

## The Contribution of Art Education in Enhancing of the Aesthetic Values for Student of Higher Education

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### Abstract

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This study was set out with the aim of assessing contribution of art education for student of higher education. The descriptive analytical and experimental methods are used in this research. The study sample consists of Students totaling (32) students from various disciplines (Physical Education - Art Education - Arabic Language - Special Education - Islamic Education - Sociology) batch (2014 – 2015) from faculty of Education of the King Faisal University – Saudi Arabia. The researchers to topics prepare of aesthetic values, through the contributions of art education to enhance of the aesthetic values for student of higher education. That it helps in times of crisis and stress. It also provides balance, sense, purpose, stability and a positive attitude. Aesthetic values are important for the human spirit. It can also help to foster resilience in students.

The findings lend support to the claim that aesthetic values are important for resilience. It helps in times of crisis and stress. The results showed that significant differences between group's performance before and after the test in the students towards aesthetic values at the faculty of Education, King Faisal University, during of the practical period. The researchers recommended to Increasing students' aesthetic vocabularies and helping them develop a finer control of rhetoric through interactions with others.

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**Keywords:** Art Education in Enhancing of the Aesthetic Values.

### 1. Introduction

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. 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 in Katy ISD.

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 dropout, raising student attendance, developing better team players, fostering a love 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 America.

Evidence from brain research is only one of many reasons education and engagement in 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.

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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” (Burton, Horowitz, & Abeles, 1999). “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” (Jensen, 2001). 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 Learning* (Fiske, 1999) 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.)
- The arts provide challenges to 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.)
- 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.)

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 (Jensen, 2001). 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 (Burton et al., 1999). The arts have the capacity to engage everyone. All levels of American society can and do participate in the fine arts. There are no barriers of race, religion, culture, geography, or socioeconomic levels.

Today's world is witness to the Information Age. The primary sources of content information are no longer teacher 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. “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 (Jensen, 1999, p. 84).” 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 the 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. 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.

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 (Eisner, 1987).

#### **Definition:**

Aesthetic value is the value that an object, event or state of affairs (most paradigmatically an art work or the natural environment) possesses in virtue of its capacity to elicit pleasure (positive value) or displeasure (negative value) when appreciated or experienced aesthetically.

#### **Description:**

Everything that is valuable is valuable in a variety of ways. Art objects often have sentimental value, historical value or financial value. Wilderness can have economic value as well as recreational value. But great art works are thought to possess a distinctive sort of non-instrumental and non-utilitarian value that is of central concern when they are evaluated as art works. It might be thought that this value is beauty, but many artworks are not beautiful. So it is more plausible that beauty is a particular species of the value in question. The aesthetic value that a work of art possesses (and most would extend this to the natural environment) has to do with the sort of experience it provides when engaged with appropriately. If it provides pleasure in virtue of our experience of its beauty, elegance, gracefulness, harmony, proportion, unity, etc., we say that it has positive aesthetic value. If it provides displeasure in virtue of ugliness, deformity or disgustingness we may say that it has negative aesthetic value. One important thing to note is that the pleasure or displeasure underwriting aesthetic value is best thought of as directed at the object in question rather than being merely caused by it (Stecker, 1997).

#### **Limitation of Aesthetics:**

By adopting this expression we at once exclude the beauty of nature. Such a limitation of our topic may appear to be laid down arbitrarily, on the principle that every science has authority to demarcate its scope at will. But this is not the sense in which we should take the limitation of aesthetics to the beauty of art. In ordinary life, we are of course accustomed to speak of a beautiful color, a beautiful sky, a beautiful river; likewise of beautiful flowers, beautiful animals, and even more of beautiful people. We will not here enter upon the controversy about how far the attribute of beauty is justifiably ascribed to these and the like, and how far, in general, natural beauty may be put alongside the beauty of art. But we may assert against this view, even at this stage, that the beauty of art is higher than nature. The beauty of art is beauty born of the spirit and born again, and the higher the spirit and its productions stand above nature and its phenomena, the higher too is the beauty of art above that of nature. Indeed, considered formally [i.e. no matter what it says], even a useless notion that enters a man's head is higher than any product of nature, because in such a notion spirituality and freedom are always present. Of course, considered in its content, the sun, for example, appears as a necessary factor [in the universe] while a false notion vanishes as accidental and transitory. But, taken by itself, a natural existent like the sun is indifferent, not free and self-conscious in itself; and if we treat it in its necessary connection with other things, then we are not treating it by itself, and therefore not as beautiful (Hegel, 1975).

#### **Objectives of the Study:**

1. To provide students with a foundation of skills that will be applied in their major fields.
2. To provide instructional depth and breadth to ensure that graduates will have a well-rounded knowledge in the aesthetic values of the various disciplines (Physical Education - Art Education - Arabic Language - Special Education - Islamic Education - Sociology).

#### **Hypotheses of the Study:**

1. There are significant differences between groups in the basic skills, before and after the test in the students towards aesthetic values.

### **Methodology of the Study:**

The respondents of the study were the total population of thirty-two (32) students, were officially enrolled in King Faisal University, taking Statistics as their subject.

The assessment survey was developed to obtain the data necessary for the study. This was pre-tested and content validated. In the study, reliability analysis of the measurement tools was re-examined and (Pearson correlation) was found as (.531), which indicated that the items of the measurement tool are with the minimum total error. For all the statistical procedures, SPSS was utilized.

The collected data was analyzed by using the appropriate statistical treatments. The T- test for independent data was conducted to verify the significant differences between test scores before and after the implementation of aesthetic values.

By means of a descriptive-correlation design, this paper determined the attitudes of bachelor's degree students who were presently studying in different disciplines. The attitudes of the students towards aesthetic values between two groups were measured after the test conducting "before and after". However, activities were conducted prior to the actual study, they were as follows:

1. Tutorial sessions on how to gaining to aesthetic values.
2. Lecture on contribution of art education in social skills.
3. Discussion on the mechanics and its Rubrics were also made to ensure success on the making of students' projects and determine which necessitate extra support.

### **Dewey's Thoughts on Aesthetic Experience and Moral Education**

Dewey describes in his *Ethics* the similarities between morality and art in a concrete way: "One of the earliest discoveries of morals was the similarity of judgment of good and bad in conduct with the recognition of beauty and ugliness. . . . The sense of justice, moreover, has a strong ally in the sense of symmetry and proportion.

A harmonious blending of affections into a beautiful whole was essentially an artistic idea.

As Dewey observes in the passage, ethical and aesthetical appreciations have much in common. The rigid separation of the aesthetic from the moral is rooted in the Enlightenment view of cognition that we have inherited. Enlightenment thinkers supported the view that "our mental acts can be broken down into separate and distinct forms of judgment." From this perspective, consequently, "moral reasoning (judgment) consisted in the application of moral laws to concrete cases, on the basis of shared moral concepts. Aesthetic judgment, by contrast, was considered not to involve any concepts at all, and they were not products of reason (Jackson, 1998).

### **Social and economic benefits of arts and arts learning:**

This chapter discusses claims made, and evidence for, the contributions of the arts and arts learning to social and economic outcomes. There are a number of differences in the research approaches that address these outcomes, compared with those that investigate the educational/learning outcomes discussed in the previous chapter. For example:

- Research on the educational benefits of arts learning typically focuses on populations who can be clearly identified as "learners" or "students" in arts contexts with an overtly educational intention. However, research on social and economic outcomes includes a focus on a broader range of people and communities, with a broader range of kinds of participation/involvement in the arts, ranging from being an active participant in community-level arts activities, to being a patron of arts-related events or institutions.
- While educational research typically looks at the benefits in terms of impacts/outcomes/changes for individual learners, social and economic outcomes are often evaluated in terms of collective (community-, regional- or national-level) impacts/outcomes/ changes. One key challenge for research is to develop models that explain how "individual" benefits (whether educational, social or otherwise) might accrue to produce effects at the group/community/society level.

For the reasons above, the methodologies and measures used to evaluate social and economic benefits/outcomes of the arts (and other outcomes—e.g., cultural benefits) are typically more diverse than those used to evaluate learning/educational outcomes. Although social and economic benefits research looks beyond the domain of arts learning/arts education (at least in formal education settings), there are clear points of interaction with educationally-focused research on arts learning. Several authors propose models that position arts education as one of many interacting factors that contribute to and underpin the eventual social and economic benefits of the arts.

**Results:**

- There are significant differences between groups in the basic skills, before and after the test in the students towards aesthetic values.

**Table 1: Paired Samples Statistics**

		Mean	N	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Pair 1	Aesthetic values before	3.45	32	1.125	.289
	Aesthetic values after	4.73	32	.894	.251

**Table 2: Pearson correlation**

		N	Correlation	Sig.
Pair 1	Aesthetic values before & after	32	.642	.003

**Table 3: Paired Samples Test**

	Paired Differences					t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)
	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference				
				Lower	Upper			
Pair 1 Aesthetic values before & after	-1.195-	.997	.169	-1.621-	-.976-	-8.500-	31	.000

The validity and reliability of the instrument reported here are based on the data collected from this study. The strategy employed in the present study to test the validity and the reliability of the study tools focuses on the psychometric properties of the scales used.

Table (2) shows the Pearson correlation. As indicated by the coefficient, both instruments are reliable since the values are above the satisfactory level of (.642) (Spector, 1992).

The above tables (1-3) showed that there is a significant difference between the students of the experimental group before and after the implementation of the program through the potential value, which amounted to (0.000). This potential value is less than the level of error allowed (0.05%) for the benefit after applying the program through the arithmetic mean value, which is amounted to (4.73) that is greater than the arithmetic mean value before implementing the program, amounting to (3.45).

**Discussion:**

This study was set out with the aim of assessing the importance of art education for student of higher education. The result of the present study showed that art education contributed to enhancing of the aesthetic values for student of higher education. In other words, the variation of (3.45) to (4.73) shows that art education contributes to enhancing of the aesthetic values for student of higher education. The findings lend support to the claim that aesthetic values are important for resilience. It helps in times of crisis and stress.

It also provides balance, sense, purpose, stability and a positive attitude. Aesthetic values are important for the human spirit. It can also help to foster resilience in youths. This study produces results, which are consistent with the finding of other previous studies on aesthetic values.

The results of the present study forward evidence for construct validity for art education and aesthetic values. Furthermore, both instruments demonstrated evidence of internal consistency reliability. The findings also show that the evidently, the current study which made use of findings reported: *The Impact of the Arts on Learning* (Fiske, 1999) that should be noted by every parent, teacher, and administrator: 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.

- Consistent findings with previous studies which used the aesthetic values.

In terms of social and economic outcomes, the research and theory base extends beyond simply looking at the outcomes of arts learning, and includes a focus on a broader range of people and communities, with a variety of forms of participation/involvement in the arts.

### **Conclusion and Implications**

The studies revealed that art education had an influential role in enhancing of the aesthetic values for student of higher education. The art education is beneficial in enhancing of the aesthetic values, increased innovation and creativity and enhanced commitment. The existing literature provides strong support that team effort aggregates creative contribution of the group without undermining individual inputs. It promotes information sharing and cooperation, which are both vital for the successful implementation of aesthetic values.

The results of this study have implications for both scholars and practitioners. First, the results provide context to enhancing of the aesthetic values in higher education, and are helpful in understanding the contribution of art education in creating a sustainable future within higher education. Secondly, the present study is limited to King Faisal University students, and thus future studies may include other major stakeholders such as faculty, staff. It may also be interesting to replicate the study in other countries to gain a global comparison and international perspective.

### **Recommendations:**

1. Increasing students' aesthetic vocabularies and helping students develop a finer control of rhetoric through interactions with others.
2. Encourage students to reflect on projects and see what they have ideas with other students.
3. Helping students to discover themselves and their creations.

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