



ROLE OF MURAL PAINTING IN THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

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Abstract: This article discusses the role of mural painting in socio-economic development. Mural art is a form of public art used for centuries to beautify urban spaces and communicate messages to the public. The article explores how mural art can contribute to economic growth by creating opportunities for artists, craftspeople, manufacturers, suppliers, and transporters. Additionally, it discusses how public art can contribute to social capital and community development through citizen participation and the preservation and valuation of local and indigenous cultures. Finally, the article emphasizes the importance of perception in determining human behavior and public art's role in shaping perceptions of the urban environment. Overall, the article highlights the multidimensional benefits of mural painting in fostering both economic and social development.

Index Terms - Mural Painting, Public Art, Cultural Environment.

I. INTRODUCTION

Mural painting, or painting on large walls or surfaces, has been integral to human expression for centuries. Historically, murals have been used to tell stories, convey cultural values, and promote political or social messages. In recent times, however, mural painting has gained significant attention for its potential to contribute to the socioeconomic development of communities. Murals have been used to beautify urban spaces, promote tourism, generate economic activity, and foster community engagement. The role of mural painting in socioeconomic development is an important topic of discussion, as it has the potential to create jobs, increase revenue, and enhance the quality of life for individuals and communities. This essay will explore the various ways mural painting can contribute to the socioeconomic development of communities and the impact it can have on a region's cultural and economic landscape.

II. SOCIAL INFLUENCE

Mural art has significantly shaped religion and politics, two fundamental aspects of human life. In the current technological era, mural art has become a vital medium for influencing culture and shaping political and religious ideologies. Today's art landscape is heavily influenced by mural art, and the present generation must preserve and continue this beautiful history. Unfortunately, this art form is at risk of extinction without proper conservation efforts. Protecting and inspiring the next generation of artists is essential to keep this art form alive. The impact of mural art is not only limited to art and culture but also extends to economic growth. The influence of mural art on society is significant, and it is important to recognize its potential for fostering socio-economic development. With its rich cultural heritage, Tamil Nadu must try to preserve its mural art. As

art and artists continue to grow, our collective responsibility is to ensure that mural art remains an important part of our cultural heritage and continues to inspire future generations.

III. ART AND SOCIETY

Since the beginning of human civilization, there has been a strong connection between art and society. This connection can be seen in various cultural practices, such as the use of the bindi (a dot) on the forehead of a newborn and its continuation even after death. Art plays a vital role in society, not limited to painting alone. Sixty-four types of art play a significant role in our daily lives. Without art, development and change in society would not be possible. As technology advances, it will create more opportunities for artists to contribute innovatively to society. According to artist Trotsky Marudhu, this development will result in more opportunities for artists in the future than ever before. The interconnectedness of art and society has been present for years and will remain a crucial aspect of our lives.

IV. ART AND SOCIAL DEVELOPMENTS

Art and artistic products are regarded as long-term social assets, and they play a crucial role in shaping the dynamics of society. This process involves the state, families, and the wider community. Art can inspire modernization and creativity within a society, serving as a motivator for progress. As such, it is considered an essential aspect of a society's cultural heritage and a means of preserving its history and traditions. The involvement of various stakeholders in the production and preservation of art highlights the significance of art as a form of social capital. By recognizing the importance of art and investing in its development, a society can foster creativity and innovation, promoting progress and modernization.

Despite the awareness of the role and importance of art among governments and certain segments of society, a significant portion still needs to fully appreciate the benefits of art and its contributions to their lives. This lack of engagement with art can be observed daily, with rural areas often less involved in artistic activities than urban areas. Applying art can serve as a means of reducing conflicts and promoting social harmony within and between societies. The significant role played by art in the European Renaissance and cultural revolutions can be applied to other regions of the world as well. By recognizing the transformative power of art, many social problems can be addressed, and society's ability to cope with challenges can be improved. Art can serve as a means of promoting social cohesion, inspiring creativity, and driving progress.

Art and the economy are critical components of any society and are often subject to political and ideological influences. One such example is the renowned artist Trotsky Marudhu, who has made significant contributions to Tamil culture. His digital Opera and illustrations have brought to life many legends and myths of Tamil Nadu, and his work has been published in various magazines. His contributions to the film, fashion, and art industries in Tamil Nadu are immense, and he is widely recognized as a master of his craft. As an artist, his work has transcended boundaries and inspired others to explore the intersection of art and technology. In this way, he has demonstrated the significant impact that art can have on the economy and society.

V. CULTURAL CHANGE

Cultural development is an ongoing process that involves continuous enhancement and change. Even celebrations and rituals, including those surrounding death, require the acceptance of a new culture. Art plays a crucial role in these celebrations as they inspire the stories and methods we use to celebrate. The influence of mural art is evident in the colors, clothing, ornaments, decorations, and other elements integral to the celebration. These principles and elements of art are used to enhance and enrich our cultural experiences. Thus, art plays a significant role in preserving and promoting cultural traditions and serves as a medium for celebrating the richness and diversity of different cultures.

VI. DRIVING SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH MEDIA, TECHNOLOGY, AND ART

Mural art has been instrumental in bringing about social change in the past, and today it has been given a new lease of life through social media and technology. For example, murals created in cities such as Chennai and Coimbatore can now be broadcast globally through social media platforms, providing wider visibility and recognition for the artists and their work. Moreover, technology has also facilitated the preservation and protection of mural art, ensuring that it continues to inspire and influence future generations. By combining traditional artistic techniques with modern technology, mural art can continue to evolve and remain relevant today, reflecting the changing times and capturing the spirit of contemporary society.

VII. Economic Impact Of Mural Painting

In tribal societies, art is not seen as a commodity or a business. Instead, it is an integral part of their daily life and culture. Tribes incorporate art into every aspect of their lives, from painting their homes with images and colors they enjoy to enjoying artistic expression while performing routine activities such as brushing their teeth, eating, and bathing. According to art critic Indiran, this can still be observed among the tribes of Odisha, where art continues to be an important part of their everyday existence. In this way, art is not just a form of expression but a way of life intimately connected to the traditions and customs of the tribe.

While studying in college, the researcher witnessed a man drawing a wall painting with charcoal near a garbage dump. The man cleaned the place and painted a beautiful landscape scene with a girl walking. The researcher observed the scene for an hour and was surprised that the man left the place without looking back or bothering to pick up the charcoal he used. This instance highlights that art and economy may only sometimes be a direct connection, especially when artists create for their enjoyment. However, art can become commercialized when an artist needs to sell their work to make a living or survive in the industry.

VIII. Art And Marketing

The rise of the internet and technological advancements have presented artists with new challenges and opportunities. The internet has allowed for easy dissemination and broadcasting of artworks, allowing artists to gain fame even before death. However, success in this new landscape often requires a solid online marketing strategy. Artworks are increasingly used in the advertising industry to enhance marketing strategies, with advertising slogans combined with art objects. As such, artworks are becoming a crucial component of the

marketing policies of many businesses. Even renowned artists such as Picasso and M.F. Hussain utilized marketing strategies to promote their artworks.

IX. Art and Economics

In the early stages of human civilization, our ancestors lived as hunter-gatherers or foragers. They relied on gathering food from wild plants and animals to meet their daily needs for nourishment and clothing. These actions can be considered the earliest economic activities of human beings. As people began to communicate with each other, they needed different ways to express themselves. This led to the creation of images depicting their prey as a means to secure their requirements. The drawings discovered on cave walls and stones serve as evidence of these early efforts of our ancestors.

The birth of music can also be traced back to the need for communication and emotional expression. Early humans expressed their sadness and joy through crying and laughter, which eventually developed into melodies and musical arrangements with an aesthetic focus. Similarly, the emergence of both economy and art can be attributed to fulfilling the basic needs of human beings.

Over time, both economic and artistic activities have evolved and gained new dimensions. Adam Smith's book "The Wealth of Nations" marked the acceptance of economics as a scientific discipline. Similarly, art has been considered an essential element of civilized societies for centuries.

The discipline of economics aims to ensure efficiency, equity, growth, and stability within an economic system. In a complementary manner, art also contributes to achieving these goals. Just like the economy, art is based on real efforts and actions. Artists engage in physical and non-physical creative processes, using their time and materials to fulfill their needs and wants. They also interact with one another and their consumers (fans) in the art market. Both economics and art involve interactions between people and their environment.

Art and economy have a symbiotic relationship, where both benefit from each other. Art plays a significant role in improving the outcomes of economic activities and holds an esteemed position in the business climate. In developing countries, art serves as a means of relaxation, inspiration, creativity, stimulation, and reinforcement for participants in economic activities, including employees, employers, and consumers. Music and painting have become an integral part of the business environment today. Art is also a vital component of the advertising and marketing sectors, and with it, the demand for many goods and services would be higher than anticipated.

X. DRAMATIC IMPACT ON THE SOCIETY

According to literature reviews, the term "public art" has been subject to debate regarding the implications of the words "public" and "art." The term is open to various interpretations and has been used to describe everything from monumental sculptures commissioned by the government to subway graffiti. It is a broad term encompassing any art form not displayed in traditional art galleries or museums.

The traditional purpose of public art has been to commemorate famous figures or events and to beautify the physical environment through ornamentation. However, in recent times, the purpose of public art has become linked to various urban issues such as politics, policies, economy, public funds, and improving the city's image through urban regeneration.

The definitions above reveal that public art is often viewed simply as artwork in public spaces rather than galleries or museums. As a result, the intended audience, the public, can sometimes feel disconnected

from the artwork. This has prompted experts and practitioners to debate alternative ways of defining public art. Solomon has suggested that public space is not limited to physical spaces but includes non-physical spaces like the internet or social media. Therefore, it is not spatial boundaries determining whether art is intended for a public or private audience, but rather its accessibility to the public. Public art can be installed outdoors and indoors as long as it is accessible to all.

According to Dilip, effective public art projects should be part of an integrated multi-disciplinary approach involving collaboration with the people intended to enliven the city, neighborhood, or downtown. This approach is known as participatory public art, where community members are involved in the creative process, redefining the conventional roles of artists and audiences. In this approach, artists act as facilitators who oversee the artwork, while the community actively participates as creative contributors. This active public engagement in the art-making process characterizes the concept of public art today, distinctively referred to as participatory public art or community art. Therefore, in this research, the term 'public art' specifically refers to the definition of participatory public art or community art, where community members are involved in the creative stages of the art itself, and the artwork is accessible to all.

XI. Murals in the Public Art Domain

Mural

According to Encyclopædia Britannica (2010), a mural is a type of paint applied to and becomes a part of a wall or ceiling. Murals can be found both indoors and outdoors. As a relatively inexpensive form of public art, murals are often created using house paints, brushes, or rollers, although modern mural artists use various materials and techniques. For this study, murals will only be considered when applied to walls or other surfaces on public or private property with prior authorization or permission from the government or property owners and accessible to the public.

XII. Benefits of Public Art

Urban managers and local governments perceive public art as having a role in urban development or regeneration that can benefit the artists and community involvement in the project and the city itself. Public art has been credited with various roles in the urban context, including:

- a. Being a cultural investment (which means the economic return is expected).
- b. Fostering cultural tourism.
- c. Optimizing the use of open spaces.
- d. Making the built environment more humane.
- e. Bringing greater pride to the citizens of their locality.
- f. Creating job opportunities and confidence among the communities; and
- g. Enhancing land values

The recognized benefits of public art within urban environments are linked to factors beyond the artwork itself. One of these factors is the participatory process, which is crucial for engaging the public in the project and gaining community acceptance of the artwork.

- a) To make a place more interesting and attractive.
- b) To make contemporary arts and crafts more accessible to the public.
- c) To highlight the identity of different parts of a building or community.
- d) To increase a state's or company's investment in the arts.
- e) To improve the conditions for economic regeneration by creating a richer visual environment.
- f) To create employment for artists, craftspeople, fabricators, suppliers and manufacturers of materials, and transporters.
- g) To encourage closer links between artists and craftspeople and the professions that shape our environment: architecture, landscaping, engineering, and design.

- We are creating public awareness.
- We are providing a social critique.
- You are asserting a community's identity.
- They are sometimes encouraging social action.
- Being a vehicle for communal self-expression and empowerment.
- Developing people's skills and creativity in art, which previously they had a little exposure to.

Dilip discovered that murals could initiate social or political change by raising public awareness, offering social critique, and occasionally inspiring action. However, Dilip points out that considering murals as a catalyst for enduring change is an exaggeration. Moreover, he cautions that not all murals involve community involvement in their creation, and as a result, they cannot assert the same advantages as murals based on community participation.

A similar list of perceived benefits of public art is also presented by Artist Dilip, Chennai, as can be seen as follows:

- a) Public Art creates a clear sense of community pride and identity.
- b) Public Art reflects the cultural heritage, fosters an understanding of their unique identity in history, and presents the cultural identity to visitors.
- c) Public Art improves and enhances the built environment.
- d) Public Art contributes to developing a more pleasant, safe, and viable community.
- e) Public Art enhances tourism and economic development, creating an overall sense of place.
- f) Public Art creates cultural links by promoting opportunities for community development, engagement, and partnerships.

Based on the benefits outlined above, it can be inferred that public art plays a vital role in urban environments, offering physical and visual benefits and social and cultural advantages. The researcher has condensed the benefits of public art into the following summary:

XIII. Visual/Physical Benefits

- Making a place more interesting and attractive.
- Making the built environment more humane.
- Optimizing the use of open space.
- Creating a richer visual environment.
- Beautify the neighborhood through the creative process.
- Creating a sense of place.

XIV. Social/Political Benefits

- Bringing greater pride to the citizens of their locality.
- Creating job opportunities.
- Creating confidence among the communities (giving a sense of purpose).
- Creating public awareness
- Providing social critique.
- Allowing communities to express and address problems.

XV. Cultural Benefits

- Being a cultural investment.
- Fostering the culture.
- They are making contemporary arts and crafts more accessible to the public.
- We are increasing the state's/company's investment in the arts.
- We are opening more exposure to art for the people (developing new artistic skills and creativity).

XVI. Economic Benefits

- Creating employment for artists and other art-supporting businesses.
- We are improving the conditions for economic regeneration.
- It encourages closer links between artists and environment-related professions: architecture, landscaping, engineering, and design.
- We are enhancing land values.
- We are enhancing tourism and economic development.

This section explores the relationship between perception and participation, specifically regarding public art, the urban environment, and the concept of participation itself. We also examine the connections between the perception of public art, the perception of the urban environment, and participation in public art projects, illustrated in Figure 1.

XVII. Perception of Public Art

The perception of public art can be approached from two angles. Firstly, public art can be viewed as a tangible product comprising sculptures, graffiti, or murals. Secondly, public art can be regarded as a participatory process. Public art's perception as a product largely depends on the viewer's "cultural capital," which refers to their expertise (knowledge and skills) in the arts and can be influenced by subjective or personal aesthetic preferences. Conversely, the perception of public art as a participatory process tends to focus on the outcome of the process, specifically the perceived impact or benefits of public art.

As previously mentioned, the advantages associated with public art encompass not only visual or physical benefits but also social and cultural ones. According to Dileep Kumar, perception involves more than what meets the eye. This statement implies that perception is influenced not only by sensory stimuli from the environment but also by psychological mechanisms that shape the relationship between the environment and perception. Therefore, the perception of public art is not merely visual but also psychological. Various factors, including cognition, personal experience, values and beliefs, and sociocultural context, influence an individual's perception of a particular public artwork.

XVIII. Perception of Urban Environment

The perception of the urban environment involves making judgments about it, including perceived qualities, satisfaction, and problems. Such assessments gauge the extent to which an individual perceives the urban environment, or a specific aspect of it, as positive or negative. Significant correlations exist between the physical environment, the social environment (such as social interaction and sense of belonging), and residential satisfaction. Negative indicators of incivility in the environment, such as litter, abandoned vehicles, or groups loitering on the street, can result in fear of crime, decreased property values, and social isolation. Conversely, a particular form of public art can impact a place's social, economic, political, and cultural values.

Dileep Kumar suggests that universal needs are perceived in the urban environment. These universal needs, which he refers to as "universal invariants," can be utilized by urban designers and planners as a reference point for both qualitative aspects and physical planning in developing more functional urban environments. The following points provide a grouping of these universal needs into physical, social, and cultural categories, as outlined by the researcher.

XIX. PHYSICAL

The following points outline the universal needs perceived in the urban environment, as categorized by the researcher:

- The user perceives the aesthetic quality of the urban setting.
- Security and health aspects, and how physical arrangements respond to these needs.
- Degree of integration of nature in the urban environment, allowing access to open space for leisure.
- Provision for privacy, especially in denser urban environments.
- The ability of the urban environment to function effectively as a peaceful place for residence, social amenities, employment, and leisure.

XX. SOCIAL

Varying degrees of social encounter facilitated by the spatial characteristics of the urban setting opportunity for kinship and social networking ways of generating a livelihood and responsive physical arrangements to conduct informal as well as formal business activity

XXI. CULTURAL

The following points outline additional universal needs perceived in the urban environment, as categorized by the researcher:

- The identity of the place is expressed through the distinctiveness of character, familiarity, and territorial bonding with a place.
- Attributes of the physical environment promote self-identity for both individuals and communities.
- Opportunities for both spontaneous and formal recreation that enhance the urban experience

Moreover, the perception of environmental problems can serve as a motivator for action. Neighborhood organizations often form in response to the threat or reality of physical deterioration in the environment.

Solomon's model of sustainable behavior demonstrates how individual or household awareness can translate into behavior. This model can be used to develop effective policy instruments, assuming that changes in behavior depend on a combination of knowledge, perception, and influencing factors. Other factors such as regulations, facilities, and personal situations must also be considered to ensure sustained behavior change.

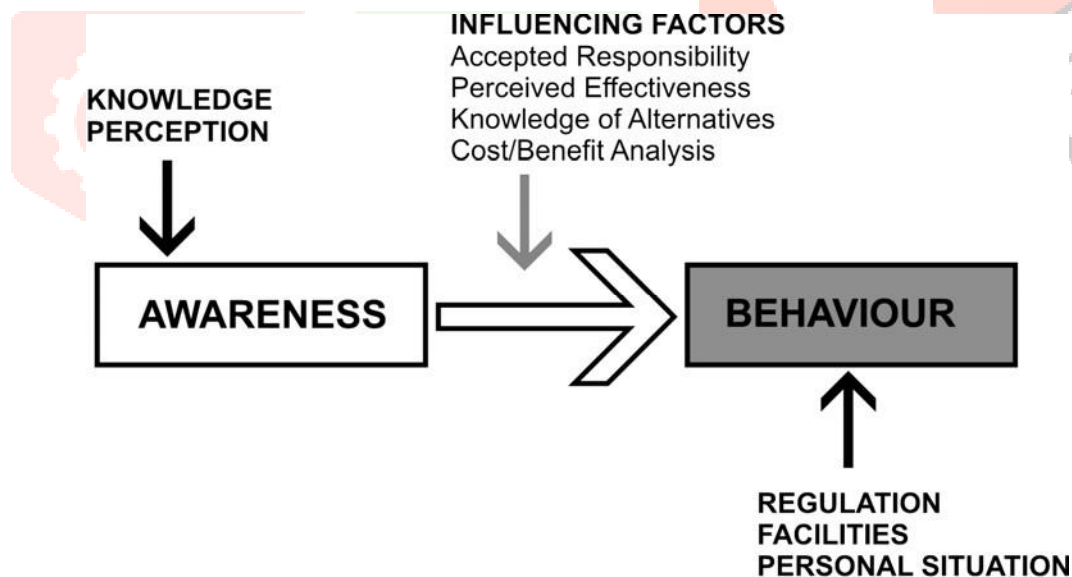


Figure 1 Sustainable Behaviour

The impact of people's perceptions on their behavior in the environment can be examined through the potential and effective environment model. The diagram presented in Figure 2 demonstrates that the built environment does not necessarily induce changes in human behavior. Hence it is referred to as the potential environment. The other key factor is social structure and culture, which can turn the potential environment into an effective one. Social structure and culture shape people's perception of the built environment, influencing their appraisal of whether or not to modify their behavior accordingly.

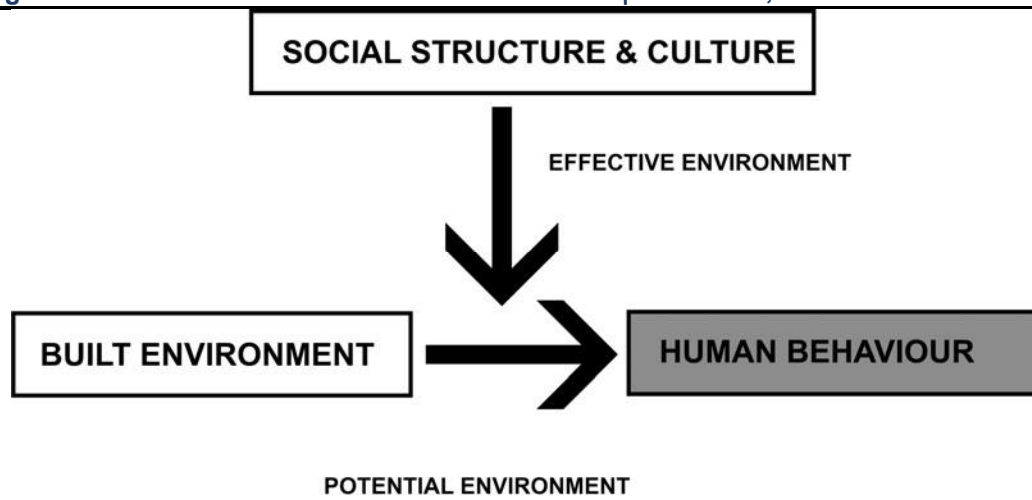


Figure 2 Potential and Effective Environment Approach

Community Development through Public Art

The participatory aspect of public art suggests that citizen involvement in such projects contributes to community development. The subsequent paragraphs outline various community development facets associated with public art.

Community Development

The concept of community development is multifaceted and encompasses a wide range of disciplines. It encompasses physical, social, political, economic, cultural, and environmental aspects. Community development recognizes the importance of social, economic, political, cultural, and personal/spiritual development. With globalization impacting economic and cultural aspects, there is a risk of losing local cultural identities. However, societies must identify with their unique local culture and distinctiveness. Public art plays a crucial role in contextualizing the urban environment and creating a sense of belonging and association for citizens with the place they inhabit.

Dilip Kumar expands on the components of community development, including cultural development, with four major aspects: local value preservation and valuation, indigenous culture preservation and valuation, multiculturalism, and participation. Participation is a crucial factor in building a sense of community. Thus, community development must be distinct from the concept of participation.

XXII. Citizen Participation in Public Art Projects

As discussed earlier, participatory public or community art involves collaboration between citizens (artists and community members) and public institutions (art councils/local governments). In addition to artistic achievements, such projects are expected to enhance local social capital. Public art is believed to impact social benefits positively and has become an integral part of development strategies. However, the success of public art projects cannot be guaranteed, regardless of the area in which the project is located. For example, in the case of mural art, it should not be viewed solely as an educational tool that can be exploited for ideological manipulation.

Citizen Participation in public art projects is perceived to bring benefits, namely:

- a. The artists involved in the projects.
- b. The community members who get involved in the projects.
- c. The communities living in the area where the project takes place; and
- d. The city, in various forms in terms of individual, social, economic, educational, and urban environmental improvement.

In conclusion, the success of a public art project relies heavily on Citizen Participation. The involvement of citizens in such projects not only leads to the physical enhancement of the built environment but also contributes to social and cultural benefits for both the citizens and the city.

XXIII. The linkage between Perception and Participation

The preceding paragraphs have established that perception is crucial in determining human behavior, particularly in urban settings. In urban environments, people's perceptions can range from the positive perception of amenity, which elicits pleasure, to the negative perception of degradation, which leads to annoyance. These perceptions can apply to various environmental domains, such as the visual urban or residential (neighborhood) environment. Participation or the decision to participate can be viewed as a form of coping behavior dependent on the perceived environment, as outlined in the concept of behavior setting. Therefore, an individual's decision to participate in public art projects hinges on their perception of public art and its impact on the urban environment.

Based on the literature mentioned above review, the researcher has attempted to develop a relationship model showing how the perception of public art and the urban environment link to participation in a public art project, as follows:

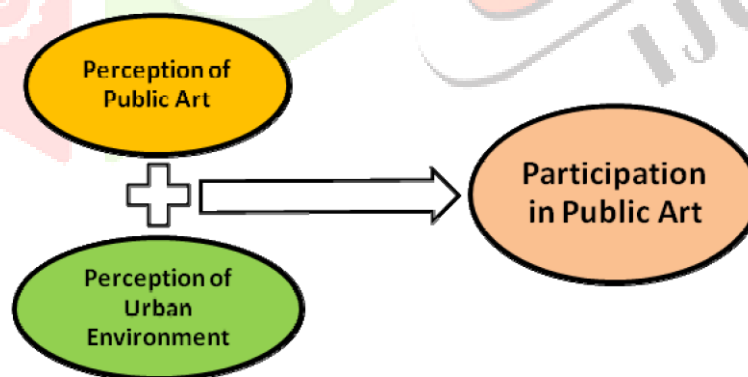


Figure 3 Linkage between Perception and Participation

XXIV. MAJOR ROLE IN ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

The impact of mural art on the economy has been significant for centuries. The opportunities created by mural painting have resulted in economic growth, particularly for artists. However, more than artists benefit, as craftspeople, fabricators, material manufacturers, suppliers, and transporters also benefit from the process.

This chain of benefits fosters closer relationships between artists, craftspeople, and other professions that shape our environment.

CONCLUSION

Mural painting has a significant role in the socioeconomic development of communities. Mural art is an artistic expression and impacts a community's economic growth. The benefits of mural art are not limited to the artists alone, but it extends to other stakeholders in the chain, such as fabricators, manufacturers, suppliers, and transporters. This positively impacts the local economy and contributes to the community's development.

Moreover, mural painting also plays a significant role in preserving and promoting local culture and identity. It allows the community to showcase its unique cultural heritage, thus contributing to the preservation of cultural diversity. This, in turn, fosters a sense of pride and belongingness among community members, which can lead to social cohesion and unity. Furthermore, mural painting can serve as a tool for community development by fostering citizen participation and engagement. Involving the community in creating and implementing public art projects allows for the empowerment of citizens, which can lead to positive changes in the community.

In summary, the role of mural painting in socioeconomic development must be considered. It provides economic opportunities, preserves and promotes cultural heritage, and fosters community development. As such, it is important to recognize and support the potential of mural painting in contributing to the overall well-being and development of communities.

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