

# ‘Bal Geet’ and ‘Chetna Geet’ as an Art Integrated Learning Approach to transforming the school Education: An Action Research

**Jagadish Biswal**

Research scholar, Ravenshaw University, Cuttack

## **Abstract**

The current paper is an outcome of one of the ambitious project of investigator while doing his Gandhi Fellowship in Piramal Foundation, the School Ecosystem Immersion (SEI) Programme which was carried out by the investigator at UMS Rampur School in the Katihar district of Bihar. In this project, two interventions, ‘Bal Geet’ and ‘Chetna Geet’ were used in an art integrated approach. The key objectives of the SEI process is to create an effective and joyful learning environment for children, as well as to see if it aids in increasing the student attendance and retention in school. For this study, an Action research method was used. Both the interventions were first shown by the investigator, and then it was conducted by the teachers and students. The whole data was collected through participatory observations & interviews and analysed using the thread-ware discussion. The findings of the study indicated that both the intervention, ‘Bal Geet’ and ‘Chetna Geet’ not only create an engaging and joyful learning environment among students, but also aid to increase their attendance and retention in school. It has developed in pupils a sense of collaboration, coordination, communication, and responsibility. The intervention ‘Bal Geet’ was found to be an effective pedagogy for interactive teaching learning process, where teacher was connecting the students from ‘Bal Geet’ to other academic content. One central implication of the study will be fruitful for both pre-service and in-service teachers in terms of how to make the teaching-learning process more effective and enjoyable by adopting such art-integrated learning approach. Both pre-service and in-service teachers should be given training in this regard to implement such practices in the classroom.

**Keywords:** Art integrated learning, Bal Geet, Chetna Geet, School Ecosystem Immersion

## **Background of the study**

“Art has the power to transform, educate, to illuminate, inspire and motivate.”

### **- The Progressive Teacher**

Education is a potential key that helps in individual development and the development of the nation. The National Education Policy 2020 has come up with some changes that make the education system more vibrant compared to the earlier system. Its emphasis on learning should be Holistic, Integrated, engaging, and enjoyable among the student. Further, it recommends the integration of different pedagogy like- Art integration pedagogy, toy-based pedagogy, sports integration in different stages of education. Through their point of access, all students can benefit from an equitable learning environment through the experiential learning framework of art integration. In an atmosphere that incorporates art,

students create own meaning through art-related activities. The goal of art integrated learning (AIL) was to enhance the target areas of the learner's cognitive, socioemotional, and psychomotor domains using pedagogy that could be used at all educational levels. Art-integrated learning has created opportunities for inter-disciplinary and holistic learning at several stages of the pedagogy process. Art-integrated learning (AIL) was envisioned as a pedagogy that could be used at all educational levels to help students develop their cognitive, socio-emotional, and psychomotor skills. Art-integrated learning has created opportunities for inter-disciplinary and holistic learning at several stages of the teaching-learning process. Encounters with art, both visual (painting and sketching) the performing arts (music, dance, theatre, puppetry, clay modeling, pottery, paper crafts, mask and puppet making, heritage crafts) etc. help people better acquire and create knowledge about many subjects (Guideline on AIL, 2019). The arts are sufficiently flexible to give students the chance to explore at their own speed in an age-appropriate manner.

### **Context/ Rationale**

I worked as a Gandhi fellow in Piramal foundation. Piramal foundation of education and leadership is a Non-Government Organization whose headquarter situated in Bagar, Rajasthan. It basically working in the area of education, health, water and sanitation through engaging young mind to transform the lives of marginalized community across India. The Aspirational district transformation programme (ADTP) NITI-Ayoga intervention was scale up with this organization and district administration. During the two years of fellowship, the fellow has to gone through different process such as school ecosystem program, community immersion programme, non violence communication skill and facilitation skills, field visit with district and block level education officer, Vipassana, learning journey and four boot camp along with numbers of Self improvement workshop designed by the organization. In this context, I will focus on my school ecosystem Immersion (SEI) programme. It was the first process of our fellowship. In this process, each fellow have to select a block from the district and after that you have to visit at least 5-10 schools which must be heterogeneity in nature. I followed all the rules co created by our team and then I decided Rampur middle school, Hasanganj School for my school Eco system immersion. The reason to select this school among all others visited schools is that; the school has been having a larger number of enrolments in comparison with the other school that has visited. This process is one month longed programme and in this one month presence of this school the prime objective is to you immerse in the school process, assess the students level and improve their learning outcome, co-operate other teacher and interact with community member, supporting the head masters leadership skill to smooth functioning of the school.

### **The school: Rampur Middle School, Hasanganj**

Rampur Middle School had students from class 1 to 8. The number of students was nearly 400 and the school also has 10 teachers and 1 headmistress. This school is in a rural belt of Katihar district. Initially, when my SEI had just begun, I could notice the school's practices, as well as various classes of the teachers, for five days. Most of the times in the school, I found that attendance of students remains quite low. In Wednesday and Friday, the attendance of the students increases a little bit. Another thing is that during the lunchtime in every day most of the classes appear to be empty. In this issue, I had an interaction with the teachers where they said they also tried their best to meet the communities and interact with the parents of children to send those children to the school regularly; however, there was

still some problem for school authority to get cent percent children to their respective schools. At the same time I also interacted formal and informal setting to students and understanding their perspective about their irregularity and retention in school. From my one month of staying at school and interacted with stakeholder I observed the situation and context of the area. Main reason of leaving school or not to retain in the school were- teacher and pedagogy( teacher quality, teaching style and assessment), social and demographic factor, students engagement and learning progress, personal factor, When a low-skilled worker loses a job or a family is re-located by public housing authorities, children have to change schools.

They left school because they did not like school or did not like teachers. If those who leave school because they are failing or do not do well are added to those who simply do not like school and those who claim to have lost interest or motivation, it appears that approximately one in three of all early leavers do not find school a happy or satisfying place to be. High levels of mobility between schools are more common among students from families of low socioeconomic status. Follows and this in turn leads to low academic self-esteem and disengagement from school. Reflecting upon the responses of both teacher and students I started working on the above issue- to make the teaching learning process more students engaging and joyful through integrating performing arts in their school. I came across some literature which gives a ideas about the art integrated learning.

### **Review of related literature**

Das, S. (2024). Conducted a study titled as teachers' perspective towards implementation of art-integrated learning (AIL) for quality education at elementary stage. The research result revealed that-Art-Integrated Learning (AIL) has gained significant role in developing student's cognitive domain with other domain affective and psychomotor as well. Majority of teacher (90% teachers) agreed that AIL contributes to achieving desired learning outcomes and promotes team sprits, creative & collaborative learning environment in classroom. Adding to this, the findings suggest that AIL not only improves student engagement but also promotes professional development among educators, making classrooms more dynamic compared to traditional teaching methods.

Prince C.P (2020) conducted a study on Practical Implication of Art Integration in a CBSE School: A Qualitative Study. Ethnography method has been used and collect data from students and teacher as well as parents of a secondary school in Assam India to understand their views on AIL. The research results showed that- pre-primary teacher has organised kid's fest where all the content are converted into different art form. The kids fest impacted on the kids who are the school allergic were become enthusiastic to come to school after the program introduced in classroom. Introvert students are become active and they take active participation in their classroom discussion. Students, teachers &parents shows positive outlook towards the art integrated learning program. Teacher claimed that this type of classroom teaching learning practice give them opportunity to understand their students very minutely. It helps to tighten the teacher-students relationship.

A set of guidelines for art-integrated learning in schools was released by NCERT. The following empirical researches are mentioned in this NCERT guideline paper as proof of the potential outcomes of learning through the arts:

**Arts and underprivileged groups:** Using the arts in the classroom was linked to higher test scores in English and mathematics at a Washington elementary school serving a mixed-society student body (Donna St. George, 2015). Specifically, students the integrated strategy was beneficial to those who

were impoverished. The researcher also underlined how expanding studies demonstrating the academic, social, and personal advantages for students is generating curiosity in the integration of the arts on a global scale.

**Arts create innovative processes:** Nobori (2012) was astounded by how the arts open doors to education. Although incorporating the arts into the classroom may look like doing art projects, it's actually a teaching method that skillfully combines art experiences with core curriculum to create meaningful learning environments. For example, to show their knowledge of the solar system, students constructed a dance combining locomotor and non-locomotor motions.

**Arts and cognitive processes:** Benegal (2010), asserted that the arts cause significant brain changes, including fortifying the "attention network." The parts of the brain that process language, auditory perception, attention, memory, and motor control are also active when listening to music. In today's knowledge-based environment, art education is a vital tool for fostering balanced mental growth.

**Arts and Socio-emotional development:** Harvey (1989) discovered through his research that elementary school pupils' self-concept, motivation, achievement, and cognition are all related to the art process. Essentially, the arts function wonderfully as affective education when they are incorporated into the educational process. "The use of music, dance, and art can lead to the creation of metaphors and the resolution of emotional and societal problems. The cognitive side of creativity and the therapeutic side of changing one's behavior and personality are thus brought together by creative arts practices. Social/emotional and academic behaviour can be positively impacted by creative arts therapy because of this connection of thinking and feeling.

**Arts as Pedagogy:** In their review of the implementation of Art Integrated Learning in 107 classrooms across 17 Municipal Corporations in New Delhi, Puri and Arora (2013) discovered that students in the 107 classrooms demonstrated (i) a notable improvement in the school environment, (ii) a higher level of student involvement in the learning process, (iii) a notable improvement in attendance, (iv) improved academic achievements, and (v) greater confidence and openness to handle new situations compared to their peers in the classrooms that did not use AIL.

(Source- NCERT (2019) document on Art integrated learning guideline pg no- 4&5)

From the above literature it can be inferred that Art integrated learning has put impact on cognitive, psychomotor and affective domain of learner. Introducing the Art integrated learning approach in the classroom helps to reduce the boredom among learner and make them a active participant in the classroom discussion. The school climate also makes a positive environment where every student can flawlessly participate in different organised by school. It also enhances the student's involvement, improving school attendance and academic achievement (Puri and Arora, 2013). Additionally, it develops the student's life skill such collaboration, communication skill, team spirits. In the context of teachers AIL helps in their professional development. When they integrate the art related activities in their classroom it creates a strong bond with their classroom students (Das, 2020).

### Statement of Problem

The DTP Fellowship program began in 2016 to develop the capacities of education leaders at all levels of the system. Piramal Foundation and NITI Aayog joined forces in 2018 to transform education in 25 aspirational districts across India. The program is based on the belief that empowering block and district education officials will result in more effective school leaders. This will eventually result in schools with ever-improving learning outcomes and students with better chances of a successful future. Every DTP

fellow works not only with primary stakeholders such as government officials at the block and district levels, but also with other stakeholders such as the community, parents, and the media. As a result, the fellows become more self-aware, are less afraid of risk, and develop a mind set of lowest common denominator thinking to work toward a large scale impact and sustainable solution.

During the two years of the fellowship, a fellow is assigned to a block where they will work with various stakeholders to transform the elementary education system.

As a Gandhi Fellow, I was assigned to work in the Katihar district of Bihar. In the initial phases of fellowship, all fellows work with the school to acquire hands-on experience about the school system. A fellow must devote one month to understanding the system and involve in the teaching of two hours daily on literacy and numeracy in school ecosystem immersion (SEI). UMS Rampur, Hasanganj Block, has been chosen for a one-month immersion in the school ecosystem (SEI). During the SEI program, it was discovered that the majority of children do not attend school and that even those who did attend school left after having their mid-day meal. Furthermore, during classroom instruction, it was observed that students are less interested in reading books and participating in classroom activities.

Regarding this above problem one interaction with HM and staff of the school was conducted, they told that most often in rural students they involved in their household work, supporting their parents in their work. Parents are not eager to send their students to school also. Fellows had frequently interacted with students and parents about the above matter to gain a thorough understanding of the root cause of the problem. The majority of the students expressed dissatisfaction with how their teacher instructed them. Teachers, on the other hand, believe that they make every effort to make students more engaged, but that due to a lack of resources and funding, they are unable to provide a more learning enjoyable school environment.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To address the problem of attendance, retention and students engagement in school
2. To implement the interventions, ‘Bal Geet’ and ‘Chetna Geet’ as an art integrated leaning approach in school.
3. To find out the extent to which art integrated leaning approach is creating an effective and joyful learning environment for pupils.
4. To find out the extent to which art integrated leaning approach is helping in increase the student’s attendance and retention in school.

### **Methodology of the Study**

The present study was conducted by using the action research method. UMS Rampur School taken as a field to carry out the present work. After the intervention data were collected through the observation and Interview Scheduled. Data were interpreted through thread ware discussion.

### **Intervention**

To address the problem related to lack of attendance and the retention of students, it is obvious that if the activity is engaged as well as interesting then they can more interested to do that. On a trial basis, the fellow demonstrates ‘Bal Geet’ and ‘Chetna Geet’ in prayer class for a week. Most of the teachers and students were satisfied with these types of activities. Further another orientation was provided for the teachers to conduct balgeet and Chetna geet in the prayer class. Initially, the Fellow faced a lot of



resistance and non-cooperation from the teachers. Most of the time teachers told that if we engaging our students in doing 'Bal Geet' and 'Chetna Geet' they might become away from the academic subject. At the same time, few teachers have little hesitation that it would be difficult to do it in assembly for them as it needs both actions as well as singing. So, I told them that, no problem if you are unable to do action. It is ok to do only singing mode without the action. After seeing several demonstrations by fellows they were gradually convinced by seeing the increases in students' attendance and their active participation in assembly as well as other work. The fellow's work is also highly appreciated by the Cluster Resource Centre Coordinator (CRCC). One lady teacher has voluntarily (Mrs, Lekha Kumari) led the art integrated program (Bal geet and Chetna geet) in her school. She starts with some readymade 'Bal Geet' and Chetna geet documents and later she developed so many 'Bal Geet' for the Grade I and grade II students and practiced the children after the recess.

Further, all the teachers and HM were oriented by the fellows regarding the importance of 'Bal Geet' and how it contributed to their students' development. After getting, a good response from students they are enjoying their assembly and happily involved in their learning activity, Even they all demand to do the same activity in evening assembly before the closing of the school.

Further a group of students from each classroom was selected and formed a core group. With the mentoring by fellow and teacher, they all are getting encouraged to create different activities and balgeet and Chetna geet for their respective classroom

### Results and Discussion

The Present study focused to resolve the problems of retention and low attendance rate of UMS Rampur through the art integrated intervention (especially-'Bal Geet' & 'Chetna Geet'). For this, Investigator planned some interventions and implemented them in the field. Measuring the results the researcher receives from the intervention is crucial. According to a female instructor at the school, the intervention fosters a fun environment for the pupils.

Through this art integrated intervention (Bal Geet) students are enjoying this type of activity in assembly. Even, nearly all students are requested to make the 'Bal Geet' and 'Chetna Geet' twice a day. It has been observed that students are happy with these interventions. It is not only creating an enjoyable environment but also creates inquisitiveness among the young mind. After the 'Bal Geet' activity ended she connects the Bal Geet activities to library activities. like- from the word we uttered in the Bal Geet pick two words and find out its synonyms. Similarly, different stories need to collect from the library which is correlated with the 'Bal Geet' and activity. Through these types of activities, students have developed their reading habits and self-confidence, communication skills, and presentation skill also. In addition to this 'Bal Geet' intervention, it developed among them the team spirit among the students.

Most of the students enjoyed the art integrated approach in their school. Majority of the student prepare themselves 'Bal Geet' with the action and demonstrate in the evening assembly (Pic.1). Students take ownership of the prayer class and other work. In an evening assembly time by observing and participating with 'Bal Geet' a class 2 students come up to the front and started performing the activities. In this context, the HM viewed that-

The practice of 'Bal Geet' is not limited to the assembly we also bring it to our classroom. In early class grades 1 and 2, we used this approach. The Art integrated approach in the early classroom makes the children engaged as well as interesting. Most of the students get regular attending the school. In the evening assembly time, most of the children's parents came to pick up their child even they also appreciated this practice. Further, this approach also benefited teachers, they are innovative in their teaching, willing to experiment, persevere in integrating the arts despite barriers, and approach their classes in a more child-centered rather than adult-centered manner.

By showing the advantage of the 'Bal Geet', one teacher said during the cluster meeting they portrayed the 'Bal Geet' as a tool for literacy. It develops the student's vocabulary, Oral development, phonological awareness in early class. The demonstration has appreciated by other members. They told that they also implemented these practices in their school. About 90% of educators believed that there had been a discernible increase in the efficacy of teaching and learning, a discernible shift in the way that kids participated in co-curricular activities and in the classroom, which contributed to the enjoyable and immersive nature of learning. Peer learning increased following the introduction of AIL in schools. The study's significance may be useful for in-service teachers as well as pre-service teachers in that it not only creates an engaging and joyful environment, but it also contributes more to developing learning outcomes in various subjects. It made a significant contribution to students' development of 21st-century skills such as creativity, teamwork, cooperation, and coordination. As most rural government schools struggle with low attendance, they may implement this art-integrated approach in their classrooms with some self-developed 'Bal Geet'. More training on art integration in the classroom should be provided to in-service teachers. This approach can be used to effectively engage children in the classroom during the prospectus teacher internship program.

### Conclusion

AIL offers several benefits to ensure learners have a better overall development. They can learn complex concepts efficiently and consequently perform better in exams and tests. If exposed to integrated learning at an early age, learners can focus better, acquire enhanced motor skills, and have other positive outcomes that promote their mental and physical growth.

Therefore, this is a practical approach towards learning and teaching. It offers a richer and more memorable learning experience to the students. Teachers have a significant role to play in the implementation of this learning technique. They should make it a part of their teaching methodology to bring the best out of the students.

### Few glimpse from the field

**Picture 1 – Introducing 'Bal Geet' in the evening assembly.**





## Reference

1. Ncert. (2019) Art Integrated Education Guidelines. <https://ncert.nic.in/pdf/notice/AIL-Guidelines-English.pdf>
2. Ministry of Education. (2020). National Education Policy 2020, Government of India. [https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload\\_files/mhrd/files/NEP\\_Final\\_English\\_0.pdf](https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/NEP_Final_English_0.pdf)
3. C P, Prince. (2020). Practical Implication of Art Integration in a CBSE School: A Qualitative Study. PEARL Multidisciplinary journal, 6 (1), 55-77, February 2020. [http://epearlspcputtur.org/home/download\\_files/ART20-00111](http://epearlspcputtur.org/home/download_files/ART20-00111)
4. Das, S. (2024). teachers perspective towards implementation of art integrated learning(AIL)for quality education at elementary stage. Journal of contemporary educational research and innovations, 14(1), pp11-18, Jan 2024. [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381775991\\_TEACHERS'\\_PERSPECTIVE\\_TOWARDS\\_IMPLEMENTATION\\_OF\\_ART-INTEGRATED\\_LEARNING\\_AIL\\_FOR\\_QUALITY\\_EDUCATION\\_AT\\_ELEMENTARY\\_STAGE](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/381775991_TEACHERS'_PERSPECTIVE_TOWARDS_IMPLEMENTATION_OF_ART-INTEGRATED_LEARNING_AIL_FOR_QUALITY_EDUCATION_AT_ELEMENTARY_STAGE)
5. Kisida, B., Goodwin, L., & Bowen, D. H. (2020). Teaching history through theater: The effects of arts integration on students' knowledge and attitudes. AERA Open, 6(1), 1-11. <https://doi.org/10.1177/2332858420902712>