science	31	28.58
7.	Social Science	24	28.5

S. No.	Statements
5.	It should be taught as a compulsory subject at all levels of education.
7.	Grades in Art and crafts exam does not matter to me at all.
9.	Marks of Art and craft should be included in paint grade percentage for all board exams (ICSE, CBSE, UP, etc.).
12.	The different forms of Art should not end with our secondary education (especially for science students).
14.	I think our curriculum does not give enough weightage to the arts.
19.	A creative child can also excel in other academic subjects.
20.	Art should be an optional subject in school.
27.	I believe that Art cannot be used in teaching any other subjects (Science, Maths, S.St. and language etc.)

According to the data presented in Table 6 for dimension 'Place of Art in the curriculum,' the female respondents had a higher average ( $M=29.01$ ) than the male respondents ( $M=27.2$ ). The art group had the highest mean on this dimension ( $M=29.21$ ), followed by a very close mean in commerce ( $M=28.66$ ), science group ( $M=28.58$ ) and social science group ( $M=28.5$ ).

## 4. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

### 4.1 According to Gender Sub Sample:

Female respondents had a high perception of using visual arts and music in the teaching process. Though it is contrary to the study of Kimura (1999) and Halpern (2013) where they have suggested that boys and men have advantages at aspects of visual and spatial cognition while girls and women are better at aspects of verbal cognition. The female prospective teachers' perception of Art in education was higher than the prospective male teachers. But as far as career is concerned, the male respondents favour Art as a career. And it is also seen that men dominate the career fields in arts. And even history is painted with a famous male artist. Now the question arises whatever the Patriarchal society has created an art world which has 'airbrushed' woman artist out of history.

Female respondents' inclination towards visual arts could be due to the fact that women are now being employed more in visual arts occupations like art teachers, fashion designers and interior designers even though it was also found that males who are inclined in visual Art will pursue a career as photographers, picture framer and illustrator (Throsby and Zednik 2011). The female respondents valued Art as a subject and placed the great emphasis of Art in curriculum and the syllabi of school education. As far as using arts in teaching aids, the male respondents were inclined more than the female respondents. This could be explained with the help of the book '*Pink Brain, Blue Brain*' written by Elliot. In this book, she argues that differences in verbal ability between men and women are the result of social conditioning. Probably in our Indian social context female use their verbal skills more to explain any subject matter whereas males are inclined in using attractive teaching aids which are self-explanatory and can help them to save energy on verbal explanation.

### 4.2 According to Stream Sub Sample:

The art group had a high perception in the dimension:- the general attitude of Art, arts in teaching aids, music in teaching process and place of Art in the curriculum. This can be explained as students are expected to speak, write and communicate what they have learned. The art group students have proficiency in the language, and the Art of using language skills help them to absorb content from other subjects and also express their knowledge of other subjects. Vygotsky (1962), suggested that thinking develops into words in a number of phases, moving from imaging to inner speech to inner speaking to speech 'Art in education' is helping the proficient students in language to express their artwork effectively. Interesting the commerce group had a high perception in using visual Art in teaching process-followed by science group. Probably the content in commerce, the statistical data and tabulation of result can be best explained through visual arts.

As far as career is concerned in the contemporary globalizing world, the requirements are more than mere technological progress. Human behaviour attitudes and values must change if the world is to continue to exist and to manage the challenges of our times creatively. The emphasis, therefore, falls precisely on the need to choose Art as a career. Though it is a known fact that humanities and arts are the lesser known cousins of science, which is why Art is considered as marginalized career according to science group respondents. Using music in the teaching process is highly valued by the arts group, and we do see how the very use of visual arts and music are used in plays, dramas and skits. The costume, the stage and other décor use the concept of contrast, colour; perception etc. along with words to excite the senses of the audience and provide aesthetic education to them. Moreover, it can be seen in Tamara (2002) study that students exposed to drama, music and dance were often more proficient at reading, writing and math. Another finding of Hillel and Schupp (2013) study revealed that in adolescents, music training gave them better cognitive skills and school grades and they were more conscientious, open and ambitious.

## 5. CONCLUSION

There are so many reasons for the arts to be included in the educational system, and it is beneficial for the personal, social and academic development of the students. 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. Arts education develops students who are self-driven and motivated as they are often the fiercest critics of their work. It teaches students to learn for the experience of learning and not just for the grade. Involvement in the arts teaches students how to try new things, manage risk, and handle failure. The arts provide students with a multitude of options for expressing and communicating their ideas and students learn to think about problems from a broad range of perspectives. These kinds of communication and problem-solving abilities are essential to all work environments, regardless of the field. The ability to generate ideas and communicate them effectively is vital in the workplace, and this ability can be cultivated through involvement in the arts. If schools want to prepare their students the best that they can do is to enter arts in the working school curriculum otherwise it would seem foolish not to incorporate an arts program that has as much integrity as the science or math programs that already exists.

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