



Arts, Crafts, and Aesthetics in Education

Dr. Ajay Kumar

Research Scholar, Former PhD scholar of Jawaharlal Nehru University

New Delhi-67, Add; Building. Number; 01, School of Arts & Aesthetics, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi-67

Email; ajaysharma.theatre@gmail.com Contact. No; 8709205792

ABSTRACT

Arts are the way of cultural life. It imitates the emotions of our lives and also represents the cultural heritage of India through different mediums such as architecture, fine arts, performing arts, sculpture, pictorial arts, graphics, and images. We can see it through visual communication during the presentations. Craft is an essential element found along with any art form. It decorates the genre aesthetically concerning visual reflection. It is synonymous with art forms; without forms, the craft has no relevance. Aesthetics combines all art forms with taste and beauty. It also has beautifully designed forms for visual enjoyment; people can taste it during the performance. Education fulfills our desire for life, such as enlightenment, knowledge, and scientific temperaments. It could be formal, non-formal, or informal. Significantly, arts combine all elements and design for visual enjoyment. Commonly, these elements exist in a particular form. In this article, we will intervene through theatre arts. Its vital forms have encompassed arts, crafts, aesthetics, stagecraft, acting, sound, music, etc. It integrates education with different subject contents across disciplines joyfully. I shall strive to intervene through the 'image theatre' form, coined by Brazilian theatre and renowned scholar Augusto Boal's '*Theatre of the Oppressed*' genre. He emphasizes that image theatre builds a story text through several images, and it could integrate through storytelling form in educational pedagogies (Campbell, 2019: 23, 23). In their book, *Drama Based Pedagogy*, Prof. Kathryn Dawson and Bridget Kiger Lee (2018) agree on the concepts of Boal's image theatre techniques. They consider technique as a methodology that works beyond imagination. My research method would be quantitative methods that effectively deal with behavioral approaches in ethnography, humanities, and performing studies. Finally, I shall strive to do critical analysis through the lens of 'image theatre,' in association with arts, crafts, and aesthetics among art integration learning in education.

Keywords: Arts, craft, aesthetics, integration, and education

Introduction

Art imitates our lives through various activities like performances, demonstrations, and exhibitions. It involves conceptual ideas, creativity, imagination, proficiency, beauty, aesthetics, and emotional expression. It explores through images, pictorials, graphics, canvas, painting, sculpture, exhibitions, and performances. People play with imagination to illustrate and performatively decorate new insights, visuals, and images in the performing life. Art is an umbrella term that combines various disciplines, like visual art, painting, sculpture, architecture, crafting, dance, music, drama/theatre, film, and aesthetics.

Craft is an essential element in the arts; it always works together and enhances the glorified form. For instance, print arts forms combine arts and crafts within a single form and create prints on fabrics known as Print arts. It unifies performance, garments, and canvas and can be decorated, modified, and aesthetically elaborated in various aspects of spaces. We need specific crafting to decorate happiness in our social and cultural life. Similarly, stagecraft in theatre decorates the play's mood and fills the text's requirement for visual perceptions. It has enriched itself with foundational theatrical elements like the set, costume, light, sound, props, and makeup.

Similarly, aesthetics gives the audience a proper sense of understanding the philosophy of artifacts. It decorates all artistic work regarding time, space, motion, sound, and genre in the creative world. Aesthetics, arts, and crafts are synonymous with artistic lives. Today, education explores such conceptual possibilities, primarily related to performing arts components that could enhance creative works and conventional education. It is an innovative process that presents methods of organizing the elements and transforming the ingredients in the arts. (Betty D. Copeland: 32). In other terms, aesthetics is the philosophical term that reveals a sense of beauty and taste in nature and artistic flavor around the art and performance culture. It tried to envisage arts and applied art disciplines to demonstrate a good sense of endeavor so that the audience can decide whether something is good or bad regarding beauty and taste. It entails all artistic genres like art forms, crafts, dance, music, and theatre.

Similarly, education gives a way to fulfill the desire for human life, such as employment, enlightenment, and self-reliance. Formal, non-formal, and informal education are flexible to incorporate in art, aesthetics, and theatre. We envisaged innovative art education as part of the conventional teaching-learning process. Arts Education commonly refers to the learning process through the arts, such as visual arts, music, dance, theatre, and media as subjects (Goldberg 2017: 19).

'Art' and 'craft' are different kinds of aesthetics that work organisationally and ideology together, and they emphasize the standards of quality, virtuoso, skill, and beauty. Crafts become an art medium when artists exhibit that artwork in a specific gallery. Significantly, other dominant forms, such as media, techniques, organizations, and audiences, have converted them into arts and crafts. Academicism or subordination of traditional art forms is frequently necessary outside the art world; such organized activities have become a craft (Becker. S. Howard: 1978: 862). Generally, we are familiar with the term artisan community, which refers to artists, artisans, business people, potters, etc. Here, artisan means those communities that have preserved art from generation to generation for the cultural craft heritage of the nation. Generally, we are familiar with the term artisan community, which refers to artists, artisans, business people, potters, etc. Here, artisan means those communities that have preserved art from generation to generation for the cultural craft heritage of the nation. They easily meet in rural areas of India. Whenever we see them, one thing comes to our mind: such professionals have established their expertise in art. For instance, an artist who uses their skill to build beautiful paintings, sculptures, sets, and ceramics is known as an artist or artisan. Similarly, artisans are experts in their professional skills and decorate rare objects aesthetically. Thus, crafts associated with those objects made by artists are co-related to the creative process of the artifacts. Arts experts S. Howard says that 'Art' and 'craft' are contrasting aesthetics, which is why art, crafts, theatre, and education would be contrasting aesthetics. Aesthetics encompasses all of nature, including criticism, beauty, and taste. It also strived to balance text, literature, mechanism, art, and craft properly. This effect advocates for a balance between art, craft, aesthetics, and education, as shown in the new education policy of 2020.

Historically, as per curriculum concern, Mrs. Manuel Barkan says, "Aesthetic education was a social and individual need in 1973 century." It constituted developing a curriculum-based framework on aesthetics in education for society. She discusses in detail how it has grown in later phases. Still, she emphasizes the second phase and continues to talk about 'behavioral psychology' through the shared consciousness of all stakeholders like scholars and academicians in the arts and aesthetics experts at the Center, Inc. 1968. Still, she emphasizes the second phase and continues to talk about 'behavioral psychology' through the shared consciousness of all stakeholders like scholars and academicians in the arts and aesthetics experts at the Center, Inc, 1968. They analyzed the essential nuances in their significant fields as an expert. They recommended the outlines of the content through the integration of cultural disciplines like visual arts, literature, music, film, theatre, and dance. Thus, these radical changes happened in the Curriculum with content for aesthetic education (D. Copeland. Betty: Art Education, May 1983: 32). In the 19th century, theatre in education gained a boost after World War II and was particularly influential in the era of optimism from 1939-1960. Gradually, we started talking about education and theatre discipline. Therefore, drama/theatre has become part of the curriculum framework (Nicholson, 2009). Significantly, education is a human need, and theatre is a cultural pleasure, but education plays a crucial role in the growth of humanities and the arts. It also fosters our indigenous culture forms, such as arts, crafts, dance, music, painting, and theatre. In that way, we need a policy where cultures have positively incorporated and brought radical changes in conventional education. We must talk about policy-making, such as knocking on the doors of integration and inclusion with an 'interdisciplinary approach,' which had been indulged in the National Curriculum Framework earlier and again mentioned in the present Education Policy 2020. It has been adopted as an artistic framework of NCF 2005 for school education policy by NCERT. It states that art education is the integration process through the teaching-learning process of the different arts, crafts, dance, music, painting, and theatre (Sutra, 2006: 02). New Education Policy also admits this epistemology, stating that art integrates healthy learning with education. We must emphasize developing pedagogy for the holistic development of our children (NEP 2020: 11). It states that arts education is mandatory as an interdisciplinary approach, which means we can choose art as an elective subject in various disciplines. Indeed, arts, crafts, and performances can enhance children's interest and foster their artistic potential. These are based on various events like colouring paper with crayons, making miniature statues from clay, folding in the form to create good origami, designing handmade cards, calendars, and national flags, etc. Performing art forms like dance, music, and theatre could foster artistic possibilities in growing children. When the students work with a single sheet of paper covering an ample space, they are sometimes singing and storytelling, playing with each other's motion between lines, experimenting with materials, and also attending to each other marks, rhythms, resonant elements, and pictorial representation (Schulte & Thompson 2018: 09). Significantly, theatre is a performing arts discipline encompassing all performance forms and literature, such as dance, music, costume, props, makeup, acting, dialogue, art, craft aesthetics, etc. We creators make theatrical presentations with the help of art, craft, and aesthetics. Components design the creative ambiance of the space in the theatre, craft multicultural content within various disciplines, and foster objective-based subjective materials created in funny ways that attract students to study. Today, our children have faced several challenges in completing the syllabi and increased reading pressure in front of professional competition, which becomes the cause of mental stress in their daily lives. In a way, art education can play a crucial role in redeveloping conventional schooling. We must think of an affirmative way to overcome such a challenge. Significantly, theatre performances like role-playing, imagining scenes, pronouncing dialogue, singing talent, telling stories, playing with props, stage and craft decoration, and various games engage our children in a joyful ecosystem. Arts education encompasses arts and education together, which comes under the humanities discipline in higher education; thus, it can be a suitable module for the teaching-learning process in school education. Arts-integrated learning (AIL) provides a rare way of integration that could create a joyful teaching-learning module and provide a healthy and enjoyable ecosystem to fight extraordinary challenges. Theatre performance also brought a radical change to holistic education along with integration. It helps to enhance pedagogies based on the theatre arts and incorporate interdisciplinary areas like art, craft, aesthetics, education, music, dance, and architecture.

Here, I strive to intervene through the lens of image theatre with theatrical elements of arts, crafts, and aesthetics. How do they integrate into art education themselves? Significantly, theatre/drama-based pedagogy is a giant canvas in Europe but still struggles to establish itself in India enthusiastically. Brazilian theatre director Augusto Boal talks about his repertoire technique, where theatre elements such as a forum, image theatre, games, and physical exercises written in an essay in his book '*Theatre of the Oppressed*.' help to provoke creative stories about education and society. He emphasizes the image theatre that fosters integration between story-making and pedagogies with collective dramaturgy (Campbell, 2019: 23, 23). The book, '*Drama Based Pedagogy*' by Prof. Kathryn Dawson and Bridget Kiger Lee (2018) agrees with Boal's image theatre technique. They consider technique as a methodology that will function beyond imagination. They also elaborate image theatre with the imagination of the story/narrative on various objectives. Significantly, we have mentioned that drama-based pedagogy also engages learning with theatre components like imagination, ensemble, embodiment of

story, etc (2018: 18). Scholars are trying to push an environment where students can grasp, interact, and connect with the facilitators freely and groom themselves in joyful surroundings. Both scholars agree that image theatre deals with a specific method where we have substantive skills that adventure our lives through story-making. Even in the pedagogy process, stories/narratives are created based on objectives with the help of the image. Both methods develop through tools like games, improvisation, movements, verbal and non-verbal exercise, pictorial images, storytelling, physical exercise, etc. Significantly, theatrical performance presents elements like actors, space, text, audience, light, sound, costume, set, and makeup. Still, we produce images between the playwright's text with the help of these components, and these elements also prepare scenery by encompassing these images in the form of a montage in performance aesthetics.

Research Methodology

Methodology concern, I could follow the qualitative research method that clearly understood the meaning of the sample's characteristics and nature. It helps to research, analyze, interpret, and contextualize information obtained from various strategic tools such as ethnography, humanities, historical and comparative study, etc. In this article, we did try to develop a performance-based pedagogy through Boal's image theatre concepts. Nowadays, educational training institutes have taken an important initiative to engage students with art education learning across India. They try to create a familiar environment through arts and aesthetics in education disciplines. In these initiatives, I conducted art workshops and concluded that the method demands a specific framework called pedagogies and comes from long-time experience. Here, my working area will primarily be based on two major education institutes across Delhi, the District Institutes of Education and Training, Keshav Puram, Delhi, and the District Institutes of Education and Training, Daryaganj, New Delhi. Our sample size will depend on the image theatre style on games, activities, stories, and performance pedagogy; however, these are the performance sites I found in my observation while conducting theatre workshops. My method envisages that they engage with multi-structured, collaborative, collective discussion and implementation that is objectives-oriented.



Findings came out on the process we followed in the given circumstances on the institute premises. In general, image theatre is very common in both objectives. Sometimes, it helps to create a story as text in the language of the playwright's endeavor, and sometimes, an image cultivated by the director while presenting it in the inherent text. Importantly, this method formalizes with the help of theatrical elements like arts, crafts, aesthetics, and education. So, we must warmly welcome those educational institutions that conduct such workshops twice a year based on art education or theatre in education. Thus, they provide us with resource persons in such a way as an opportunity to do research through innovative performance skills to enrich our contemporary pedagogy. Let me tell you that when we enter the school's premises or performing space on the first days, we try to interact with the students, and gradually, we engage all given variables according to the necessity. We follow various strategies, including social status, class, age groups, education policy, objectives, etc. Indeed, firstly, we have required a specific text that envisaged improvised or frequently we preferred established Playwright's text. Most of the time, we prefer improvised text, and that text has completed its full-making journey, which goes through various performance-making skills like games, exercise, principles, acting techniques, etc. This process creates innovative ideas and tries to keep engaged joyfully, and gradually; we do more exercises based on intervention like art, craft, aesthetics, and education. We also Boal emphasizes theatre games and techniques that foster education (Babbage, 2004). Selecting an art form or style would depend on the student's interest and embodiment by institutions. We have various types of culture and indigenous art forms from our society. Here, as facilitators, we prefer art forms that are familiar with the students' ethos. Subsequently, we shift our attention to the selection of the craft; the ideas of the engagement of the craft are spontaneously associated with the specific art forms. It is a universal fact that craft has been reflected in particular arts, such as pottery, ceramics, garments, stagecraft, etc. Significantly, aesthetics praise the ambiance of the performance in the theatre space. It combines all materials in the relevant form, which reflects the enjoyment of their form, test, beauty, and rasa during the presentation. Finally, education welcomes all supplementary efforts towards the making of the storytelling form to make it easy to understand various disciplines enthusiastically. This process makes lessons easy, joyful, holistically, and cognitively enhanced. Let us talk about the experience of the District Institutes of Education and Training, Keshav Puram, Delhi, that happened since the 2020-2022 batches. Here, I will share our observations on our workshop experience and how these elements communicate our performance ideologically and social issues and contribute as an essential element of theatre art. I took three stories, "Life in the Metro, Beti Padhao and Beti Bachao, Tidde raja Ki prem Kahani," which parallelly envisage art, craft, and aesthetics in education through image theatre and All stories had been developed by image as well storytelling genre.

First, I will discuss art, craft, and aesthetics integrated into the performance scenic montage and image theatre to make image by image in the series of small imaginative pics that become part of the storylines later. It could address subject-related concerns in another discipline through performances. I was a witness to this happening phenomenon. Let's start with "Life in the Metro". This story depicts the experience of the postmodern era of women's lives, and we can always see a confrontation between traditional and postmodern cultural attire and societies. Older women had been criticizing juniors for the culture of wearing clothes, footwear, miniskirts, tops, short sleeves, and tight-fit garments. They accused her of wearing such costumes, which are increasing daily, which brought more sexual harassment incidents. These performances were happening inside the metro coach, and finally, this story suggests that the younger generation should wear our Indian cultural traditions. Students used realistic theatre art styles and acting skills in various opportunities. They had crafted every



act with authentic props, the attire of the wearing clothes and handbags, and mobile phones, respectively. Sometimes, it goes with content, and sometimes, it goes beyond. All performances were designed aesthetically to entertain the spectators and enable them to communicate the message of the discipline.

Let us talk about the second performance, "Beti Padhao and Beti Bachao." this performance was utterly representative of culture, languages, and dialects; however, most students came from Haryana. The plot depicts the male-dominant societal struggle to save the life of a girl baby. One couple stayed in their ancestral house with their parents and had a girl child. Their parent was not happy with their daughter-in-law and granddaughter. However, they hoped



that she would give birth to a baby boy now. But their prediction failed over time, and her daughter-in-law gave birth to a girl baby. The tension had erupted in the family, and her mother-in-law was not ready to accept her baby. But after the intervention of the neighbors, relatives, and son, they take her. Finally, the celebration erupts in the family and begins with rituals, formalities, and sweets. Relatives come from both sides and share gifts with the mom and baby as friends of the couple, who have sung many songs for the cultural welcome. We conclude with art like songs, rituals, and acting, as well as crafts like toys, wine, clothes, sari, dupatta, motorbike, and sweets decorated beautifully that had imbibed in various action scenes that were aesthetically very entertaining and impactful.

Now discuss the third performance, "Tidde Raja Ki Prem Kahani." The 'Tidde dynasty' spread in the geographical periphery of the forest area where people lived happily. Human life was primarily on agricultural products. They grow crops like barley, maize rabbi, pulses, and millet for survival. There had been a queen who ruled over this dynasty, and she had two beautiful girls. One day, a stranger came here; unknowingly, he saw the queen's daughters in the garden. Spontaneously, both sisters have also attracted him and fell in love. Both girls quarreled with each other for passionate love. Subsequently, he reveals that he was a prince from another dynasty. Consequently, they get ready to compete to win their choice. Thus, the big sister impresses the prince with a theatrical enactment and beats this challenge, but the minor sister can't impress him. After this defeat, she plans to take revenge and possibly find a way to defeat them. Meanwhile, she provokes her mother to give a penalty for this act and gets the order from the queen's court to migrate him

from this dynasty. Whenever she finds a chance to kill him first, finally, both kill themselves together to sacrifice their life due to love. We find that art-wise, this performance centered on mystery, revenge, and sacrifices. The arts and crafts effects had been decorated very nicely. Every act was beautifully designed with acting skills, and some images were included. Scenes were crafted with various props and materials like colored costumes, knives, dances, music, and pans with dishes. All locations aesthetically gave a sense of a test of entertainment and visibility of the incorporated education. The team-based effort achieved a clear objective based on content, art, craft, aesthetics, and literature. They met at some point and explored new aesthetics, even fostering the innovative relationship between theatre and education.



Similarly, I am sharing my observation at the District Institute of Education and Training, Daryaganj, New Delhi. This workshop was conducted on theatre in education with teachers from D. El. Ed 2022-2023. I followed the methods mentioned above in this study that fostered image theatre form, art, craft, and aesthetics in education. I shall share stories of my image theatre style, which has experiments throughout the workshops. We make various images in the workshops with the help of the storytelling process, and these images are indeed coined through the regular process of the method, which is based on several techniques such as games, physical exercise, yoga, movement, and improvisation.

First, I will share the famous 'Birbal & Akber Ki Jodi' tale. It was a moral story that was very popular among children. The story portrays the life of those characters who were very honest and poor. And somehow, he gets a chance to achieve something and feed their necessity even though he impresses his belief in the king. Characters like washerman, servants, and ordinary people have the qualities to do this. When the king announced the





condition, the question was tricky: Would anybody spend whole nights in the river during freezing nights? We would honor him with coins of gold. The washer was needy and had to do anything for this purpose he could do. Confidently, he remained in the river during extreme cold the whole night with the help of the moon, and precisely, he won this condition and claimed his reward in the king's court the following day. But the king was not convinced when the king tried to know factual incidents and screamed and put pressure on the poor man. But he refused to accept false allegations against him and returned to his house without reward. Birbal faced this incident over this argument and felt very upset and left the court immediately. After this incident, he continuously abstained from the courts. After a long gap of one day, the king visited Birbal's house and saw a pitcher hanging on the tree, and Birbal was burning fire under the tree's root. How could it cook rice? It was impossible; the king realized it was their mistake and finally honored him with a golden coin. Artistically, all acts crafted through art, craft, aesthetics, and enact skills decorated each scene perfectly. Properties like dupattas, paper crafts, colorful costumes, headgear, and slogans were written on cardboard. They created a river with the help of garments like sarees and the moon shining on the cardboard at night in the sky. Performances were built enthusiastically sound that easily transitioned through story images into education aesthetically. Eventually, theatrical elements like space, actor, plot, set, makeup, costume, theatre music, light, arts, craft, and aesthetics ideally incorporate Boal's image of theatre. Transitioning into education with various stories was also a relevant endeavor and met itself relatively with several aesthetics. I never thought that students innovatively incorporated all elements adequately and enabled the artistic integration of pedagogy through arts, crafts, aesthetics, and theatre in education.

Conclusion

In conclusion, we have now concluded that theatre in education is a newly integrated discourse in which elements of theatre, such as art, craft, and aesthetics, are incorporated into education with the help of Image theatre in theatre pedagogy. I concluded that all aspects of theatre performance arts could be a few of the best educational structures, such as storytelling techniques. We found that during the practice session, both disciplines met at a juncture or a point in time and integrated into the educational structure.

Reference:

- 1) Copeland, D. (1983). *Art Education*. Vol. 36, No. 3, pp. 32. USA: National Art Education Association: Stable URL: <https://www.jstor.org/stable/3192699>.
- 2) Becker, S. Howard. (1978). *Arts and Crafts Author*. Vol. 83, No. 4. pp. 862- 889. USA: The University of Chicago Press.
- 3) Sutar, Bijnan. Ed. (2006). *National Focus Group on Arts, Music, Dance and Theatre*. New Delhi: NCERT
- 4) Babbage, Frances. (2004). *Augusto Boal: Routledge performance practitioners*. USA: Rutledge.
- 5) Badheka, Gijubhai. (1990). *Divasupna*. New Delhi: National Book Trust.
- 6) Dawson, K., & Lee, B. (2017). *Drama-based pedagogy, Vol. 1: Creative learning across the curriculum*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- 7) Dawson, Kathryn; Lee Kiger & Bridget. (2018). *Drama-Based Pedagogy: Activating Learning Across the Curriculum*. UK: Intellect, Bristol.
- 8) Nicholson, Helen. (2009). *Theatre and Education*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan St Martin Press.
- 9) Seth, Sushma. (2012). *Rang Manchan*, New Delhi: National School of Drama.
- 10) Uppal, Shweta. Ed. (2019). *Guideline: Art Integrated Learning*. New Delhi: NCERT.
- 11) Uppal, Shweta. Ed. (2018). *joy of Theatre Teachers Handbook for class vi-viii*. New Delhi: NCERT.

12) Schulte, M, Christopher & Thompson, Christine Marmé. Ed. (2018). *Landscapes: the Arts, Aesthetics, and Education 21*. Switzerland: Springer.

13) Campbell, Ali. (2019). *The Theatre of The Oppressed In Practice Today*. Great Britain, Landon: Bloomsbury Publishing