

ART INTEGRATED LEARNING IN SCHOOLS: NEED OF PRESENT ERA

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Art integrated learning (AIL) has emerged as a vital pedagogical approach in contemporary education, promoting an engaged and dynamic learning environment. This method utilizes various art forms—such as visual arts, music, and drama—to enhance students' understanding of core academic subjects by making the educational journey more enjoyable and effective. Through experiences like drawing, painting, clay modeling, and other artistic activities, students gain opportunities for experiential learning, deepening their conceptual understanding and encouraging personal expression. Moreover, AIL acknowledges the individual learning styles of students, allowing them to engage with the material in ways that resonate with their personal experiences and interests.

This paper explores the critical role of art integration within educational settings, addressing three central questions: the significance of art-integration, its necessity in contemporary schools, and effective methods for implementation in classrooms. Art integration, defined as the incorporation of artistic elements across diverse curricular areas, fosters a constructive learning environment that enhances cognitive, socio-emotional, and psychomotor development. As global educational demands increase, art-integration becomes imperative for nurturing creativity, innovation, and a passion for learning in students, as emphasized by Sawyer (2020). Furthermore, the study outlines practical strategies for embedding art in present-day classrooms, particularly through the framework of Art Integration Learning (AIL), which enhances the "4Cs" of education—critical thinking, collaboration, creativity, and communication. Ultimately, this paper asserts that art integration is essential for holistic child development in the 21st century.

Art integration in education promotes a holistic approach to learning by incorporating various art forms across academic subjects, thereby enhancing student engagement and fostering an interactive classroom environment. This pedagogical strategy blends modern and traditional teaching methods to create a conducive space for active learning, stimulating curiosity and enthusiasm among students. Despite existing efforts, such as appointing art educators and establishing training programs, the potential of art integration can be significantly amplified through enhanced collaboration among educational departments, art organizations, and community stakeholders. Key strategies include on-site support for art education, regular training for teachers, advocacy for best practices, and promoting research in art-integrated pedagogy. By cultivating an educational atmosphere that values creativity, collaboration, and critical reasoning, the integration of arts can effectively equip students with essential 21st-century skills, fostering a sense of freedom and expression crucial for personal and academic growth.

Keywords: Art integrated learning, NEP 2020, 21st century skills, foundational stage, preparatory stage, middle stage, secondary stage etc.

Received: 24/04/2026

Revised: 04/06/2026

Acceptance: 11/06/2026

Publication: 18/6/2026

1. Introduction

“The future belong to young people with an education and the imagination to create.”

..... Barack Obama

The idea of self-pace learning with art revolve the journey of art integrated learning method. The involvement of art to create the attraction towards the learning of academic subjects makes learning as well as teaching active, interesting and fruitful. As art experiences provide freedom to every learners with observation, imagine, explore, create, recreate and express and needed opportunities. This includes the experiential learning with the inclusion of various art based experiences such as drawing and painting, clay modelling, pottery, paper crafts, masks, puppets etc. with the objective to make more engaging and joyful way.

Art Integrated learning

“Logic will get you from A to B. Imagination will take you everywhere.”

..... Albert Einstein

The first question raises in the mind about art integrated learning is “What AIL is?”. With exploring the question, it may easily state that AIL is not only a pedagogy with the art, but it also includes the learning through the arts. Arts includes the experiences and/or activities engages the learners to understand, to explore, and to construct of concepts through the inner soul. Art in any form like visual, performing; which make the learning joyful & experiential. At the time of learning, learners observes, thinks, imagine, explores, experiments, creates, expresses. Such all activities belongs to the domains of learning- cognitive, affective and psychomotor. Art integration denotes combination of art and teaching/learning in different curricular areas. Subjects such as social studies, languages, mathematics can be easily linked with art experiences of a learners and clarifies the concepts. The flexibility of self-pace learning, age-appropriate opportunities for learners make art more effective tool of learning, which creates experiential learning approach. Although the role of art-inclusion in learning gets change at every learning stages such as:

1. Role of art-integration at foundational stage.

At this stage, learners are very energetic. In the age group of 3 to 7 years, various art activities such as drawing, painting, clay work, dance plays an important role in development of creativities among them, and helps them in

- Making learning joyful and interesting.
- Creation of environment of minute observation.
- Helping them in unhindered exploration.
- Developing sensitiveness towards learning environment.
- Expressing freely and openly for better learning.

2. Role of art-integration at preparatory stage.

At this stage, art need to be linked with all subjects and to be part of linked with all subjects and to be part of teaching learning concepts. Art will play an effective role to strengthen the imagination, intellect, emotional, psycho-motor etc. The art-integration during the learning of various subjects helps in

- Joyful and to develop eagerness to learn.
- Developing the inclusive environment.
- Discovering the various concepts in different subjects.
- Enhancing curiosity for learning and expression.

3. Role of art-integration at middle stage.

At this stage of development of child, the art integration helps in developing curiosity, critical thinking etc., which plays vital role in cognitive development, aesthetic development and moral development also. The major role of art-integration at this stage are

- Development of attitude towards content.
- Regulate the emotions.
- Development of co-ordination between values and content.
- Awareness development of rich heritage and culture.

4. Role of art-integration at secondary stage.

At this stage, the child is about to adolescent age and mind is developed. So the art plays wider role for the learning such as

- Enhance deep understanding of content.
- Develop societal concern.
- Emotional and aesthetic development.
- Awareness for rich heritage.
- Develop attitude towards team work.
- Develop artistic skills in day-to-day life.

NEP 2020 (para 4.7) describes art-integration is a cross-curricular pedagogical approach that utilizes various aspects and forms of arts and culture as the basis for learning of concepts across subjects. As a part of the thrust on experiential learning, art-integrated education will be embedded in classroom transactions not only for creating joyful classrooms, but also for imbibing the Indian ethos through integration of Indian art and culture in the teaching and learning process at every level. This art-integrated approach will strengthen the linkages between education and culture.

The integration of art with connection of culture surely develop the critical view toward learning, will be helpful for all round development as para 1.5.1 (a) of NCFSE 2023 states that the objective of art in the middle stages is to help students develop an appreciation for the artistic and cultural diversity of their region and other parts of India. In the secondary stage, students should develop an awareness of the wide scope of applications in the visual and performing arts. This will be helpful to enable the learners ethical, rational, compassionate and caring.

The idea of implementing the art-integrated education is very much based on discovery learning, learning by doing, activity based, inquiry based learning, problem-solving approach, peer-interaction based approach etc., which were based on various philosophers. An international society named InSEA (The International Society for Education through Art) advocates art-education as means of “fostering values and disciplines essential for full intellectual, emotional and social development of human beings”; which aims to deeply connect with world’s culture for better understanding.

In a time when educational systems are increasingly scrutinized for their effectiveness, art integrated learning presents a holistic method that not only covers the basic curriculum but also nurtures creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence. Thus, in this rapidly evolving world, integrating art into education is essential for preparing students to navigate the complexities of the future.

In spite of all efforts towards converting classroom pedagogy into art-integrated pedagogy; the questions rise: What is the importance of art-integration?; Why is art-integration needed in schools in present era? & most important; How can art-integration can be inculcated in present classroom?

In present paper authors took an attempt to reach the solutions of these questions as:

1. What is the importance of art-integration?

Art-integration means to correlate/include/combine the art in different curricular areas such as languages, social-sciences, sciences, mathematics etc. As art used in various subjects help to develop the constructive approach among learners. More over art in learning have positive effort in the development of all domains as cognitive, socio-emotional, psychomotor. Pelowski, M et. al (2016) acknowledged that art experience has positive impact in psychological development in their research. Laser et. al. (1983) also resulted that art argued to create longitudinal impacts, which includes self-adjustment, changes in one’s personality, world view and cognition ability. Art may also direct social behavior of individuals. An another study by Cuyper et. al. (2012) stated that art have an impact on health and well-being such as reduced stress. Tomporowski et. al.(2019) concluded that performance arts benefit in skill development, cognition function and in allocation of mental resources. And it works as a naturalistic translational approach.

2. Why is art-integration needed in schools in present era?

Various studies showed the importance of art-integration in development of various domains i.e. cognitive, socio-emotional and psychomotor. The schools were established for the purpose of all round development of the child/learner.

Now a day, expectations from learners as well as from schools have been increased at a very high level. Now all nations are at global level in learning, to perform etc. in the line of 21st century skills. To achieve these with sound mental and physical health, art-integration becomes the need of school to transform the knowledge, skills in teaching-learning process. This may be elaborated in a manner as art helps to develop the creativity, innovations, develop the interest in learning and many more. This was also advocated by Sawyer, K (2020), exploring the contributions to understanding the benefits of art-education. Wan et. al. (2020) advocate for partnership between researchers and independent organizations to develop the stronger evidence for art integration and art education.

3. How can art-integration can be inculcated in present classroom?

AIL as a pedagogy, it directly influenced the 4Cs of learning: Critical thinking, collaboration, creativity and communication. Central Board of Secondary Education (CBSE) made by issuing the guidelines for art-integrated project-work to be conducted by students of class IX & X, the art-integrated project will be integrated with any form of Indian art- visual or performing. The teacher will play the role of facilitator to impart the art in classroom. However the art has the ways as various procedure into foundational, preparatory, middle and secondary level classrooms. Mainly variations can be classified into three categories i.e. Arts as curriculum, art-enhanced curriculum and art-integrated curriculum. All these variations are linked to learners as their nature, and facilitates in deep learning. A booming of art-integrated education may be possible with the efforts all engaged stakeholders in education. All stakeholders i.e. teachers, teacher-educators, researchers, trainers, planners, policy makers, administrators have the vital role in fostering the art-integration education. Some of them are being sensitized their role as per controlling authorities to mark their role such as: Teachers can provide the opportunities of art-integration in their classroom by the way of accepting the ideas &feeling of learners, with encouraging the culture & artistic values of the students, by

enriching the art-related vocabulary as well as artistic content among learners. Teacher-educator/trainers can inculcate art-integrated teaching/training strategies in teacher-education course/training, also suggest the curriculum developer about the ways to develop art-integrated curricula at various level. As the NEP 2020 provides the broader point of view of integration of art in curriculum as well as in classroom to attain the maximum outcome/output of the investment in education, the policy makers developed the framework, policy etc. for the purpose of providing guideline for the implementation. The supreme role falls of administrators as they are the overall responsible in all aspects. The acceptance of charge will definitely provide the insight and motivation to other stakeholders to implement the art-integration in education.

2. Conclusion

As art-integration is the use of art (in any form/type) in all other academic as well as non-academic subjects in curricula to promote the outcome based learning. This way helps the learners in better learning with the combination of modern and traditional methods of teaching-learning. In the process of inclusion of art-integration in other subjects, class becomes interactive, conducive to learning, active and more over develops the eagerness towards learning. Although so many efforts are being done at various levels by most of the stakeholders in school-education. Such as appointment of art-teachers, establishment of Bal-vatikas, development of training manual, sensitizing the teacher, development of art-room etc. These can be enhanced up to the significant level with

- Collaboration of education departments to other organization i.e. Bal-bhawans, museums etc.
- Active collaboration of schools and district/state level institutions.
- On-site support of institutions belongs to art-education.
- Regular and qualitative orientation of teachers and other stake-holders.
- Inclusion the part of various training by the way of awareness and implementation.
- Collect, advocate and dissemination of the stronger evidence of art-integration practices.
- Regular meeting of all level of stake holder means teachers/parents to administrators.
- Exchange programs of students & teachers among the education departments of different states.
- Motivation/encouragement of various efforts make by teachers at ground level.
- Promoting the research related art-integration in class room practices etc.

With this approach, learning will become more interesting, active, creative, reasoned based, collaborative, equity etc. Sense of freedom, expression etc. in art-integration education will definitely boosts the various skills related 21st century as per global requirement.

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