THE IMPACT OF THE FINE ARTS CURRICULUM ON ACADEMIC MOTIVATION, SELF-EFFICACY, AND SELF-REGULATION WITHIN A GENDER CONTEXT AMONG FINE ARTS STUDENTS IN SAUDI ARABIAN UNIVERSITIES

HANAN ABDULRAHMAN S ALRASHEED

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by

HANAN ABDULRAHMAN S ALRASHEED

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES

LIST OF FIGURES

Page

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

DAS   Devaluing Academic Success

GPA   Grade Point Average

KSA   Kingdom of Saudi Arabia

PBL   Problem-Based Learning environment

SDT   Self-Determination Theory

SEM   Structural Equation Modelling

SESRL   Self-Efficacy For Self-Regulated Learning

SET   Self-Efficacy Theory

SPSS   Statistical Package for the Social Sciences

SRL   Self-Regulated Learning

WLS   Weighted Least Squares

WLSM   Weighted Least Squares Mean Adjusted

LIST OF APPENDICES

KESAN KURIKULUM SENI HALUS TERHADAP MOTIVASI AKADEMIK, EFIKA KENDIRI DAN PENGATURAN KENDIRI DALAM KONTEKS GENDER DI KALANGAN PELAJAR SENI HALUS DI UNIVERSITI- UNIVERSITI ARAB SAUDI

ABSTRAK

Seperti negara Arab yang lain, pendidikan seni halus di Negara Arab Saudi telah terabai sehingga kini yang menjurus kepada ketiadaan latihan dan pengalamannya dalam sistem pendidikan Saudi. Kajian ini mensasarkan tujuan utama untuk menyiasat kesan kurikulum seni halus sedia ada terhadap motivasi akademik, efikasi kendiri akademik, dan peraturan kendiri akademik dalam kalangan pelajar seni halus di universiti-universiti Saudi. Kajian ini juga bertujuan untuk mengkaji kesan peranan penyederhanaan perbezaan dalam jantina terhadap hubungan antara kurikulum seni halus dan efikasi kendiri akademik serta peraturan kendiri dalam kalangan pelajar seni halus sarjana muda di universiti- universiti negara Saudi. Dalam metodologinya, kajian ini telah menggunakan Purata, Sisihan Piawai, Korelasi Bivariat, Regresi Multivariate, Analisis Moderasi menggunakan Pemodelan Persamaan Struktur (SEM), Kuasa Dua Terkecil Separa menggunakan SmartPLS dalam menganalisis data kuantitatif kajian. Populasi kajian termasuklah pelajar-pelajar sarjana muda yang sedang mengikuti kursus seni halus di beberapa jabatan seni di universiti - universiti Saudi Arabia. Kaedah persampelan yang telah dilaksanakan dalam kajian deskriptif jelas ini melibatkan persampelan rawak berstrata dengan 361 pelajar telah mengambil bahagian dalam tinjauan inferensi. Sehingga kini, soal selidik berstruktur tertutup telah digunakan untuk mengumpul data, dan pernyataan, yang mengukur motivasi akademik, efikasi kendiri, dan peraturan kendiri, telah diadaptasi

daripada kaedah yang sah dan berwasit sebelum ini untuk digunakan dalam kajian penulisan. Berkenaan dengan motivasi akademik pelajar, keputusan-keputusan didapati menunjukkan impak yang signifikan dan positif atas kurikulum seni halus terhadap motivasi akademik pelajar. Hasilnya menunjukan bukti konkrit terhadap pembelajaran melalui pengalaman dalam kurikulum seni halus melalui pendedahan kepada bengkel pembangunan seni kehidupan sebenar dengan pelukis-pelukis dan para profesional bersekutu beserta pengalaman semasa dalam meningkatkan motivasi pelajar. Semasa penemuan didapati merapatkan jurang yang ketara dalam kekurangan bukti akademik mengenai hubungan antara kurikulum seni halus dan motivasi akademik pendidikan tinggi Arab Saudi. Berkenaan dengan efikasi kendiri akademik pelajar, keputusan menunjukkan impak positif yang signifikan/besar daripada kurikulum seni halus sedia ada terhadap efikasi kendiri pelajar sarjana muda Arab Saudi. Berkaitan kesan kurikulum seni halus terhadap peraturan kendiri, keputusan menunjukkan bahawa walaupun kurikulum seni halus memberi kesan yang signifikan terhadap motivasi akademik dan efikasi kendiri pelajar, dimana peraturan kendiri mereka tidak dikaitkan secara signifikan dengan pembolehubah peramal. Berhubung perbezaan jantina, keputusan menunjukkan pelajar perempuan mengatasi prestasi rakan sebaya lelaki. Walau bagaimanapun, andaian bahawa pelajar lelaki mempunyai kelebihan berbanding rakan sejawat perempuan mereka telah terbatal. Kajian ini menekankan kepentingan pedagogi dan sokongan guru dalam memenuhi motivasi akademik, efikasi kendiri, dan peraturan kendiri pelajar di jabatan seni halus di university Arab Saudi untuk memastikan pengekalan mereka di institusi pengajian tinggi, terutamanya di program seni halus, yang merupakan bidang pengajian yang jarang dipilih di Negara Arab Saudi.

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ABSTRACT

Like other Arab countries, fine arts education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia has been mostly overlooked until recently, which led to the absence of arts-based training and practices in the Saudi education system. This study mainly aims to investigate the impact of the existing fine arts curriculum on academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and academic self-regulation among fine arts students in Saudi universities. The study aims to examine the impact of the moderating role of differences in gender on the relationship between the fine arts curriculum and academic self-efficacy and self-regulation among undergraduate fine arts students in Saudi universities. In its methodology, the study utilized Mean, Standard Deviation, Bivariate Correlation, Multivariate Regression, Moderation Analysis using Structural Equation Modelling (SEM), Partial Least Squares using SmartPLS in analysing the quantitative data of the study. The population of the study included undergraduate students currently pursuing fine arts courses in several arts departments in Saudi universities in Saudi Arabia. The implemented sampling method in this descriptive, explanatory study is stratified random sampling and 361 students participated in an inferential survey. To this end, a close-ended, structured questionnaire was used to collect the data, and the statements, which measured academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and academic self-regulation, were adapted from previously well-established and verified measures for application in the literature. Regarding the students' academic motivation, the results showed a significant, positive impact of the

fine arts curriculum on the students' academic motivation. The results established concrete evidence on experiential learning in the fine arts curriculum through exposure to real-life arts development workshops with painters and allied professionals and in-hand experiences in boosting the students' motivation. The findings bridged a significant gap in the lack of academic evidence on the relationship between the fine arts curriculum and Saudi Arabian higher education academic motivation. Regarding the students' academic self-efficacy, the results revealed a significant, positive impact of the existing fine arts curriculum on the self-efficacy of Saudi undergraduate students. As for the impact of the fine arts curriculum on self-regulation, the results showed that despite the fine arts curriculum significantly impact the students' academic motivation and self-efficacy, their self-regulation was not significantly associated with the predictor variable. Concerning the gender difference, the results showed that female students outperformed male peers. However, the assumption that male students have the edge over their female counterparts was nullified. The study, therefore, emphasized the significance of pedagogy and teacher support in the fulfilment of the students' academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and academic self-regulation taking cognizance of gender in fine arts departments in Saudi universities to ensure their retention in the higher education institutions, especially in the fine arts program.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of Study

Fine arts education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA), similar to other Arab countries, was largely ignored until recent times, leading to the absence of arts-based training and practices in the country's education system. While there is data available on the number of students enrolled in tertiary education at KSA (1,653,000 in 2019), there is a lack of such data on the students enrolled in fine arts programs in higher education (Statista, 2020). Arab nations, including the KSA, are influenced by culturally and socially acceptable norms based on religion, tradition, and gender (Albakri, 2020), contributing to lesser visual arts and artists' development. Nonetheless, recently, art education in Saudi Arabia appears to be changing following Saudi Crown Prince Mohammed bin Salman's issuance of an authoritative document entitled Vision 2030 in 2016. It presents goals for enhancing Saudi Arabia's economy and positioning the country more prominently in global markets, but it also presents changes to be made in the social infrastructure, including education. One of the three major themes is that of a "vibrant society." With this document, the country is committed to increasing the number and variety of cultural activities and showcasing Saudis' diverse talents. Attention is given to developing children's character, including "social skills, cultural knowledge, and self-awareness" by "reshaping our academic and educational system" (p. 28). Mention is made of preparing a "modern curriculum." Vision 2030 promotes and reinvigorates social development to build an active and productive community.

Even though there is a global movement to integrate diverse issues within the curriculum and within art education specifically, a review of prior studies revealed that there are gaps in the existing knowledge about the ways art teachers can survive in difficult circumstances to make changes in their programs to accommodate the requirements of various kinds of students. Moreover, there are challenges for the art faculty to learn more about the art forms native to their country and community and to respond to pressures of a global nature (Alamoud, 1991; Al-Salloum, 1995; Alsaud & Qurban, 2016; Alshehri, 2005; Kattan, 2015; Lutfi, 2018). Besides, there has been a lesser effort made to understand the effectiveness of the present arts curriculum on the academic self-concept and behavioural growth of the higher education students in the KSA, unlike the global scenario wherein there has been increasing research and awareness on the role of fine arts curriculum in students' personality and behavioural growth across levels of education.

1.2   Problem Statement

Integration of fine arts in elementary, middle, or higher education has developed leadership skills, self-efficacy, general abilities, higher education majors, linguistic and mathematical achievements in schools, creativity and motivation, self-regulation, and emotional intelligence. Arts education or integration of fine arts in higher education is associated with the development of skills held as critical for innovation— critical and creative thinking, motivation, self-confidence, and ability to communicate and cooperate effectively— along with academic skills in non-art subjects of mathematics, science, reading and writing (Winner, Goldstein, & Vincent-Lancrin 2013). In medical institutions, the integration of humanities and fine arts has enhanced students' empathy, diagnostic skills, team building, resilience,

communication skills and cultural sensitivity (Mukunda et al. 2019). Employment of Visual Thinking Strategies or Artful Thinking pedagogies has been instrumental in developing clinical observational skills and the above behavioural abilities in medical institutions. Similarly, Respress and Lutfi (2006) observed the significance of fine arts in reducing the risk of violence among atypical children through brain-based learning.

Art education has been introduced in the Saudi Arabian context at various primary, intermediary, and higher education levels to enhance aesthetic values and resilience through purpose, sense, balance, positive attitude, and stability (Mahgoub & Aldbesi 2016). Nonetheless, academic research on the deeper impact of the fine arts curriculum on the students' behavioural and personality growth concerning academics is a rarity. Despite the influential role of the fine arts curriculum on students' behavioural development, especially in higher education, a lesser effort has been made academically to gauge the changes among Saudi Arabian students in general and fine arts students in specific.

On the contrary, however, there has been some academic development in understanding academic behaviours of university students involving self-regulation, social connectedness, self-efficacy and self-control, albeit without the effect of the fine arts curriculum. For instance, Jdaitawi (2015) posited a bi-directional association between self-regulation and other variables, including social connectedness, self-efficacy, and self-control of the University of Dammam, Saudi Arabia. The study reported that social connectedness and self-control are predictors of students' self-regulation, but not self-efficacy. Furthermore, there was a significant difference in the relationship between self-control and self-regulation among female students. The other variables were insignificant for both genders, thereby underlining the moderating role of gender differences in some aspects of the students' behavioural growth. Zaidi et al.

(2017) have noted a strong impact of teaching strategies on the students' self-efficacy, motivation, and performance of the College of Health and Rehabilitation Sciences. Nonetheless, while both problem-based and traditional learning has no difference in impacting the students' self-efficacy, academic performance was higher for students of traditional learning methods.

Dradkh (2018), on the other hand, observed moderate self-regulation levels among the undergraduate students of Saudi Arabia, owing to obstacles like incompetent skills of time management, inadequate planning, lack of an appropriate method of study, high amount of homework, subject complexity, family problems and the student's social relationships. Since the study method has been highlighted as one of the principal determinants of students' self-regulation, understanding the impact of the fine arts curriculum in Fine Arts education would establish its effect on students' behavioural growth. Besides, students' academic self-efficacy is significantly but negatively associated with academic procrastination and positively with academic achievement (Güngör 2020), making it imperative to understand the role of curriculum.

There is relationship between education for both gender in Saudi Arabia with the existing religious, cultural and traditional values (Hamdan, 2005). Gender segregation has been associated with culture. Women have attended segregated campuses, and subjects were more limited for women than those of their contemporaries (Schmitt-Thiel, 2003). Thus, challenges have many negative consequences on the development of education in Saudi Arabia. For instance, not all degrees are offered in Saudi Arabian universities, several specialties are offered to men only and until recently some specialties are offered to women only (e.g Nursing). However, the contemporary Saudi Arabian society is open about women's education.

Social dynamics such as religion, tradition, and gender are critical underlying factors directly linked to the institutional structuring of art education, wherein older practices relating to arts and crafts represent ideal and acceptable art forms (Lutfi 2018). Consequently, the art education curriculum in the KSA is being influenced by culture. Therefore, the current study was motivated in order to investigate cultural implications on the students' development. Practising artists in Saudi Arabia revealed difficulties and challenges due lack of knowledge, and awareness as well as lack of supportive audiences in Saudi communities. Therefore, the problem lies in understanding if the contemporary art curriculum in Saudi Arabian higher education institutions is equipped to positively influence students' academic motivation, self-regulation, and self-efficacy. What is the role of gender in fostering such academic self-concept and behavioural growth?

1.3   Research Objectives

i.   To investigate the relationship between the fine arts curriculum on academic motivation, academic self-efficacy and academic self-regulation among undergraduate fine art students in Saudi universities.

ii.   To explore the moderating role of gender difference on the relationship between the fine arts curriculum and academic motivation, academic self-efficacy and academic self-regulation among undergraduate fine arts students in Saudi universities.

iii.   To investigate the impact of the existing fine arts curriculum on academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and academic self-regulation among fine arts students in Saudi universities.

iv.   To explore fine art curriculum mapping policies in order to understand what meaning this educational initiative has for individual fine arts students, teachers and administrators in Saudi universities.

1.4   Research Questions

i.   What is the impact of the fine arts curriculum on academic motivation among undergraduate fine art students in Saudi universities?

ii.   What is the impact of the fine arts curriculum on self-efficacy among undergraduate fine art students in Saudi universities?

iii.   What is the impact of the fine arts curriculum on academic self-regulation among undergraduate fine art students in Saudi universities?

iv.   What is the moderating role of gender difference on the relationship between the fine arts curriculum and academic motivation among undergraduate fine arts students in Saudi universities?

v.   What is the moderating role of gender difference on the relationship between the fine arts curriculum and academic self-efficacy among undergraduate fine arts students in Saudi universities?

vi.   What is the moderating role of gender difference on the relationship between the fine arts curriculum and academic self-regulation among undergraduate fine arts students in Saudi universities?

1.5   Significance of the Study

Studies across the globe have established the positive and significant role of the fine arts curriculum and pedagogies on students' intrinsic motivation, creativity, self-efficacy, and academic performance. Academic self-concepts such as self-regulation are considered important for visual artists' creativity, sustenance, career advancements, and performance. As Ivcevic and Nusbaum (2017) have argued, the success of transforming creative ideas into accomplishments substantially depends on effective self-regulation processes. Self-regulation enables the students to restrategise and revise through regulation of process goals, develop goal-appropriate approaches and manage/embrace ambitious goals and risks. Moreover, self-regulation help students sustain and maintain their efforts, such as strategies for planning and organisation, persistence in facing challenges, and management of emotions. Their study further identified two broad groups of self-regulation processes in creativity: (1) revising and re-strategising (including regulating process expectations, adjusting approach, and managing ambitious goals/embracing risk); and (2) sustaining and maintaining effort (including planning and organisation strategies, persistence in the face of obstacles, and managing emotions). Bendassolli et al. (2016) similarly noted the mediating role of self-regulation in the relationship of strategy and planning competencies with business performance in the creative industry and their social relationships. Self-regulation is also instrumental in influencing the processes fine arts students activate to sustain their motivation, cognition, affect and behaviours as they strive to improve their performance and reach their goals (McPherson & Renwick 2011: p.234). Moreover, self-regulation assists students (later, artists) with emotional regulation and executive functioning, demonstrating reductions in internalising and externalising disorders, academic difficulties and academic self-efficacy with positive

7

trends in improved academic achievement (Rapp-Paglicci, Stewart, & Rowe 2011), making visual arts curriculum a significant influencer in shaping the intrinsic growth of students.

Apart from self-regulation, intrinsic motivation has been established to impact art students' creative process and performance, and there may be a complex effect of motivation on creativity among them (Stanko-Kaczmarek 2012). Furthermore, students' intrinsic motivation is considerably affected by how they are taught, like interaction with artists, which fosters their creativity instead of theoretical and traditional modes of the teaching-learning process (Wahed, Husain, Wahed, & Pitil 2019). Such observations have been corroborated by the empirical investigation of Klamer and Petrova (2007) on Dutch visual artists, while further adding that the financing modes gained through the social support system also facilitate or affect the creativity leading to their artistic achievements. Overall, the studies on the self-concept of the fine arts students establish the importance of curriculum and pedagogy shaping the outcomes, which makes this study imperative in the Saudi Arabian context, owing to lesser research on the issue and recent positive developments in the fine arts education in the country amidst the heavy influence of religion, culture, preconceived norms and gender differences.

Although there is considerably lesser evidence on the impact of fine arts curriculum or pedagogy on student outcomes concerning creativity, critical thinking, persistence, motivation and self-concept (self-regulation and self-efficacy), there is plausibility on the influence of art education curriculum and pedagogy in fostering such skills. For instance, Serio et al. (2013) showed that augmented reality technology positively impacts students' motivation, where motivational factors involve attention, relevance, confidence, and satisfaction. In an augmented-reality-based learning

environment, attention and satisfaction motivational factors were better rated than those obtained in a slides-based learning environment. When the impact of the augmented reality system was analysed in isolation, the attention and confidence factors were the best rated. Chin et al. (2019) revealed that "confidence" was the most highly rated motivational factor shaping liberal arts students' learning intent, suggesting pedagogy's role. Chad-Friedman et al. (2019) have also reflected on the impact of visual arts pedagogy on the overall art skill and realistic drawing skills of students, albeit sans any significant correlation between pedagogy and their intrinsic motivation— contrasting the popular observations discussed above.

The inclusion of visual arts pedagogy in Fine Ats High School based in Turkey also showed students' low burnout levels, high motivation levels and attitude levels and a moderate level of musical instrument performance self-efficacy beliefs (Girgin 2020). Ulger (2018) further presented the significance of the problem-based learning (PBL) approach to the creative thinking of fine arts students, but critical thinking disposition was affected to a lesser degree. The findings highlighted that PBL could help students with nonroutine problem-solving processes by maintaining uncertainty and enhancing creative thinking. To sum up, therefore, the way arts are taught— enhances these students' behavioural outcomes or hinders them (Opoku-Asare & Siaw, 2016; Opoku-Asare, Tachie-Menson, & Essel, 2015; Phelps & Maddison, 2008; González-Zamar & Abad-Segura, 2020)— needs in-depth investigation to understand the type of pedagogies and attitudes required in Fine Arts education for desired outcomes.

Another contribution of the study lay in investigating the moderating role of demographic factors like gender differences in the relationship between the Fine Arts curriculum and academic self-concepts. Worldwide, arts education in schools suffers

from the stereotypical notion of feminisation, wherein female students or students with 'feminine characteristics' (lack of masculinity) are considered appropriate for fine or visual arts. On the other hand, students with masculine characteristics are generally perceived to opt for sports and allied extracurricular activities, leading to bullying victimisation (Lehman & Dumais, 2017) and requiring independent empirical research. Nonetheless, when the question of art education as a career choice arrives globally, there are significant gender differences, with lesser creative women than their male counterparts in visual arts, mathematics and music. These differences are attributed to societal norms than the psychometric, psychological, and biographical abilities of gender in the concerned fields (Piirto, 1991). As can be understood from the societal norms of Saudi Arabia, the influence of unofficial religious discourses, which gradually in the 1980s and 1990s, especially after the Gulf War in 1991, evolved into religious and then politico-religious discourses (Al-Atawneh, 2009), shaped the country's present cultural and social structure. Such shaping of the societal norms with its underlying complexities and inconsistencies led to considerable gender disparity with fewer women students in fine arts education (Alajmi, 2019).

Furthermore, the limited women population enrolled in Universities and pursuing a career in higher education had to rise to such roles after several social and familial challenges and obstacles to achieve success (Devos, 2004). Regarding contemporary art and its education in universities, there is segregation of education based on gender. However, many artists are carving out novel approaches to address the gender paradox in contemporary Saudi Arabian art studies by exploring the governmental boundaries in this issue, wherein the latter continues to allow the redrawing of lines with each passing day (Alajmi, 2019). In addition, there has been considerable growth in female visual artists in the KSA, redefining contemporary art

and inspiring female fine arts students. Therefore, a study involving the moderating role of gender differences was necessary to understand the differential impact of the fine arts curriculum on the self-concept of male vis-à-vis female students, especially when there is a dearth of such issues. Such absence of studies on the role of gender differences in students' academic self-concept belittles the intersection between identity markers, including gender (woman), religion (Islam) and occupation (artist) (Ralph & Gibson, 2021).

1.6 Scope of the Study

This quantitative research is limited to the impact of the fine arts curriculum on undergraduate students in Saudi universities on academic motivation, academic self-efficacy and academic self-regulation. Using the theories of self-efficacy and self-determination, the University fine arts students were studied to establish the causality of the fine arts curriculum on their academic self-concept. Besides considering the gender paradox in fine arts education in Saudi Arabia, the study also investigated if the male students, considering their population dominance, outperform their female counterparts in creativity. Due to the author's affiliation as a faculty with a Saudi Arabian university, conducting such empirical research provided the author with considerable context. Therefore, all students, across grades, who study in the fine arts departments of the five universities of Saudi Arabia (Makkah, Riyadh, Hail, and Jeddah) are included in the present study.

1.7   Operational Definition

The operational terms of this study are defined below:

1.7.1   Curriculum

This project defines what is taught (and assessed) and how it is taught (and assessed). The curriculum is thus a product and a process, with the design goal of facilitating and enriching student learning. The designing curriculum involves asking: to achieve the desired learning outcomes best, 'what should we teach?' and 'how should we teach?' (Barnett, 2009).

1.7.2   Academic Motivation

Academic motivation can be defined as a form of cognitive and emotional arousal that influence a learner's academic achievement (Vallerand et al., 1992).

1.7.3   Academic Self-Efficacy

Academic self-efficacy refers to a student's confidence in his/her abilities to successfully perform academic tasks at a designated level (Schunk, 1991).

1.7.4   Academic Self-Regulation

Academic self-regulated learning refers to one's ability to understand and control one's learning environment. Self-regulation abilities include goal-setting, self-monitoring, self-instruction, and self-reinforcement (Harris & Graham, 1999; Schraw, Crippen, & Hartley, 2006; Shunk, 1996).

CHAPTER 2

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

2.1.1 The higher education system in Saudi Arabia

The history of higher education in Saudi Arabia may be traced back to about 1400 years ago regarded as the beginning of Islam. Thus, Mecca and Medina (Holy cities of Islam) have disseminated knowledge to the Islamic world in particular and the rest of the world. Schools developed in Mecca and Medina were usually sponsored by wealthy Muslim individuals.

The Ottomans built some of the most famous schools there after the Ottoman conquest of the Arabs in 1517 (Antonius, 1965). Sul- tan Qayt Bay, Sultan of Egypt, Sultan Gheyath el Din, and Sultan of Benegal were some of the early prestigious schools (Wahibi, 1978).

According to history, university education began in 1957 with a single institution with 9 staff and an enrolment of 21 students (King Saud University, 1982). However, by 1982 there were 7 universities with a teaching staff of 6,906 and 63,563 students.

According to Ministry of Education (1980), educational policy of Saudi Arabia stated that the purpose of education as follows:

i) Student to understand and correctly spread Islam

ii) Prepare the individual to become a useful member in the building of his community

iii) Develop the society economically, socially and culturally

iv) Equip the individual with the various skills and knowledge

v) Develop conduct of conduct of an individual in constructive directions'

Furthermore, Saudi Arabias' characteristics of education include the following: focus on Islamic teaching, a gender segregation policy, state funding at all levels a centralized system of control and educational support (Smith & Abouammoh, 2013).

Education for industrialization is stressed as the key to modernization, thus Saudi Arabia is rapidly growing in that direction proving a high standard of living and full employment to its citizens (Duguid, 1970). Considering above-mentioned points, higher education aims at providing the manpower needs for qualified personnel at present and in the future.

Hilal (2013) reported gender segregation policy in Saudi Arabia, especially in universities except King Abdullah University of Science and Technology as well as the medical sector.

Culture refers to values, attitudes, beliefs and practices that are shared among a certain human group. Considering the context of culture different cultures were often classified on the continuum of collectivistic or individualistic (Triandis, 1994). The learning styles of college students differ according to their culture of origin due to the amount of behavioral pattern restrictions the society places on its individuals (Ma & Schoeneman, 1997). Thus, in collectivistic societies, the students should receive knowledge from the teachers who embody the role of potential sages while students' individual insights are not valued (Pak & Sands, 1996). However, students in individualistic societies are responsible for their learning where some teachers act as guides to knowledge rather than experts in the study area. Saudi Arabia can be

classified in the collectivistic category due to clinging to traditional customs and social values (Long, 2005).

Saudi Arabian culture is associated with complex religious and ideological terrain Hamdan (2005). In addition to the unique society's appearance in its adherence to its inherited values, Saudi Arabia has to offer solutions without changing parts of the culture (Alfawaz et al., 2014). Similarly, Saudi Arabia is regarded as a religiously and socially conservative country. Saudi Arabia has tribal and Islamic affiliations, thus regarded as a high cultural homogeneity (Alfawaz et al., 2014).

Nearly a century ago, in 1918, Ralph Adams Cram observed the development of a new and better civilisation through the education of art forms, which is simultaneously the result of sane and wholesome conditions of life (Cram, 1918; p.130). Moreover, art enables individuals to perceive and interpret in a way not possible by any other means. Therefore, fine arts within this domain of liberal arts (including painting, architecture, sculpting, music, drama, poetry and minor arts involving wood, stone and metal works) should be constructively placed within higher education to generate appreciation toward the power and function of arts. Furthermore, as Cram (1918) stressed, the inclusion of fine arts in education leads to a real liking towards good art among young individuals instead of bad. While fine arts in lower levels of education instill among students sense of beauty and craftsmanship, at higher levels, the revelation of the splendour and significance of art enables the individuals to view the great elements of past civilisations, which in turn, enables the future artists to bring forth ways for quality life through beauty in the surrounding instead of focussing on mechanical elements of survival.

To ensure a quality of life based on values, enhancement of quality in character and personality of individuals at a young age is necessary, facilitated through fine art education (Longman, 1959). Through fine arts, students are exposed to identifying aesthetics in any artwork, interpreting insights embodied by the work, and being empathetic to comprehend its unique aspects through imagination and sympathetic identification. When transferred to life situations, such elements of knowledge of aesthetics, comprehension, empathy and intuition influence their motivation and behaviour (Longman, 1959). Besides, since art is the product of a single mind's imagination, education in the understanding of art creation contributes to developing independence, individuality, self-confidence, and originality. Apart from being vivid, flexible and adaptable to daily lives among the students (Longman, 1959). Therefore, Longman (1959) and Cram (1918) considered fine arts education more intrinsically value-based against the 'organisation man' puppet produced by technological or social sciences.

Higher education is expected to instil wisdom in judgement, peer understanding and environmental harmony (Morey, 1943). It is here that fine arts education as a major stream enables students with temperamental compatibility, highly developed critical ability, and to think richly and wisely, thereby facilitating higher education goals. In addition, the contribution of fine arts education to the personality development of students also supports the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia's (KSA) Vision 2030 (Al-Buqami, 2021).

2.1.2 The history, ideas and fine arts system at the higher education level in Saudi Arabia

There was no much literature on the historical roots of art education in Saudi Arabia (Al-Risais, 2010). There are two categories of art in Saudi Arabian, namely: plastic art and visual art. The teaching of painting faced strong opposition from some conservative scholars according to the history of Saudi art education. These scholars protested against the endorsement of fine art in the Saudi Arabian public education program due to the fact that drawing is photography which is simulating images of God's creation and its prohibited in Islam.

King Abdul Aziz took a decisive decision between 1876 -1953 on not accepting the opinion of those who advanced the practice of drawing. Furthermore, the teaching of drawing continued to face many challenges leading to opposition against some other kinds of art (portraiture, drama and music).

Nevertheless, the public in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia gradually realized the difference between drawing and photography. As part of keeping with modernization several Arab artists perceived learning the language of Western art (AlMunajjed, 1997). Similarly, AlMunajjed (1997) has reported that a modern educational system in Saudi Arabia steadily replaced the traditional education system between 1953 when the Ministry of Education was established and the issuance of Saudi Education Policy Document in 1970. These modern schools assumed the roles of community centers for cultural and social activities (exhibitions, sporting events, plays and public gatherings). Engagement between the local community and the schools that met the needs of people was promoted through these social activities. Furthermore, schools in rural areas replaced village squares where guidance in drawing lessons was provided (AlMunajjed, 1997).

The Ministry of Education in Saudi Arabia introduced drawing and painting lessons into curricula. The art classes were basic, taught by local instructors with little or no art training Ali (1989).

2.1.3   Gender issues in the educational system of Saudi Arabia

The study of gender and education encompasses gender differences in educational outcomes such as achievement, attainment, and experiences within the education system (Buchmann & Edmunds, 2018).

El-Sanabary (1994) describes Saudi Arabia as a traditional Islamic country that designed its education system upon which gender divisions and power relations were embraced through the following practices:

i)   Differentiation of curriculum at the various educational levels

ii)   Schools and colleges that are based on gender-segregated

iii) An educational policy that is gender-specific and stresses the domestic function of women

iv)   A dual system of education for male and female

2.1.3(a)   The Gender definition

Gender can be defined as the socially constructed attributes, behavior, activities and roles that a particular society at a given time and place considers appropriate for men and women, and boys and girls and the relationships between them (UNICEF, 2002).

Gender differentiates and determines what men and women, and boys and girls are expected to do and to be (their obligations, rights, responsibilities and roles). Gender can be a key determinant of who decides, gets and owns what as well as who becomes educated. In many countries, societies and communities boys are usually educated compared to girls (UNICEF, 2002; 2011).

2.1.3(b)   Saudis approach on Gender issues

Nearly in all societies, inequity based on gender exists to a varying extent and across ethnic and social groups (Vo & Park, 2008). However, gender inequality varies with time and women are in the receiving end of hardship in every community, nationality and class (Brody, 1981; Arendell & Estes, 1994; Climo, 2000). Inequality in the context of gender applies to any variation in the household duties, land, ownership of property, employment, special opportunities for training, basic facilities, natality rates and mortality rates (Amartya, 2001).

Women are more vulnerable when it comes to gender inequity in respect to power imbalance, especially in traditional patriarchal societies such as Saudi Arabia. Monarchy is the system of government practiced in Saudi Arabia following a constitution governed by a strict interpretation of Islamic law (Vidyasagar & Rea, 2004). King nominates the Council of Ministers, media is owned by the government. The government does formulation and implementation of policies. There are no independent interest groups, pressure groups or any group that will oppose government. For the first time in 2005, the government ran municipal elections but women were disallowed to vote (The world factbook, 2022).

2.1.3(c)   Gender issues in Saudi Education

In Saudi Arabia, informal schooling took place for both boys and girls with the aim of teaching religious rituals. In this setup, Quran and Hadith were learned in all the communities (Doumato, 2000). Education of boys and girls first took place in the class of Quran recitation for children known as Kuttab. In addition, the homes of professional male or female Quran readers were the centres (private tutorials) for the teaching of girls. Furthermore, education for girls usually stopped at the puberty stage (Altorki, 1986). Department of Religious Guidance until 2002 was responsible for the education of girls/women at elementary, secondary, high school and university levels. However, the Ministry of Education oversaw the education of boys/men (Hamdan. 2005). This was aimed at ensuring no deviation from the original purpose of female education that makes women good mothers and wives as well as recommends suitable jobs for women.

Formal public schooling in Saudi Arabia started around the 1960s and the first official primary school for girls was opened in Riyadh (AlMunajjed, 1997). Similarly, Riyadh's King Saud University opened the first women's campus in 1979 with Arabic, English, history and geography as subject areas. The same university added colleges for public administration, medicine, dentistry, nursing, and education in the women's campuses (Hamdan. 2005).

Women's education has been changing and marked a lot of progress in Saudi Arabia under the leadership of King Faisal. The Ministry of Higher Education has approved sponsoring of talented women for graduate studies abroad. Saudi Arabia's ' policies on women have improved significantly as recently the government supported

the election of Thoraya Obaid, a Saudi woman as an executive of the United Nations. Obaid is seen as a pioneer and fighter for the education of women (Qantara.de, 2003).

2.1.4 Self-Determination Theory

Academic motivation in higher education has recently been associated with and understood through the self-determination theory (SDT) developed by Ryan and Deci (2000), being the product of social conditions facilitating or hindering the element among students (Cavusoglu & Karatas, 2015; Jeno, 2015; Beachboard et al., 2011; Badiozaman et al., 2020). Academic motivation refers to the student's attitude towards tasks received from school and academic subjects influencing their academic success (Alexander 2006; Artino Jr & Stephens 2009). On the other hand, SDT is premised on individuals' "inherent growth tendencies" and their "innate psychological needs", developing their self-motivation with external conditions fostering positivity in the development journey (Ryan & Deci, 2000: p.68). In an educational setting, through the application of SDT, Reeve (2004) noted that autonomy enjoyed by students and supported by teachers positively influences their academic motivation, which in turn contributes to their generating of innovative products. Besides autonomy, competence and relatedness are positively associated with students' self-motivation and academic motivation, influencing their academic achievement. Social environment, such as higher education institutions, satisfying students' basic psychological needs such as competence, autonomy, and relatedness maximises their academic motivation (Deci & Ryan 2002). Through the application of SDT, Cavusoglu and Karatas (2015) noted self-determined intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to be negatively correlated with academic motivation and achievement, with the former having a deeper impact on students' attitudes than the latter. However, fulfilling

psychological needs transforms non-self-determined extrinsic motivation into self-determined extrinsic motivation and positively influences the students' intrinsic motivation. Therefore, a supportive environment concerning autonomy, relatedness, and competence reinforces self-determined motivation, indirectly predicting academic motivation (Oksuz & Guven 2014).

Similar observations regarding the relationship between psychological fulfilment, self-determined motivation and school dropout intentions have been established by Jeno et al. (2018). The study, therefore, recommended the importance of pedagogy and teacher support in the fulfilment of the students' psychological needs for ensuring their retention in higher education institutions, especially among the fine arts program in the KSA— a lesser chosen area of study. Such fulfilment can be meted out by "providing choice and volition to facilitate autonomous motivation and giving students effectance-relevant feedback and optimal challenges to increase perceived competence" (Jeno et al., 2018: p.1163). Furthermore, content relevance, instruction quality and perceived transparency of requirements also determine the degree of fulfilment of students' psychological needs and consequent academic motivation displayed through their higher study interests (Müller & Louw 2004). The significance of applying SDT in this study lies in its ability to explain "why students benefit when teachers support their autonomy" (Reeve, 2004: p.185). The first explanation involves different types of motivations— autonomous and controlled, and the second refers to the association of autonomous motivation (such as intrinsic motivation and identified regulation) with increased positive educational benefits than controlled motivations.

Badiozaman et al. (2020) noted the importance of a supportive and conducive learning environment in higher education institutions to engage students, which predicts positive academic motivation, academic self-efficacy, and a sense of self-

capability (Dogan, 2015; Wu, 2019). Similarly, the introduction of cohort programs in higher education institutions infuses an environment of relatedness with peers and faculty members, leading to positive educational outcomes involving critical thinking, literacy and job preparedness (Beachboard et al., 2011). Overall, the application of SDT in the study helped the researcher examine if the current fine arts curriculum in the higher education institutions of KSA is learner-centric— providing neglecting or nurturing learning environments (controlling, amotivating, autonomous and informational), affecting their academic motivation, self-efficacy and self-regulation.

Concerning fine arts education, pedagogy enhances aesthetic values among students enabling them to address crisis and stress through balance, purpose, sense, stability, resilience and a positive attitude (Mahgoub & Aldbesi, 2016). However, the degree to which the current fine arts curriculum acts as informational than controlling. Students are given the autonomy to engage with the art form and create something of their liking instead of meeting the market demand positively influences their academic motivation (Leavell, 2016). SDT identifies if the positive academic motivation of the fine arts students is the outcome of intrinsic motivation through informational curriculum or extrinsic motivation through controlling curriculum. Moreover, through an effective fine arts curriculum, higher education students are introduced to an innovative model of the educational process through the formation of universal competence, which enables them to decision-making based on their increased universal and moral values developed from the intercultural interaction and non-verbal communication (Alekseeva et al., 2019). Similar observations were laid by Hsu and Chi (2021), whose study revealed fine arts students having higher intrinsic motivation and identified regulation than students of other majors, which were positively correlated with satisfaction and negatively correlated with regret and amotivation.

Through the application of SDT, the researcher will analyse how the fine arts curriculum followed in the KSA will contribute to the students' academic motivation and self-efficacy. Despite the fine arts curriculum being designed to develop students' personalities, values and behaviour, current educational policies and practices are anchored in traditional motivational models and teachers being controlled by institutional pressures, controlling mandates and leadership styles (Ryan & Deci 2020). Such constraints often contribute to the failure to meet the students' psychological need satisfaction, irrespective of the curriculum goal (Wang et al., 2021).

2.1.5   Self-Efficacy Theory

The self-efficacy theory (SET) developed by Bandura (1977) is premised on the idea that different psychological procedures develop and strengthen perceptions of personal effectiveness or self-efficacy irrespective of their formats. Such perceived self-efficacy influences individuals' behaviours and choice of activities, the extent of effort they spend on a particular task and the degree of resilience shown against obstacles (Bandura & Adams, 1977). The theory premised on the social learning analysis, bases four core information sources on which self-efficacy emanates— performance accomplishments, experiences of observing others succeeding through consistent efforts, verbal persuasion by others on the individual's capabilities and forms of physiological arousal enabling them to judge their anxiety and vulnerability to stress levels.

Moreover, Bandura (2000) noted through an empirical investigation of the theory that different approaches of treatment change perceived self-efficacy, wherein the dependability of the "source of efficacy information" influences the degree of self-