



An overview of art education policies in India

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Abstract

In ancient times, art was a *sadhna* or an exploit of veneration which emerged after *aatam bodha* or amending the senses. Today, art is a medium of learning and understanding various fields of life and also works like a remedy for today's distressful life emerged through the digitalization of the modern world. Although, geographical limits of the world continuously decreasing, while the imaginations and originality of the art pieces and capability of art students is decreasing within the narrowness of apparent world. The main objective of this paper is to review the reports of Education Commissions and Educational policies of government of India to revive and modify the curriculum during pre-independence and post-independence in consecutive manner in the field of art education. The study also considers the adequacy and significance of the policies in the field of art education during today's digital world, while on the other hand, traditional arts in vocational forms also trying to reach in the global markets to reflect their distinct identity of indigenous culture as well as source of earnings. The study is based on review of literature and exploratory method.

Keywords: ancient, modern, government, education, policies, changes, digitalization

Introduction: Celebrated antiquity

Our present and future depend on our past. In ancient times, arts emerged as a medium of communication among human beings but as the time passed, it became a medium to express the heartily feelings. In every era, it changed its forms, mediums and techniques as well as the minds and hands, who played with it. From the Indus valley civilization till the modern times, it changed many times but its universal goal of expression of heart and mind never changed. From the earthen vessels to the walls of caves (fig. 1), palm leaves, leather, fabric and paper, every

medium depicts its specific era. Inspirations of nature, religions and politics cultivated the art activities, while leisurely activities of creating art pieces also became a medium of earning from the very ancient times. Traditional arts were continued till eighteenth- nineteenth centuries, while efforts to revive traditional art expressions were done through the Bengali painters, but advent of a new era in the form of British influences knocked the doors of Indian arts and manipulated them externally as well as internally.



Source: <https://s-media-cache-ak0.pinimg.com/originals/eb/41/1d/eb411d4d018e09223b3fe7e05d2f2cd7.jpg>

Fig 1: Ajanta, 6th century A.D.

▪ Art education in British India

The doors of modern education system opened in India in the nineteenth century in vernaculars and mother languages in its initial stage. 'Macaulay's Minute, 1835 did finally pave the way for the continuance of schools and colleges where indigenous learning was being imparted and also for promotion of European literature and science among the natives of India. That marked the real beginning of bilingualism in educational system of India^[1].' Despatch of the Court of Directors of the East India Company in 1854 is popular as Wood's Education Despatch or 'the Magna Charta of English Education in India' or 'the Intellectual Charter of India'^[2]. In this Despatch, the main focus of education was the diffusion of the Arts, Science, Philosophy and Literature of Europe. From 1854 various expansions for the modification of Indian education system were done during the pre and post-independence periods. Along with these efforts, Art colleges in Madras during 1850, in Bombay during 1857, in Lahore during 1875 (fig. 2) and in Lucknow during 1911 were founded to promote art education on degree and industrial level.



Source: <http://lahore.city-history.com/places/mayo-school-of-industrial-art-later-national-colle/>

Fig 2: Mayo School of Industrial Art. Lahore. 1875

1. Art education was included in Hunter Commission or Indian Education Commission (1882) in the curriculum of upper primary class. In three divisions of optional subjects; one was elementary drawing like free hand drawing, model and object drawing and practical geometry as well as painting, carpentry, joinery, smithery etc. as third option were included in Bombay education curriculum as one of the largest provinces^[3].
2. Art education was included in Indian Universities Commission (1902) as practical subjects like drawing, practical geometry and carpentry in the Bombay school final examination. Book-keeping, drawing, political economy, etc. were optional subjects in the Allahabad school final examination^[4]. And focusing on the education of drawing as 'a subject of great value to Indian students^[5] recommend for the subject of drawing.
3. Government Resolution on Educational Policy (1913) recommended to move in the field of research.

Amalgamating Indian-Western culture, Indian treatment of subjects with western technique was suggested. To promote and revive traditional culture, the indigenous art industries were promoted. The preservation of ancient art pieces in museums and their appreciation were suggested. The relation of museums to the educational systems of India was discussed at the conference^[6]

4. In Calcutta University Commission (1917) or Sadler Commission intermediate colleges were included in which instructions in other subjects along with the subject of Arts were suggested^[7].
5. Hartog Committee (1929) and Sapru Committee (1934) were also organized to promote medieval art culture of 16th century onwards in common schools working under the guidance and supervision of Hindu and Muslim masters.....These schools branched off later into various territorial schools, which, in addition to their special features, retained the distinctive grace and accuracy of the parental type^[8]. To promote and connect traditional art practices of India with present times, it was the significant proposal of Sapru committee. Sapru Committee also recommended for the vocational training and education after the lower secondary stage.
6. Abbot-Wood Report (1936-37) recommended for the Polytechnic institutes.
7. Zakir Hussain Committee (1937) recommended the education with some form of manual and productive work and related to the central handicraft chosen with due regard to the environment of the child. A basic craft is to serve as the centre of instruction. The idea is not to teach some handicraft side by side with liberal education, but the entire education is to be imparted through some industry or vocation^[9].
8. Wardha Education Committee of the Central Advisory Board of Education (1939) or B. G. Kher Committee included 40 minutes for arts and 2 ½ hours for craft work in 5 ½ school time^[10].
9. Central Advisory Board of Education Report (1944) or Post-War Educational Development Report or the Sargent Report (1944) recommended art education in curriculum for both and for all girls a course in domestic science^[11] essentially.

▪ Art Education in Independent India

1. University Education Commission (1948-49) or Dr. Radhaksrishan Commission recommended research and advanced study in fine arts^[12] along with other subjects. The subject of art appreciation in art education was also^[13] included to increase the perceptive and expressive sensibility towards beauty.
2. Secondary Education Commission (1952-53) or Dr. Mudaliar Commission recommended the subject of art and craft in the curriculum of the middle School. In the second year of high school or higher secondary stage, diversified courses' of instruction included seven groups in which one is fine arts^[14], comprising History of Art, Drawing and Designing, Painting, Modelling, Music, Dancing^[15].

To promote cultural and artistic activities; Sahitya Akadami was inaugurated in March, 1954 and the Lalit Kala Akadami in

August. The National Gallery of Modern Art was inaugurated in March 1954.

3. *National Committee on Women's Education (1958) or Shrimati Durgabai Deshmukh Committee* recommended the conduction of vocational training courses with 'Primary' as basic qualification in school during the day, alongside general education. Organization of courses with 'Middle' and 'Secondary' as basic qualifications in vocational sections of middle and secondary schools, in multipurpose schools, in separate vocational schools, in apprenticeship classes, in training centers, in workshops and or in continuation schools [16].
4. *University Grants Commission's Review Committee on Education (1960) or Prof. K.G. Saiyidain Committee* recommended through the Art History Panel for research in museology and funds for the establishment of museums in universities. Universities were requested to include proposals for their development in the Seventh Plan proposals. Stress was also laid on establishing departments of fine arts in the programme of Action of the NPE and on broad-basing and diversifying cultural courses like music, arts, performing arts and others [17].
5. *Committee on Emotional Integration (1961) or Dr. Sampurnanand Committee* promoted the art, culture and extracurricular activities for emotional integration.
6. *Indian Education Commission (1964-66) or Dr. D. S. Kothari Commission* recommended art education as creative activities in lower primary stage (class I-IV), art as a subject in higher primary stage (class V-VII) and lower secondary stage (class VIII-X) [18]. In higher secondary stage (class XI-XII) art or art and craft [19]. Research should be increased in this field.
7. *National Policy on Education (1968)* recommended to increase facilities for vocational education to fulfill the requirements of developing economy as well real employment opportunities [20].
8. *The Curriculum for Ten-Year School: A Framework (1975)* recommended 4 periods per week for Art education for classes IX-X.
9. *Review Committee on the Curriculum for the Ten-Year School (1977) or Ishwarbhai Patel Committee* included 2 hours for Art education in Classes IX-X.
10. *Working Group to Review Teachers' Training Programme (1983)* recommended for DIETS to work on the areas of interest to the local community like local flora and fauna as well as local history, culture, arts and crafts involving the local community to achieve the aims of education for all [21].
11. *National Policy on Education (1986)* recommended associations between the university system and institutions of higher learning in art, archaeology, oriental studies, etc. Attention should also be paid to the specialized disciplines of Fine Arts, Museology, Folklore, etc. Teaching, training and research in these disciplines will be strengthened so as to replenish specialized manpower in them [22].
12. *National Policy on Education 1986: Programme of Action 1992* recommended Media would be used in literacy promotion as a tool of dissemination of information, mobilization, motivation and sensitization through Doordarshan and Radio, advertisements and motivational films including print and non-print media along with

traditional folk arts for circulating literacy [23]. The area of research through research scholarship and fellowship should be promoted [24], opening of the Fine Arts Departments in Universities [25], special fellowships/scholarships/incentives would be given on the basis of State and national competitions for creative and performing arts [26]. *The networking of the entire country through Zonal Cultural Centers will help in provision of inter-State cultural linkages and affinities. These Zonal Cultural Centers would also build up exhibitions and displays of performing, arts not only in terms of their emphasis on revival of languishing art forms but also in making the student community aware of the rich diversity of India's cultural heritage* [27]. *In the 8th Plan, special institutions for documenting and promotion of folklore and arts would be set up. These would take care of preservation and documenting of the rich diversity of art forms particularly in the rural and tribal areas. These would conduct special capsule course for teachers and scholars* [28].

13. *The National Curriculum Framework: Secondary; (2009)* proposed the subject of Art as equally significant in the curriculum along with other academic subjects [29].

■ Today's requirement of Art Education

British educational policies laid the foundation of Indian Educational System while various revisions took place after independence to revive the standard of education in India. An attraction towards Westernization is increasing continuously among students of different streams to achieve worldwide goal. To fulfill these achievements in the field of Art Education, changes are required to compete the modern world of Digital Arts. On the contrary, it is also time to promote traditional arts in the global world to mark a distinct identity of indigenous culture of ourselves. Now Art has entered in every field of life through the intervention of Designing of modern products. One can preserve our traditional arts and crafts through encouraging the traditional art products and their artisans joining them with electric media and supporting with financial resources as well as to take them in colleges and universities, so that our traditional practices always remain alive through the hands of new generation. There is need to extend professional courses in universities and degree colleges connected them with digital mediums because our basic art curriculum of manual mediums cannot achieve Digital goals.

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