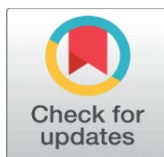
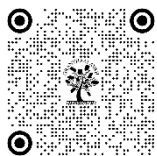


## ROLE OF ARTS AND LITERATURE IN PERSONALITY DEVELOPMENT

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## ABSTRACT

The present research paper is a discussion on an essential area of human life. The personality and its development with art and literature is the focal point of discussion here. Art which includes five dimensions of skill is an integral part of human life. From ancient times man could never escape his life form literature and art. Art works for the inclusion of harmony, rhythm, balance, unity, proportion, love, compassion, sympathy, fluency, compatibility in human life. These qualities lead a man towards a better version of his personality. The area in which art, particularly literature, is most easily demonstrated as an investigatory technique per se is of course that of personality study. Characterization in the master pieces of literary works portrays virtues and follies before reader. The psychological study of human personality is determined by the action of man, but the betterment of these actions can be learnt through art and literature. A writer, painter or sculptor with their artistic impression create classics and leaves the reader, spectator, or art lover to identify and absorb the best rather suitable for one. The formation of personality begins with the birth of a man. It includes songs sung by mother, folk literature in form of mythologies like 'Ramayana' and 'Mahabharata' or heroic tales of country heroes told by grandparents, folk art forms like 'mandana' which is a reflection of cultural perspective of traditions and the whole process seems invisible but before the beginning of any education process lays the foundation of a personality. Man is a social animal and grows in the society. Therefore, the values, believes, experiences and expressions art and literature display belong to that society and reflects the culture of it but for sure makes a man able to transform into a useful human.

**Keywords:** Art, Literature, Personality Development, Culture, Society, Expression, Emotions and Experience

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Arts is a comprehensive term, blended with other expressive disciplines as painting, sculpture, architecture, music, and literature. This broad vision allows us to express its creator emotions and experiences in a universal language. These disciplines are divided into audio and visual forms of art. Sculpture, painting and architecture are classified as visual art while music and literature fall among the audio form. The timeless works of great masters have always been enriched and deepened the understanding of human world. An artist, with great insight of human nature and actions, has enlightened us with challenges that we face for the betterment of self.

Now, how does enjoying art contribute to personality development, is a matter of discussion here. There is no fundamental difference in any language in terms of the purpose it carries, to express and convey thoughts through the process of communication. This way of communication, in art, fulfills itself creatively with audio, visual, symbolic, or imaginary mediums of expressions. Similarly, culture possesses a common and very strong tradition that linguistic skills as oral active, aural passive are indispensable to the formation of the personality. Linguistic skills of a culture are the fundamental asset of literature.

The word literature is derived from the Latin word 'litteraturae' which stands for 'writings. In eighteenth century used to designate fictional and imaginative writings- poetry, prose, fiction, and drama. In a broader sense "it designates also any other writings (including philosophy, history, and even scientific works that are addressed to a general audience) that are especially distinguished in form, expression and emotional power" [Abrams & Harpman \(2013\), 199](#). In general understanding, any written figure, whether essay, poem, novel etc. anything that utilizes the written word in a particular culture stands as a literary piece of work. Here, we crossed the word culture which completes the meaning of art and literature. Art, from the ages, is accepted as the 'mirror of society'. A society, which believe to be constructed over the foundation of a particular set of beliefs and way of living that shapes a culture, likewise influences art and literature of its time. "Literature is, most broadly considered, an element of culture, extant and vital" [Wilson \(1952\), 301](#). Therefore, William Wordsworth made the theoretical argument that "the conventional poetic diction should be replaced by a language closer to the everyday speech of ordinary people. According to him ordinary words should be admitted into the language of poetry" [Carter & McRae \(2001\), 212](#).

An art is always busy in displaying the higher human values which is the zest of humanity. Therefore, to learn or study art contributes to personal growth and development by stimulating our sensibility and by awakening the expressive and creative aspects of human life. The magnitude of art is well explained in the words of Johann Wolfgang von Goethe as- "A man should hear a little music, read a little poetry and see a fine picture every day of his life in order that worldly cares may not obliterate the sense of the beautiful which God has implanted in the human soul" [Hereford \(n.d.\)](#).

Literature, through the depiction of various characters along with their experiences, displays the meaning of human existence in related culture. It is an effort of artist to portray a close to reality picture of humanity in his creative imagination which tries to showcase man in his better or expected ideal version. Van Kaam and Healy in their work *'The Demon and the Dove'* have discussed upon the relation between personality growth and literature. The work comments that, "when we respond to literature, we are present to man in an immediate and pre-reflective, experiential and intuitive manner" [O'Doherty \(1968\), 369](#).

Reading a text enhances our imagination and we cannot help but become a part of the plot in a fiction or non-fiction work. A reader finds himself empathizing with the characters. Without having to experience the tragedies of the lives of characters we broaden our understanding of human nature. Classics of literature Homer's *'Iliad'*, *'Oedipus Rex'* an Athenian tragedy by Sophocles or *'The Metamorphoses'* a Latin narrative poem by Roman poet Ovid etc. are standing as the storehouse of experience and learning of decisions and action of humans with the consequences they encountered. How could their decisions turn the fate of society? How could they escape from the tragic incidents occurred in life? etc. are the possibilities of imagination forms in the minds of readers.

It is apt to admit that to have literature in education process is only to transform learners into a good human through the great heroes, antiheroes, or antagonists etc. Louise Rosenblatt in her book *Literature as Exploration* gives the conception of the role of literature in education. According to her, in the educational process “Literary material can contribute, because they are experienced, absorbed, accepted, incorporated into personality through emotional and aesthetic experiences. Through literature comes the linkage between intellectual perception and emotional drive which is vital in any learning style” [Wenzel \(1948\), 14](#).

Epic literatures of India, *Ramayana* and *Mahabharata*, contains the thoughts of seers and sages from Vedic period. The knowledge, this literature contains is of the highest spirituality but today it is accepted as the oldest oral and folk literature of Indian society. These ancient and long texts are the form of mythology which is a “system of hereditary stories of ancient origin which were explain (in terms of the intentions and actions of deities and other supernatural beings) social customs and observances and to establish the sanctions for the rules by which people conduct their lives” [Abrams & Harpman \(2013\), 230](#). *Ramayana*, the storehouse of knowledge, showcases in front of man, the spirit of time and people, human relations in perfect form, the nature of ideal monarchy and patriotism towards motherland. After thousands of years, people of India still deriving inspiration from the lessons of this mythology to lead a noble and ideal life as they placed it as a standard scale of expected figure of humans. Thus, it shows that, “Role models are the part of literature”.

However, *Mahabharata*, the longest poetic work on the Earth contains one lakh and ten thousand *shlokas*. The greatest lesson of this epic to humanity is to overcome the losses, sufferings, sorrows, mistakes, distress, and misfortunes of worldly existence. It is a lesson to the people to stand against *Adharma* for their rights. We can't find another work comparable to India's *Mahabharata*. Another interesting factor about these epics is that both have always remained the part of culture and society in form of oral literature in India. Sant Kabira's *Sakhi* is another oral literature and an inseparable culture of society which in didactic tone is a teaching of a better personality of an individual.

Literature can be defined as a perspective of the world. In the words of Marcel Proust “only through literary art we can escape from ourselves and know the perspective of another on the world...” [Hereford \(n.d.\)](#).

Literature is, neither didactic nor instrumental with its effects and it is the only value of literature. The true value of literature lies in the possibilities it provides for liberating the creative function and the experience of intrinsic values which human shares with society. According to Philip Sidney a poet is free to portray the probability and idealized situation. Sidney supports that a poet imitates in order both to ‘delight and teach’. Furthermore, he includes that “the object of both teaching and delighting is goodness: by delighting, the poet moves people to welcome goodness; and by teaching, he enables them to know that goodness whereunto they are moved” [Habib \(2015\), 263](#). Thus, literature is not written to be read rather it fulfills the purpose of human development as the process of learning that is ‘to change into behavior’. This change is actually a matured experience or lesson of life we learn from the realistic imagination of the author. The whole function of literature or whole history of literature is an attempt to present various occasions in which the reader can experience in himself the ‘quality’ of the experience which led the creator of the literary work to produce it. Thus, the writer suggests reader the exercise of thoughts which can grow in the light of ideas. “It cannot grow if it is only fed with the vehicles of ideas. Again, personality can only

grow if it is fed with thought, and thought can only grow if something is thought about" O'Doherty (1968), 366.

Art, with its common meaning, is concerned with the human world. Without failure human and its activities have been traced out or delineated faithfully in the hand of an artist. Painter, sculpture, and writer put a real effort to understand the human species. Though an artist is stressed and bounded to an order of validation of his work as he depends on the degree of truth or falsity determined partially by the acceptability of society. This must, of course, be testified by a reader that the portrayal of literary character can be completely wrong in term of scientific knowledge of a character or can be inexact. This characteristic of literature conveys a kind of truth that is beyond the properties of science. Thus, literature gives an indispensable element in full understanding of personality.

The science that studies and analyses the personality with the working of mind is known as psychology. Its content of testing is human actions while in 'literature', a personality is never regarded as a sequence of unrelated actions. Apparently, psychology is deviated from emotions and depends upon the actions of man. However, Murrey always favored the literary techniques as tool of his scientific study as he mentions that "A psychologist who believes that he can tell the truth without being 'literary' has only to writing a case history or biography, and then compare what he has done to a character sketch of any novelist of the first order. We academic psychologists have yet to discover how much can be learnt the realists of literature. A little humility here would add to our stature" Wilson (1952), 299.

Sculpture as an art form manifests the vision of wholeness and is believed to carry the impersonal mood or state. Some great Master of Art like Devi Roy Prasad with his work '*Triumph of Labour*' as an artistic piece, evokes stillness and dynamic movement together. It teaches us that 'the unity is strength' and the pure struggle of strength and need of survival in society. In an apt manner it displays the way of survival in human world rather than the need. It explicitly leaves the impression, for sure, on the personality of a spectator.

'*Khajuraho*' showcasing the sublime display of sculptures form the ages. It is considered the realistic display of human existence with four '*purusharthas*', *dharma*, *artha*, *kaam* and *moksha* on which partially the construction of human society was believed to be formed. The beauty and grandeur of sculpture here, soothes the eyes of visitors and enables them to experience the '*Shanta Rasa*' it's in spiritual environment.

'*Nataraja*' an ancient Indian sculpture, is a depiction of lord Shiva. The sculpture symbolizes Shiva as the lord of dance and dramatic art. This work is a window, displaying many art forms at one time. At first this sculpture stands for drama as it is one of poses of '*Natyashastra*', a treatise of Bharat Muni on dramatic art. Furthermore, it depicts the mythological occurrence of '*Tandava*', a dance form when Shiva is in *Raudra* avatar or furious. *Apasmar* under the feet of Shiva represent s the spiritual ignorance and '*Natraja*' favors not to kill this ignorance. In the images of '*Nataraja*' of the figure of '*Durga*' slaying *Mahisha*, the demon, the sculpture begins from a still center, builds upon a central axis and expending circles with diameters, radii, all moving to the center. In short, the technique of expression is a multilayered correspondence. This correspondence lies between lines- straight, erect, symmetrical, diagonal or curved or otherwise and the impersonalized mood and between certain postures etc. Vatsyayan (2016), 108-109.

The timeless artistic piece of Pablo Picasso, '*Guernica*', is regarded as the most moving and powerful anti-war painting in history. The painting is the result of a request, to make painting on the turmoil of contemporary world, made by Guan

Larrea. At present this painting is, exhibited in Museo Reina Sofia in Madrid, delivering the message of essentiality of peace in a happy and progressive human life. It is an announcement of humanity against the disastrous reality of war age and speaks of peace only.

The masterpiece of Vincent Van Goethe '*The Potato Eaters*', depicts the harsh reality of earning bread and butter and how these working hands have honestly earned their food after a long laborious day. Thus, this painting is a message to every social being to be laborious in his efforts throughout the life with a hardworking spirit.

These artistic works we discussed here are only the language and meaning of lines, drawn successfully by humans only and served for humanity. Lines find voice and language in art as "There is a relation between awareness and facilities in the non-verbal languages (as the language of line). This relation goes along with the other essential elements of Art" Miles (1960), 78.

If we are to discuss about the architecture as an art form here, it requires only one example. The monument, symbol of love, complete in itself and preaching the only message that humanity requires today, 'love'. The '*Taj Mahal*' is enlightening and educating humanity not for erotic love but the only emotion that any language in the world should possess. This building is an example of purity, beauty, and togetherness. It is spreading the bright emotions love and compassion as the only food of today's generation to remain alive in turmoil of wars and conflicts of the modern world.

Music is one of the best and purest forms, of fine arts, of creation for mankind. It, with rhythmic pattern comforts our soul and reduces the mental stress of man. The classical ancient form of Indian music resides in '*Ragas*', a definite musical framework within which one is free to create infinite melodic patterns. This discipline provides you the opportunity to flourish your creativity. It changes and transforms with region, culture, society, and the span of time. It takes place in folk literature, fairy tale of kids, victory of kingdoms, glory of a king and rituals of human life. Lyric, ballad, ode etc., undoubtedly, are literary style but reaches to the completeness with the music only. Music is as ancient as a language and needed to be learnt and remember.

All the forms of creativity, we discussed, are called fine arts. Every form is interrelated with the other one or intermingled all together. The musical pattern of music with words becomes the part of literature. However, paintings, sculpture or architecture find their place in literature as symbols and images. Every art implicitly or explicitly set an aesthetic standard and enhance the creative imagination author, reader, spectator, and listener. We can say that art presents nature of humanity from what a man is to what a man should be to become a figure closer to absoluteness. Thus, profoundly "art production and appreciation are not proposed as areas of exploration which will change radically our present conception of culture, society, or personality. They may, however, contribute to deeper understanding and later fill out the contemporary portrait of man in his diverse milieus" Wilson (1952), 298.

The discussion can be concluded with the essentiality of art in human life. The development of an individual lies in his knowledge, learning and transformation of behavior. This behavior we mentioned here is the creative transformation of ones' ideas and experiences with, acceptability and utility in a culture. Thus, art and literature are the infinite possibilities for humanity to find the best path to become a worthy or useful human for this beautiful but disturbed world.

## **CONFLICT OF INTERESTS**

None.

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None.

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