

Perception towards Integration of Art as a Compulsory Subject in Primary School Curriculum: A Study Among Undergraduate Students of Lucknow

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ABSTRACT

The integration of art as a compulsory subject in primary school education has become a significant concern in contemporary pedagogy due to its contribution to holistic development. The present study examines undergraduate students' perceptions regarding the inclusion of art as a compulsory subject in primary education. The study was conducted among students of Shri Ramswaroop Memorial University using a sample of 150 students from B. Tech, BCA, and Biotechnology disciplines. A descriptive survey method was employed, and data were collected using a self-structured Likert-scale questionnaire. Statistical techniques such as mean, standard deviation, t-test, and one-way ANOVA were used for analysis. The findings reveal that students generally possess a positive perception toward art integration. While gender differences were found to be statistically insignificant, significant differences were observed across disciplines. The study emphasizes the importance of incorporating art education into the primary curriculum to foster creativity and cognitive development.

KEYWORDS: Art Integration, Primary Education, Perception, Undergraduate Students, Curriculum.

INTRODUCTION

Modern education emphasizes holistic development, where cognitive, emotional, and creative domains are equally valued. Arts education, including music, dance, drama, and visual arts, plays a crucial role in nurturing creativity and expression (Eisner, 2002). The National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT, 2005) also advocates integrating art into the school curriculum to enhance experiential learning.

Primary education is a foundational stage where children develop essential life skills. Integrating art as a compulsory subject can improve creativity, problem-solving abilities, and emotional intelligence (Gardner, 1993). Undergraduate students, as future professionals and educators, can provide valuable insights into the acceptance of such reforms.

Review of Related Literature

Over the years, many educators and researchers have highlighted how important art is in a child's learning journey. Art is no longer seen as just an "extra" activity in school; instead, it is increasingly recognized as a powerful way to help children think creatively, express their emotions, and understand concepts more deeply. Studies have shown that when art is meaningfully integrated into classroom teaching, students often perform better academically. They tend to develop stronger problem-solving abilities and become more confident in expressing their ideas and feelings.

Researchers have also noticed that people do not all think about art education in the same way. Perceptions can vary depending on factors like gender and academic background. For example, students who are studying in creative or life science fields often appreciate the value of art more, as they may already

How to cite this paper: Dr. Smita Srivastava | Dr. Ashish Awasthi "Perception towards Integration of Art as a Compulsory Subject in Primary School Curriculum: A Study Among Undergraduate Students of Lucknow" Published in International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (ijtsrd), ISSN: 2456-6470, Volume-10 | Issue-2, April 2026, pp.1287-1291, URL: www.ijtsrd.com/papers/ijtsrd125202.pdf



IJTSRD125202

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be exposed to interdisciplinary and expressive forms of learning. On the other hand, students from highly technical fields sometimes prioritize core academic subjects and may initially view art as less important, although many still acknowledge its benefits when discussed in the context of overall development.

Despite the growing body of research on art integration, there is still a noticeable gap when it comes to understanding how undergraduate students perceive the idea of making art a compulsory subject at the primary school level—especially in a city like Lucknow. Since these students represent the next generation of professionals, educators, and decision-makers, their opinions matter. This study, therefore, makes an effort to explore their perspectives and contribute to a better understanding of how art education is viewed in today's educational landscape.

Objectives of the Study

1. To compare the perception towards integration of art as a compulsory subject in primary school curriculum on the basis of gender.
2. To compare the perception towards integration of art as a compulsory subject in primary school curriculum on the basis of discipline.

Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant difference in perception based on gender.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in perception based on discipline.

Methodology

Research Design- This study used a descriptive survey design to understand the topic in a simple and practical way. The method was selected because it helps in collecting information directly from people about their views and experiences. It focuses on describing what is happening in the present without making any changes to the situation. Data were collected using structured tools like questionnaires to keep the responses clear and consistent. This approach made it easier to identify patterns and common opinions among the participants. Overall, the method provided a clear and realistic picture of the situation in its natural context.

Results and Interpretation

Objectives No- 1

1- To compare the Perceptions towards Integration of Art subject in Primary school curriculum as compulsory subject on the basis of Gender

Hypotheses No- 1

1- There is no significant difference between the Perceptions towards Integration of Art subject in Primary school curriculum as compulsory subject on the basis of Gender

Population

Population means the complete group of individuals that the researcher wants to study, as explained by Best & Kahn (2006). It includes all people who share common characteristics related to the research topic. In this study, the population consisted of undergraduate students of Shri Ramswaroop Memorial University. These students were chosen because they come from different academic backgrounds and experiences. The population acts as the main base from which the sample is selected. Understanding the population helps in making the study more meaningful and relevant.

Sample

A sample is a smaller group taken from the population to represent it in the study. In this research, 150 students were selected using a random sampling method to keep the selection fair and unbiased. The sample included students from three different courses to maintain variety. There were 50 students each from B.Tech, BCA, and Biotechnology programs. This equal distribution made it easier to compare their responses. Using random sampling also improved the reliability of the study.

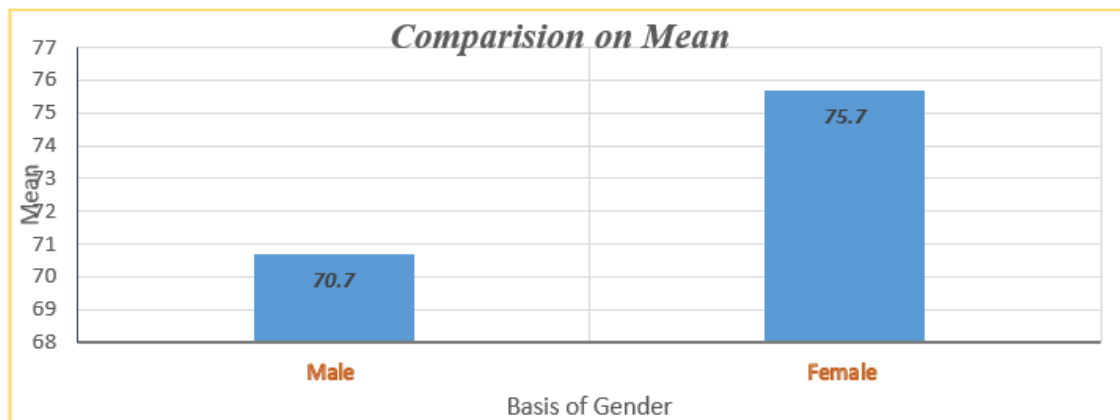
Tool

The study used a self-made questionnaire as the main tool for data collection. It was designed using a 5-point Likert scale to understand students' opinions clearly. The scale ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree, giving participants flexibility in their responses. The questions were simple, clear, and directly related to the objectives of the study. Care was taken to make the questionnaire easy to understand for all students. This helped in collecting accurate and useful information.

Statistical Techniques

Simple and appropriate statistical methods were used to analyze the data. Mean and Standard Deviation were calculated to understand the average responses and how much they varied. These helped in getting a clear overall picture of the data. An Independent Samples t-test was also used to compare differences between groups. This made it easier to see if the responses of different groups were significantly different. Overall, these techniques helped in drawing clear and meaningful conclusions from the study.

<i>I- Comparison</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>t-Statistic</i>	<i>p-Value</i>	<i>Significant (p < 0.05)</i>
Male	50	70.7	6.32	0.00002	Yes
Female	50	75.7			



Interpretation of Hypothesis 1

The objective of this analysis was to compare the perceptions towards the integration of Art as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum based on gender.

The mean score of male respondents (N = 75) was 70.7, whereas the mean score of female respondents (N = 76) was 75.7. This indicates that female participants have a relatively higher perception towards the integration of Art as a compulsory subject compared to male participants.

The calculated t-value is -6.32, and the p-value is 0.00002, which is significantly less than the standard level of significance ($p < 0.05$). Therefore, the result is statistically significant.

Hence, the null hypothesis stating that *there is no significant difference between male and female perceptions* is rejected.

Objectives No- 2

To compare the Perceptions towards Integration of Art subject in Primary school curriculum as compulsory subject on the basis of discipline.

Hypotheses No- 2

There is no significant difference between the Perceptions towards Integration of Art subject in Primary school curriculum as compulsory subject on the basis of disciplines.

Disciplines	No	Mean	SD	Mean	F-Statistic	p-Value	Significant (p < 0.05)
B.Sc.	50	72	5	72	0.4291	0.6519	No
B.Tech	50	70	6	70			
BCA	50	71	4	71			

Interpretation of Hypothesis 2

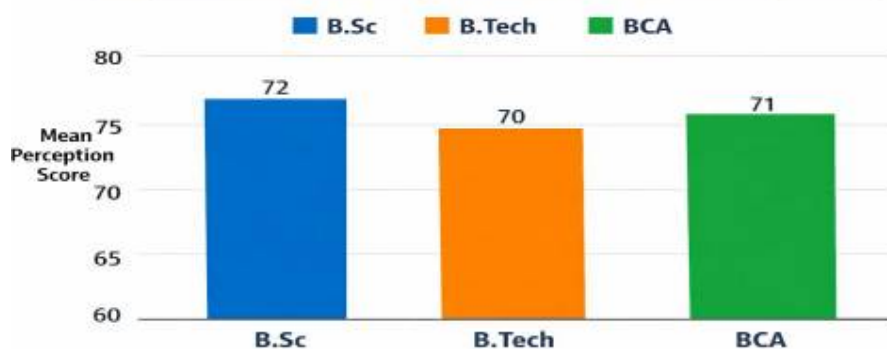
The objective of this analysis was to compare the perceptions towards the integration of Art as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum based on different disciplines.

The mean scores for the three groups are as follows: B.Sc. (N = 50, Mean = 72), B.Tech (N = 50, Mean = 70), and BCA (N = 50, Mean = 71). These mean values indicate that the perceptions of students across all three disciplines are quite similar, with only minor differences.

The calculated F-value is **0.4291**, and the p-value is **0.6519**, which is greater than the level of significance ($p < 0.05$). This indicates that the difference among the groups is not statistically significant.

Therefore, the null hypothesis stating that *there is no significant difference in perceptions based on discipline* is **accepted**.

Perception Towards Integration of Art in Primary Schools



ANOVA Test: $F = 0.4291$, $p = 0.6519$ • **No Significant Difference**

Findings-

It can be concluded that there is a significant difference in perceptions based on gender, with female respondents showing more positive perceptions towards the inclusion of Art as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum.

The results of the one-way ANOVA test indicate no significant difference in the perception towards the integration of Art as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum among students of B.Sc, B.Tech, and BCA disciplines. This means that students from all three disciplines share similar views regarding the inclusion of Art in the primary curriculum. Therefore, discipline does not influence students' perception of Art integration, and educational planners can consider this finding while designing inclusive and balanced curricula. It can be concluded that students from different disciplines (B.Sc., B.Tech, and BCA) do not differ significantly in their perceptions towards the integration of Art as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum.

Discussion

The findings of the study show a clear and encouraging trend—most undergraduate students view the integration of art into the primary school curriculum in a positive light. This suggests that young adults today are increasingly aware that education should go beyond textbooks and exams. They seem to recognize that art plays a meaningful role in shaping creativity, expression, and overall personality development.

At the same time, some differences in perception were noticed among students from different academic backgrounds. Students from Biotechnology appeared more open and supportive of art integration, possibly because their field already encourages connections between different areas of knowledge. In contrast, students from more technical streams like B.Tech tended to focus more on core academic subjects, which might explain their relatively lower—but still

positive—inclination towards art education. When it comes to gender, the differences were present but not strong enough to be considered significant. This indicates that both male and female students generally agree on the value of art in education.

In simple terms, there seems to be a shared understanding across groups that art is not just an optional activity, but something that adds real value to learning.

Overall, these findings are in line with earlier research, which has consistently highlighted how art contributes to creativity, critical thinking, and emotional growth. The study reinforces the idea that art integration is not just beneficial but necessary in modern education.

Educational Implications

The results of this study offer some practical insights for improving the education system. First, curriculum planners should seriously consider making art a compulsory subject at the primary level, rather than treating it as an optional or secondary activity. When introduced early, art can help children develop confidence, imagination, and a love for learning.

Teacher education programs also need to adapt. Future teachers should be trained not only in subject knowledge but also in how to integrate art into their teaching methods. This will make classrooms more engaging and inclusive.

There is also a need to spread awareness among parents, educators, and institutions about the importance of art education. Often, art is overlooked because it is not seen as “academic enough,” but this mindset needs to change.

Finally, educational institutions should encourage interdisciplinary learning, where art is connected with subjects like science, mathematics, and technology. Such an approach can make learning more meaningful and relatable for students.

Limitations of the Study

Like any research, this study has certain limitations that should be kept in mind. It was conducted within a single university, which means the findings may not fully represent the views of students in other regions or institutions.

The sample size, although adequate for analysis, is relatively small when considering the diversity of undergraduate students as a whole. A larger sample might provide more detailed insights.

Additionally, the study relies on self-reported data, which means responses may be influenced by personal bias or the tendency to give socially desirable answers.

Suggestions for Further Research

This study opens the door for further exploration in this area. Future researchers can expand the scope by including students from multiple universities and different regions to gain a broader understanding of perceptions towards art education.

It would also be useful to compare the views of students from rural and urban backgrounds, as their exposure to art and educational opportunities may differ significantly.

Long-term studies could provide even deeper insights by examining how art integration impacts students over time, especially in terms of creativity, academic performance, and emotional well-being.

Conclusion

In today's rapidly changing world, education needs to prepare students not just for exams, but for life.

Integrating art as a compulsory subject in the primary school curriculum is a step in that direction. It helps children grow into creative, confident, and emotionally aware individuals.

The present study shows that undergraduate students largely support this idea, recognizing the many benefits that art brings to learning. While there are slight differences based on gender and academic discipline, the overall attitude remains positive and encouraging.

These findings send a clear message to educators and policymakers: art education deserves more attention and should be thoughtfully included in the curriculum. By doing so, we can move closer to an education system that truly supports the holistic development of every child.

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