

ART, EDUCATION, AND MEDIA: INTERSECTIONS IN THE CONTEMPORARY INDIAN CONTEXT

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Published on 30 April, 2026

ABSTRACT

This paper examines the interrelationship between art, education, and media in the contemporary context, with particular reference to India. Art, traditionally regarded as a medium of aesthetic expression, has evolved into a significant tool for communication, cultural preservation, and social engagement. Education, similarly, has expanded beyond conventional frameworks to incorporate interdisciplinary and experiential approaches, while media has emerged as a powerful platform for dissemination and representation. The study explores how these three domains interact and influence one another, highlighting the role of art education in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and cultural awareness. It also discusses the impact of digital media in transforming artistic practices and enhancing accessibility to educational resources. The paper critically examines policy initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which emphasizes the integration of arts into mainstream education through innovative pedagogical approaches. While media and institutional frameworks have expanded the reach of art and education, challenges such as commercialization, digital divide, and loss of authenticity persist. The paper argues for a balanced and integrative approach that combines traditional knowledge systems with contemporary practices to ensure the holistic development of individuals and the preservation of cultural heritage.

Keywords: Cultural Transmission; Indian Art Forms; Art Education; Interdisciplinary Learning; NEP 2020; Media Studies; Digital Media

Introduction

Art, education, and media constitute three interdependent domains that significantly shape human thought, cultural identity, and social development. In the contemporary era, characterized by rapid technological advancement and globalization, the boundaries between these domains are increasingly fluid. Art is no longer confined to aesthetic expression alone; it functions as a medium of communication, education, and social critique. Education, in turn, has evolved beyond traditional frameworks to embrace interdisciplinary and experiential approaches, while media has emerged as a powerful force influencing both the dissemination and perception of knowledge.

In the Indian context, where art has historically been intertwined with daily life, spirituality, and pedagogy, the interrelationship among these domains acquires deeper significance. The present discussion examines how art, education, and media interact and influence one another, with particular reference to Indian artistic traditions, the role of art education, and contemporary policy initiatives such as the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

Art as a Medium of Knowledge and Cultural Expression

Art has long served as a repository of knowledge and a reflection of cultural consciousness. Indian art forms—classical, folk, and contemporary—embody a synthesis of aesthetic, philosophical, and social values. Traditions such as classical music, dance, and regional visual arts not only provide artistic expression but also function as carriers of historical memory and collective identity.

In the contemporary context, art continues to play a vital role in fostering creativity, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence. It enables individuals to engage with complex social realities and articulate perspectives that may not be easily expressed through conventional forms of communication. Moreover, art has increasingly become a platform for addressing issues such as gender equality, environmental awareness, and cultural diversity. The experiential nature of art makes it an effective pedagogical tool. By engaging multiple senses and encouraging active participation, it facilitates deeper understanding and retention of knowledge. Thus, art naturally complements educational processes.

Art Education: Importance and Emerging Perspectives

Art education is essential for holistic human development. It cultivates imagination, innovation, and aesthetic awareness—qualities that are indispensable in the modern world. Beyond skill acquisition, it nurtures empathy, cultural sensitivity, and the ability to think critically.

This paper was presented at the 'Swar Sanskar National Seminar', organized by Swar Sanskar Sangeet Gurukul
Seminar Convener: Dr. Yash Sanjay Dewale (Co-Founder: Swar Sanskar Sangeet Gurukul, Assistant Professor: MSU Baroda)

Traditionally, however, art education in India has been marginalized within formal academic structures. It has often been viewed as secondary to core subjects, resulting in limited institutional support and resources. Despite this, there is a growing recognition of its significance, particularly in light of contemporary educational needs.

Art education also plays a crucial role in preserving and promoting traditional art forms. Many indigenous practices face the threat of decline due to changing socio-economic conditions. Integrating these forms into educational curricula can ensure their continuity while also enriching the learning experience.

Furthermore, interdisciplinary approaches have highlighted the relevance of art in enhancing learning across subjects. For instance, rhythm in music can aid mathematical understanding, while visual arts can deepen historical and cultural awareness.

NEP 2020 and the Integration of Arts

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 represents a transformative step in reimagining education in India. It emphasizes holistic, multidisciplinary, and experiential learning, placing significant importance on the integration of arts into the curriculum.

One of the key features of NEP 2020 is the concept of "arts-integrated learning," which encourages the use of artistic methods to teach various subjects. This approach not only enhances engagement but also promotes creativity and critical thinking. The policy also advocates for the inclusion of local and traditional art forms, thereby fostering cultural awareness and diversity.

Additionally, NEP 2020 introduces flexibility in subject choices, enabling students to pursue arts alongside other disciplines. This challenges the conventional hierarchy of subjects and encourages a more inclusive educational environment.

While the policy provides a strong framework, its effective implementation requires adequate infrastructure, teacher training, and institutional support.

Media as a Transformative Force

Media plays a crucial role in shaping contemporary cultural and educational landscapes. With the advent of digital technologies, the ways in which art is created, shared, and consumed have undergone significant transformation.

Digital platforms have expanded the reach of artists, enabling them to connect with global audiences. Traditional art forms, once limited by geographical boundaries, now find new avenues of visibility through online media. Similarly, media has enhanced access to art education through virtual classes, tutorials, and digital archives.

However, the growing influence of media also presents challenges. The commercialization of art, the prioritization of popularity over quality, and the risk of cultural homogenization are pressing concerns. Moreover, the rapid consumption of media content may lead to superficial engagement, undermining deeper artistic appreciation.

Interrelationship of Art, Education, and Media

The interrelation of art, education, and media is dynamic and mutually reinforcing. Art enriches education by fostering creativity and experiential learning, while education provides the framework for understanding and interpreting art. Media, in turn, acts as a bridge, facilitating the dissemination and accessibility of both.

In contemporary education, media tools such as audio-visual content, digital storytelling, and interactive platforms enhance the teaching of arts. Conversely, artistic elements play a vital role in media production, influencing its aesthetic and communicative impact.

This interconnectedness also contributes to cultural preservation and innovation. Media-driven educational initiatives can promote awareness of traditional art forms, while contemporary artistic practices continue to evolve through technological integration.

Indian Context: Opportunities and Challenges

India's rich artistic heritage provides immense potential for integrating art, education, and media. Government initiatives and policy frameworks have begun to recognize this potential. However, challenges such as the digital divide, inadequate resources, and the commercialization of art remain significant.

Balancing tradition with modernity is crucial. While adapting to new media formats is necessary, preserving the authenticity of traditional art forms is equally important. This requires a thoughtful and balanced approach that respects cultural heritage while embracing innovation.



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Conclusion

The interrelation of art, education, and media reflects a transformative shift in contemporary society. Together, these domains contribute to the holistic development of individuals and the preservation of cultural identity. While media enhances accessibility and reach, education provides structure, and art enriches both with creativity and depth.

In the Indian context, initiatives such as NEP 2020 offer promising directions for integrating these domains. However, sustained efforts are required to address existing challenges and ensure equitable access to resources.

A balanced integration of art, education, and media can foster a society that values creativity, critical thinking, and cultural diversity—qualities essential for navigating the complexities of the modern world.

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