

**Motivation for Women Access to Art Education in Pakistan: A Mixed-Method Study on the Survey of Teachers & Students in Higher Education**

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**Abstract.** Art as a subject has introduced new trends in the art field in Pakistan. However, Pakistan shows a different situation about the role of women in art education in higher education institutes which are supervised mostly by female teachers. The purpose of this study was to explore the main factors of motivation that drive women to pursue art education and what benefits they get from art studies. This study employed both quantitative and qualitative methods to collect primary data from a sample of 20 female art teachers and 100 female art students from two universities in Pakistan. Results from the study show that obtaining an art degree provides better jobs opportunities in different fields of the art industry. However, teaching is the most suitable profession for Pakistan women.

**Keywords:** Motivation, female, higher education, Pakistan

**Introduction**

Art education has introduced new and valuable trends in the art field of Pakistan (Khan, 2014). Pakistan shows a different situation than other countries regarding the role of women in art education in higher education institutes, which are supervised mostly by female teachers, (Hashmi, 2018). Women also can work equal to men in any field. However, science and technical subjects are not much suitable traditionally for women of Pakistan. These girls often get married they cannot continue their jobs, as their first responsibility is to take care of their home and family. In addition, the father/ husband does not like such jobs in which women and men work together or go far from home for work. It is therefore not surprising that the proportion of working women in the fields of administration, laboratories, and banking is quite low. Art education can, however, be a blessing in disguise for these women should they see the potentials that art education provides. Exploring the motivating factors and reasons behind women's decision to pursue art education is quite desirable.

Art education is the learning, living, and established phenomena which is traceable based on tangible arts and which are also real and visible in all respects. Art education is defined as a curriculum that is responsible for providing a balance between expression and the student's need to experience the world mostly through visual expression (Dewey, 1919). Art education is a broad field that is usually preferred by women due to its closeness to nature (Soucy, 1989).

It presents a range of activities that include perceiving, exploring, responding, and appreciating the world. In its simplest terms, art education is meant to enable the student to clarify and express ideas through a range of activities such as drawing, painting, printmaking, sculpture, and other fields of visual arts. Dewey said; "Art education was a foundational part of the curriculum because it developed creativity, self-expression, and an appreciation of the expression of others" (Dewey, 1934).

Pakistani women are said to constitute 52% of the country's population. Recent statistics by UNESCO showed that the number of women in Pakistan is more than 110 million. Despite these women constituting more than half of the population, a survey shows that they are still

disadvantaged and do not have access to many privileges which are enjoyed by men (Ahmad, 2013). Women empowerment programs have been slow and most of the girls in the countryside are still being controlled by men when making economic decisions (Osama, 2009). The introduction of Islamic feminists has brought changes to the societal setup in which many women are now seeking justice in every sphere of life. In Pakistan, all the universities offer graduate and postgraduate studies for men and women equally, and there have specific women colleges also which was proving higher education, but still, 3% of women are highlighted educated in Pakistan. Universities in Pakistan have improved over the years and five of them are now in the top 500 of the world university rankings. Universities in Pakistan currently are however still underfunded since they receive only 2.5% of GDP (UNESCO, 2003). The slow growth in university education has been due to a shortage of funds. Also, the increase in population is resulting in severe shortages and difficult access to higher education.

This research aimed to explore the main factors that motivated women to pursue an art education. To assess the benefits for women, obtain from their involvement in art education in university. In addition, it is of great significance to note that there is a need to investigate the currently enrolled students and the experiences of female art teachers should be examined that there clear mentioning of both achievements and obstacles. Upon completing the study, the researcher intends to have gathered clear facts and reasons which may motivate other women to join art education.

### **Female in Higher Education in Pakistan**

In studying feminist education in Pakistan, the researcher looked at the papers published between 1988 and 2008. This was done between November and December 2016. The published papers concerning issues related to women's access, gender inequity, higher education, and Pakistan. In order to have a critical analysis, the researcher collected 22 papers from the academic databases.

In Pakistan, the traditional and social influences have been deciding on the number of female children going to school. According to Shaukat and Pell (2015), access to education has been seen as unfair but later on, improved upon after independence due to the development of educational curriculum. Access to higher education has been used as a gateway to empowering women. This is against a background of a social structure that was disadvantaging women (Khalid & Mukhtar, 2002). According to UNESCO (2003), if some segments of the society are not able to attain education, it is interpreted as a human rights violation.

Women's access to higher education in Pakistan has been low, Chauldray (2014) stated that developing countries may fail to enjoy the benefits of globalization if they do not realize the need of having a well-educated workforce that emanates from higher education. Access to higher education by women in Pakistan is really a challenge (Arshad, 2014). This is because the women are facing a multilayer of cultural and social challenges which if not well managed or addressed in time, all the reforms done by the government will become useless. Research done by Fauzia (2012) showed that 88% of the parents in Pakistan were reluctant to send their children to higher education institutes. The main reason put forward was that the outside environment was unproductive to the female children and most the parents cannot afford financially at a time to send their sons and daughters. As a result, female students have decreased access to higher education (Osama, 2009).

Hansen (2005) is of the view that many families had stopped sending their female children to co-education universities because they were thinking mixed gatherings are not suitable for their young girls. In a related study, Fauzia (2012) mentioned that access to higher education by female students was limited due to the distance involved between small cities to big cities or the urban areas and the rural areas. Based on these two authors it is therefore prudent to insinuate that the access to higher education is different for female students between

those who are in the urban areas and those in the rural areas. Hansen (2005) explains that due to the limitedness of resources in the country, the Pakistan government is not in a position to establish female institutes in every city or rural area.

Research done by Ahmad (2013) concluded that upon completion of studies, women students are more productive as compared to their male counterparts. In addition, Hansen (2005) elucidates that higher education access in Pakistan can be considered to be a gateway in which females will become the leaders of society and act as role models to young girls. However, the increase in the gap between the government targets and the actual performance is causing the women to be on the losing side of the equation.

A study carried by Batool (2013) revealed that investment in human development by the government was favoring men over women. This means that all the females in Pakistan have fewer chances of access to higher education as compared to males. In a similar study that analyses the enrolment of students at higher education institutes, it was concluded that the literacy rate was favoring men. Females had slim chances of acquiring higher education or other technical degrees (Khan, 2013).

### **Methodology**

The study used SPSS statistical Software tool for the questionnaire and the qualitative responses from the open-ended questions were analyzed using constructs emerging from the common responses in the data analysis.

The data was collected from 20 art teachers and 100 female art students from the College of Art and Design The Islamia University Bahawalpur, and the Institute of Design and Visual Arts Lahore College the women's university Lahore, Pakistan. This study was mixed methods, interview questions and questionnaires were sent by email to the respondents and they attempted all the questions at their own time, expressing the factors which motivated them to study art education. All the respondents agreed to fill the questionnaire except seven students from both universities, the quantitative responses given were analyzed using SPSS software. The interview questions were self-administered, the qualitative responses from the open-ended questions were analyzed using constructs emanating from the common responses. For the sake of analysis, the teachers were identified as A-T (Art Teacher) and their research numbers were used. Students were also identified by the code S-T (Art Students). In carrying out this study all the responses were collected from the returned interview questions and questionnaires for quantitative and qualitative analysis.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- Specifically, the objective of this study primarily attempts to observe the important factors that drive women to pursue art education at Pakistan University.
- To assess the benefits women, obtain from their involvement in art education.
- Also, the study examined women who are currently enrolled in art education at the university and those who have become qualified and skilled personnel in art education in Pakistan.
- The results reveal that women are derived by three main factors to join art education; personal interest, family, and social influences.

### **Results**

The main focus of this paper was to analyze the responses from the participants concerning the motivation for them to pursue art education in university. The analysis was done based on the twenty female teachers and hundred female students who were enrolled for bachelor's and master's programs in two recognized universities of Pakistan. The researcher

reduced all the different responses into sub-themes or constructs necessary for bringing in similar points from the respondents such that a summary can be made.

### Sensitive in Nature & Personal Interests

The evaluation on “Women are sensitive in nature to opt for art education” was done in the research to determine the extent to which women are inclined and have an interest in nature and therefore, they possess sensitive and aesthetic feelings (Stankiewicz, 1982), that’s why art education suits female naturally. Analyzing the results shows that most Pakistani women who pursue art education are motivated by their love for it as women and not necessarily for monetary gains. Table 1 below shows the distribution of the respondents.

**Table 1. Women are sensitive by nature**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Disagree	6	5.0	5.0	6.7
	Indifferent	14	11.7	11.7	18.3
	Agree	49	40.8	40.8	59.2
	Strongly Agree	49	40.8	40.8	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 1 shows that more than 80% of the respondents stated that women acquire sensitive and aesthetic feelings and that art education suits women naturally. The love of art education is beyond the income gains or the opportunities offered. This shows that despite the challenges which may be faced by the students, the female students always want to study art education. This confirms the results of Alexandra (2010), who mentioned that art education was most preferably done by women who found an opportunity to express themselves. One of the young teachers stated the following: “women have an interest in nature and therefore, they possess sensitive and aesthetic feelings. That’s why art subjects are suitable for women” A-T4.

In a similar sentiment, the one senior teacher stated that art had a bond with women which dated as back as the 16th century. In her interview response, she outlined the following. “Art is an old profession which was mainly promoted by women. They used it to show their mood as well as in expressing their daily struggles to society. As a result, all peaceful women want to express themselves through different methods of art” AT-11.

On the “personal interest” assessment, respondents across the two universities showed that they joined art education due to personal interests. Art education is one of the interesting subjects which give graduates good opportunities to earn good returns. The study showed that the majority of the respondents were not influenced by family or any other factor to join art education but they chose it on their own. In addition, the female art teachers revealed the global art industry was expanding and this was motivating to most of the young girls hence they were joining art education due to increasing interests. It is also crucial to note that some respondents developed a personal interest in art education due to the positive perception shown to female graduates in their areas.

### Family & Social Influence

There are some instances whereby the family may choose the discipline to be pursued by the student. Commonly, parents drive the student into doing a certain course. Here, the researcher wants to determine whether students chose art education on their own or by the influence of family. Below is Table 2 which shows the results of participants.

**Table 2. Family influence to opt, an art major**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	20	16.7	16.7	16.7
	Disagree	35	29.2	29.2	45.9
	Indifferent	24	20.0	20.0	65.9
	Agree	24	20.0	20.0	85.9
	Strongly Agree	17	14.1	14.1	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

16.7 % of the respondents strongly disagreed that their families had influenced them to join art education. Another 29.2% also disagreed with the above declaration and showed that they had no inspiration from the family. These results are in conformance with those in 5.2 in which the majority of the students showed that they were attracted to art subjects due to self-interest. However, 20% of the respondents showed that they were influenced by the family to opt-in art education. These were supported by 14.1% which strongly agreed with the statement. Those who stated that they were indifferent showed that they were pushed to art education by both family and self-interest. A-T 12 Mentioned that arts education was not her first choice, but family pressure pushed her to do art education because her mother is a successful businesswoman and runs an art gallery. This response is similar to that of another respondent A-S 5, who stated that she belongs to a well-off family, art education was a desire for her parents and not herself since she wanted to do engineering. But now she is happy with art studies.

The responses by A-T 8 show that art education is gradually becoming a subject that is now being preferred among other fields. One thing to note from the respondent is that some students who want to pursue art as a carrier were not interested in mathematical or science subjects or couldn't get admission in medical, but they are good at drawing or painting hence they end up doing art education which is relatively suitable for them because practical and hands-on. Generally, the results showed that many people were doing arts because of their personal choice, this shows that arts should be regarded as a lifestyle.

One student expressed in this way: "art education was motivated me for self-satisfaction, to create and innovate something new" A-T 7. However, this is the opposite of the other respondent who mentioned that art education was motivated by her self-interest. These are the people who did art education at university, not by coercion. The respondent stated that having access to art education was out of her desire after seeing the rate of success for others who were also doing art education. The respondent stated the following:

### **Societal Influence to Opt for Art Major**

Societal setup is one of the factors which came out as a motivating factor behind the taking up of arts education by females in Pakistan. The data obtained shows that many of the respondents have the view that society plays a significant role in pushing female students into art teaching and learning due to the environment created. Table 3 shows that societal influence plays a very important role in art education enrolment.

**Table 3. Societal influence to opt for art major**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Disagree	14	11.7	11.7	15.8
	Agree	47	39.2	39.2	55.0
	Strongly Agree	54	45.0	45.0	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The table above reveals that 39.2% of respondents agree with the statement and 45% strongly agree. This means more than 80% of both female students and teachers agree that society has a strong influence on their preference for art education. However, some respondents stated that they were motivated to take up art teaching and learning due to the need to tell their stories to the world. Some status-conscious women chose art subjects because of status consciousness gave their view in the following excerpt: “I was good at drawing and painting, so I opted for painting as a major in university, I was so impressed with some female artists of Pakistan, who are famous and arranging exhibitions worldwide. Also arranging exhibitions are a good way to communicate with educated and artist community” A-T 12.

Another respondent gave similar sentiments and stated that “I belong to a well-off family; I like the interaction with all segments of the society, especially with the artists’ community. I think an exhibition of artwork is the best way to communicate with society” A-S 23. In contrast, there is a need to note that some respondents (33% of the respondents) were doing arts due to family and social influence. This confirms the findings done by Fine (2004) who stated that most of the motivations behind women's art education are mainly family influence and social imbalances.

### Easy to Study & Job Opportunities

Art education is interesting and creative that’s why it’s easy to learn. Art education suits feminine nature and assists women in fulfilling their sphere in life (Stankiewicz, 1982). With this question, the researcher wanted to investigate the extent to which the respondents viewed art education at the university level. The results from the study show that art education was largely perceived to be easy and some people opted because it’s an interesting and creative subject. The results are shown in Table 4 below.

**Table 4. Art education is easy to study**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	5	4.2	4.2	4.2
	Disagree	15	12.5	12.5	16.7
	Agree	55	45.8	45.8	62.5
	Strongly Agree	45	37.5	37.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

In Table 4 above, there is a distribution of the study responses about the advantage of art education on the basis that it is interesting to learn. It is shown that 55% of the respondents stated that art education was good because it was easy and interesting to study. These were supported by another 45% who strongly agreed to the statement. About 20% of the respondents showed that they disagreed with the assertion that art education is easy. Based on the interview questions answered, these are the respondents who stated that art education was just like any

other subject which means that it also had some challenging learning areas. The results are in line with the multiple Intelligence theory by Gardner (1988) in which he stated that children should choose a learning area based on where their intelligence lies. Art is a subject that also requires high-level intelligence.

From the analysis on the responses it can be stated that for those who stated that art education was easy, the majority of them were the female who has rich experience in art education either as teachers or as students. Another analysis showed that students who are above 24 years of age were agreeing that art education is easy to learn and interesting, while those between 17 and 20 years were stating that methods of art in theory and practice were difficult to learn within a short period. The responses in Table 4 show that some students may join art education for other reasons except it being easy. Taking on the excerpt from one of the interview responses, A-T1 stated that, “Art education is easy to learn, interesting and creative subject and it suits females’ sensitive nature, it is the reason why there are large numbers of girls who apply for it” A-T1.

A female art student who is below the age of 24 stated the following statement: “Art education has never been easy to me. There are many concepts taught within a short period of time and that is hard for me, however, it’s interesting to learn and I want to become a famous artist” A-S7. The responses above show that art education is easy or hard to carry according to the maturity level. Young students are finding it hard while the teachers and the old students are finding it easy.

### Art Education Provides Better Job Opportunities

On this question “studying art education provides better job opportunities after graduation” the researcher wanted to investigate the views of the participants on why they would want art education basing on the opportunities offered after degree. The results are presented in Table 5.

**Table 5. Studying art education provides better job opportunities after graduation**

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Strongly Disagree	2	1.7	1.7	1.7
	Disagree	10	8.3	8.3	10.0
	Indifferent	38	31.7	31.7	41.7
	Agree	37	30.8	30.8	72.5
	Strongly Agree	33	27.5	27.5	100.0
	Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The table shows that 27.5% of the study participants strongly agree that art education provides better job opportunities after graduation. These were supported by a further 30.8% who agreed to the same view. Another 31.7% of the respondents were indifferent. In summary, only 10% opposed the view and stated that art education did not give the surety the ability to offer good earning opportunities after graduation as fine arts is already a very expensive subject, so it’s so hard to buy art materials whole year for most of the girls.

In the analysis, the researcher observed that many students had a positive view and they preferred art education simply because of the good opportunities they have seen for those who graduated. This is supported by the excerpt from one of the students who stated the following: “The opening of many private schools and colleges in the country has made me choose art education because the schools and colleges are good-paying, and also I can find a job in school or college in my city” A-S 34.

Supporting the same sentiments is a female teacher who in an interview stated that art education qualification was proving to be a good-paying initiative in Pakistan. Her words are as follows: “I am enjoying a good life as a university art teacher, I have a good salary. I had realized the opportunities offered by an art degree. There are a lot of jobs which give good income after graduation, these days many schools and institutes are opening and teaching profession, especially in girls institutes is suitable for girls” AT-4.

The increasing number of female students in art education is greatly linked to the assertion that art provides better job opportunities after graduation. The results show that many girls in Pakistan are being attracted to art studies due to the good job opportunity being observed in the global art industry. Another reason mentioned was that as an art teacher working in private schools in their city is suitable for Pakistan girls and chances are high that one will be employed. Based on the interview results, one of the female art students stated the following: “I want to be financially independent. This is only possible if I get a good job. I chose textile designing as my major and painting as a minor subject. I think I could find a job as a designer in the art industry, otherwise, I think I get a job in any good stander private school as an art teacher after getting degree” AS-23.

The response above shows that women also want to be financially independent. This motivates them to join art education. The need to earn from better job opportunities was also highlighted by another student who mentioned the following: “Unfortunately I come from a less privileged family and my family is struggling to pay the expenses. I am doing a diploma in textile designing, it takes four years to complete my studies. Hopefully, I can get a job immediately after my degree” AS-34.

The responses above confirm that many people are joining art education in order to earn a good income as designers, artists, and art teachers.

Based on the above responses, it is possible to state that remuneration and within four to six years to become a professional master in the specific field of art education are the main pulling factors for women in art education. Besides the fact that women love art by nature, it is also true to state that the job opportunity and need for good-paying jobs are at the center of most students.

### **Conclusion**

The results indicated that all the respondents showed a clear understanding of the ultimate benefits of the subject of fine arts. They thought that art education is more suitable for women than men. They argued that the subject suits women by nature because their sensitivity, delicacy, soothing approach to the subject strongly appeals to them. However, the analysis showed few individuals adopted art subject under the social influence, two teachers could not meet the merit in medical they adopted art subject.

The results of this study show that there are tangible reasons why women may decide to join art education. These reasons are mixed because they include both financial and non-financial gains. Results also show that a big proportion of the respondents have an interest in art education because getting jobs and good earnings obtained in the art industry in Pakistan. In addition, it can also be considered to be flexible when one is in the industry. This has been said, because women can do many artworks at home such as painting, designing without going out of home or on long trips, as most of the parents don't like to send their daughters far from home for job purpose.

The results of the study can also be said to be in line with the major theories related to art. They can be said to be consistent with the art education of Dewey (1934) who stated that everyone can become an artist and art can be experienced. Dewey (1929) went further to state that children should be given enough time to develop consciousness of what they need to do in the future. This means decisions to join art education should be decided by the student (Eggen

& Kauchak, 2012). In addition, by Gardner (1988) has also been found to be consistent with the results because students who are in art education possess certain skills which, if given the chance to develop, may become good artists (Gardner, 2000).

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