

Research Stream

A Bi-Annual, Open Access Peer Reviewed International Journal

Volume 03, Issue 01, March 2026

A Co-relation of Visual Art, Aesthetics and Mental Endurance

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Received: 20 March 2026 Accepted & Reviewed: 25 March 2026, Published: 31 March 2026

Abstract

The state of mind is very crucial while doing any work satisfactorily, hence the role of mental strength or mental endurance plays very important role in getting success and satisfaction in life. So several methods are discussed for increasing it which are mainly yoga, dhyana, music, singing and sports etc. But the effect of visual art work in increasing mental endurance is comparatively less explored, hence it is considered in the present review to find out the effect of different type of visual art on the different parts of human brain while doing the artwork or simply viewing it. As the role of aesthetics is well understood in artwork, so it has also been tried to establish a correlation of artwork inculcated with aesthetics in enhancing mental endurance with the help of several studies reported in the literature.

Key Words: Mental Endurance, Artwork, Aesthetics, Co-relation, Human brain

Introduction

Technological advancements in the area of Informatics, computer science, machine learning accomplished with artificial intelligence has brought whole world in one room and this has inspired every one specially youths to achieve best to fulfill the future dreams for their well- beings. Such atmosphere prompted every one to work hard to earn more and undoubtedly the purchase power for most people has gone up. But to those who failed to fulfill their ambitions will naturally bound to fall into stress and depression causing mental sickness. To overcome stress conditions there are several traits practiced overwhelmingly and discussed thoroughly to increase resilience, mental strength and mental endurance which are yoga, dhyana, meditation, music, singing and sports etc., so that one can take right decision in adverse or stressed situations to get fruitful results. In most of all these methods one has to involve physically. But it has also been realised that there are good number of people who can not express their sentiments verbally nor able to involve physically so in such cases it is a great challenge to find out suitable method to increase mental endurance so that stresses could be mitigated. While envisioning it, the visual artwork seems a plausible method to enhance resilience, mental strength or mental endurance to both i.e., a person involved in visual artwork and to those who are only viewers because visual artwork has no language but able to express sentiments very implicitly. Though such studies are less explored as compared to other activities as mentioned above. It is well understood that in the visual artwork if the aesthetics is inculcated the effectiveness of artwork multiplies. So in the present paper it is considered worthwhile to study a correlation of visual artwork, aesthetics and mental endurance so that effectively the challenge of mental stress could be minimized to build healthy and happy society.

The visualisation of some specific natural object creates positive effect on the mind of every individual and generates a perception, which may be termed as beauty. Visual art, even though silent, has a positive impact on the mind, whether the expressed subject expresses joy or sorrow. Truthful and pleasant expression creates beauty in any work of art. Sense of beauty is naturally embedded in every person. Art certainly possess the quality of beauty as it is persisting universally in the nature. The representation of artistic elements in an artwork evokes aesthetic feelings. If an artwork awakens consciousness even in the unconscious mind, then it's purpose is considered fulfilled and such artwork is considered superior. Art is one of the purest expressions

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of human thoughts. Visual art serves more than just a source of pleasure, but also as a stimulus for the viewers' emotions and thoughts. This fosters self-exploration and self-awareness as well as social awareness. Beyond simply being a medium for self-reflection, visual art also depicts social situations. Viewing paintings and sculptures also evokes a sense of positivity, allowing the viewer to relieve mental stress and feel pleasure.

Visual art helps to increase the mental tolerance of both artists and viewers as it enhances the cognitive functions through interaction and creativity. These are the mental processes which help a person think, learn, remember, concentrate, understand language and also problem solving. These are essential for maintaining orderly daily life and enhancing the quality of life. Therefore, maintaining these is crucial. That's why, teaching through pictures in infancy is considered crucial because it helps establish mental balance. In this way, individuals are able to make right decisions in adverse and difficult situations. By controlling their emotions, they move towards their goals and achieve normalcy, which leads to a feeling of joy in life. Therefore, visual art gives rise to creative thinking, which is not just a concept but scientific studies have also proven that various visual artworks, such as abstract and realistic painting, objective and subjective painting, traditional and modern painting, monochromatic and polychromatic painting, drawing and imitation etc., all produce different effects on different regions of the brain (1). A study conducted by the functional Magnetic Resonance Imaging (fMRI) revealed that the prefrontal cortex and orbitofrontal cortex of the brain were activated in people who simply viewed art images. (2). Interestingly, different art mediums, such as drawing on paper versus a digital tablet, exhibit distinct activation patterns i.e., when drawings are carried out by the art students on paper, their activity in the left frontopolar and orbitofrontal cortices was significantly greater than those who did it on digital tablet (3). Research work also showed a close association between painting ability and increased gray matter density in the left cerebellar anterior lobe and right medial prefrontal gyrus. It has also been observed that in the students trained in fine arts, the gray matter density in the right precuneus enhanced significantly (4). Another study noted that during three months of continuous painting training, students exhibited increased neural activity in the cerebellum and frontal cortex, as well as changes in the white matter of the frontal lobe. (5). Another fMRI study observed specific changes in the kinematic measurements and eye brain region during visual arts, suggesting that the abstract drawing increases activity in these regions compared to drawing facial features (6). Furthermore, drawing abstract objects from memory activates a greater number of brain regions within the frontal, temporal and parietal lobes compared to drawing familiar objects from viewing these objects (7). The study also found that when art is created by visualising of external object, activity in the precuneus region of the brain increases while creating a picture from memory, activity in the frontal and parietal lobes increases (8, 9).

Similarly, whether an artwork depicts monochromatic or polychromatic images, a single object or a group of objects, they have different effects on the brain. Color therapy is another established field that demonstrates how colors affect the human body because each color has its own wavelength and energy. When such a wavelength enters the pupil of the eye and strikes the retina, electrical waves of varying intensities are generated, which, when reaching the brain affects different regions of the brain and influence the different regions of the body parts controlled by that region of the brain. Not only colours but the methods of using different shapes in visual art also produce different effects on the different region of brain e. g., facial expressions such as beautiful, sad, angry and sarcastic etc., stimulate and activate different areas of the brain due to their different expressions. It is a well established fact that incorporating aesthetics into visual artwork multiplies its quality and impacts, evoking emotions, senses and inspiring the imaginations. Role of aesthetics in artwork may be exemplified while painting rose flowers in a Vase in which care is taken in the quantity of

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falling of light on flowers which are nearer, in middle and back side towards the direction of light. Careful use of values and tones of color during the coloring process yields the desired results. Light and dark colors are desirable to create the contrast and emphasis in the flowers respectively. Subsequently it is also desired that the highlight and shadow needs to be depicted properly on the flowers when it is shining. Finally the most important aspect of this composition is the reflection. The amount of color and its depth depends on the direction of the light falling on the Vase. When light falls on an object from above, the reflection is shorter while it falls from below or at an equal height the reflection is longer. The reflection is longest at sunrise and sun set and shortest at midday when the sun is directly over head. Aesthetic is reflected in this composition only when in addition to the balance of size and colour, unity and harmony are also achieved. Aesthetics explains the deepest and subtlest messages conveyed through the elements of visual art. Therefore, the vitality of any composition depends on the influence of aesthetics. Thus the above composition of flowers created in compliance with the rules, is capable of evoking a state of mind by creating an emotional impact. The emotional expression of the subject in artwork multiplies its intensity, providing satisfaction and contentment to the mind while also strengthening its cognitive aspects enabling one to make the right decisions at the right time.

From the above discussion it is evident that the aesthetically pleasing artwork is the powerful medium for enhancing the capacity and endurance of the human mind. This medium is distinct and more powerful than all other mediums such as sports, exercise, yoga and meditation, music and dance etc., because in these mental peace could be achieved only after physical involvement whereas visual artwork benefits both those who are able to express their views and also who can not express their emotions by speech or by physical languages due to one or the other reasons.

Conclusion: Role of mental endurance is very vital in achieving success and peace in the present fast growing technological world to mitigate mental stress. It is realised that one should also practice those activities besides professional work which are able to reduce mental stress and enhance mental endurance so that one could take right decision at the right moment. In view of it, few scientific studies have revealed that visual artwork very effectively able to help in increasing mental endurance both in those who carried out visual artwork and also involved simply viewing these. It is specially helpful to those who are not able to express their sentiments or not able to involve themselves physically in carrying out various activities as required in these traits.

Acknowledement: Author is thankful to Principal, DAV College, Kanpur for giving necessary encouragement to carry out such work.

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