

Chapter 6

ART, ARTIST AND SOCIETY

The art world

Artists may gain intrinsic pleasure by creating art works, however wider acceptance and larger reach is generally what an artist strives for. This acceptance brings in its fold recognition, status, wealth and so on. There are various mediums through which the art reaches the wider audience. Contemporary artists are dependent on intermediaries for selling their art works, unlike their predecessors in an earlier era whose works were commissioned by rich patron. There is a visible shift today from the systems of patronage to systems dominated by dealers, art galleries and art critics (White and White 1965). Since intermediaries such as art galleries, art dealers, art critics, and the media influence the art world it is necessary to understand their role and relation to art world. This section tries to understand the complex interplay between the artist on one hand and their art, art gallery system, art dealer, art critic, the media, and the art audience on the other.

Art Galleries - *The distributor system*

The art gallery is a place where art works are displayed for public viewing and it is here that a solitary activity like painting becomes a social product. Becker has enumerated upon the elements, which operate in the art gallery setup to enable the artworks to reach the art public. According to him,

A gallery consists of: a dealer, who ordinarily has a permanent location in which to display artworks to prospective buyers; a group of artists (often referred to as the dealer's "stable"), who produce the work to be sold; a group of buyers, who support the gallery through regular purchases; a critic or critics, who help, through published explanations and evaluations, to build up an interest in and a market for the works of the gallery's artists; and a large group of gallery goers, who attend openings, come to see shows, and generally diffuse interest in the gallery's artists by talking about them and recommending shows to others' (Becker 1982 : 110-111).

Art galleries thus operate as professional intermediaries or distribution systems that sell artworks and their purpose is to ensure sale and profit. 'The main idea of the (*production*) approach is that cultural objects are filtered through-and affected by –the people and systems that create and distribute them' (Alexander, 2003:68). A similar concept of "gatekeeper" that has been

discussed in context of how cultural products reach its audience can be explored. The gatekeepers operate as filters deciding what should reach the audiences. Art galleries, more so curators who curate art exhibitions to some extent may be the gatekeepers but their role is not as stringent as those who belong to the book distributing system. This is to bring into comparative perspective the control, which a publishing house may have for publishing a book and art galleries and curators too hold reins as to which works should be displayed in the gallery. However the artists are not completely under the reigns of art galleries.

Art galleries can be of different types, those that are housed in museums and are permanent collections of the museums, or art galleries that are attached to art institutions. Commercial, private and public art galleries also exist and along with the art galleries in elite hotels especially catering to their clientele. Art galleries are not the invention of modern society as there are references to '*chitrashalas*', which housed art galleries of similar kinds in the literature on art in ancient India (Sivaramamurti 1978 a). But these '*chitrashalas*' were the private collections of rulers and the royal family members. There are also references made to these galleries being open to certain section of the society then. Similar instances maybe unearthed from

other ancient cultures of the world. There are references to the *Salon* culture, in the 16th century France, wherein the 'Academy system' controlled the artworks produced. They also held exhibitions based on the official selection of best artworks.

The presence of numerous art galleries in any place signifies the aesthetic sense as well as prominence of art in the cultural scenario of the city. Baroda, the focus of this study, is known as *Sanskar Nagari*, but art galleries have not mushroomed here like they have in metropolitan cities. A few sprang up in 2000 but barring a handful the rest have shut down. Urja art gallery located in the planetarium in the famous Sayajibaug, attracted the masses. However it lacked proper maintenance and attention due to which it finally became defunct. Nazar art gallery in Alkapuri, which was located in the commercial area of Baroda and Art Core gallery both have shut down. According to the ex-manager of Nazar art gallery, running an art gallery requires an enterprising brain that can attract buyers and create a pool of collectors so as to sustain and stay afloat. Lack of funds, resources and entrepreneurial skills were other reasons mentioned by the persons managing art galleries for the closure of some of the art galleries. In spite of the fact that eminent artists supported Nazar and Art Core galleries, they could not

operate. Most importantly galleries in order to continue to exist must make profits without which they would become non-operational. As succinctly stated by Becker, art galleries are intermediaries in the art world that are managed by people who need to ensure that the process of production and distribution is organized, orderly and to certain extent predictable, so that they can continue to operate and serve both audiences and artists while profiting themselves (Becker 1982 : 108).

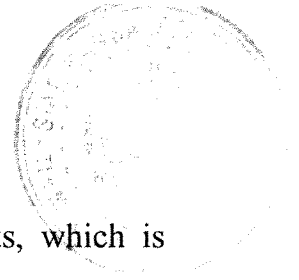
Art galleries also have additional valuable role to play. Art galleries have to build a network of buyers, and for this they have to undertake promotional activities and publicize their exhibitions to audience and specifically to their buyers and collectors. A few respondents say, cities such as Mumbai and Delhi are lucrative places as there are many buyers who are art connoisseurs and/or art investors. Moreover the huge corporate houses and wealthy persons are showing profound interest as a form of investment in the art market. So it is not surprising to see that art galleries are mushrooming in metropolitan cities like Delhi and Mumbai, as there is a wider market for art there. In Baroda however the closure of some of the galleries has deprived people from the exposure to varied arts. A senior artist, G.M.Sheikh commenting on Baroda said, '*All the galleries in Baroda*

are situated this side of the river (Vishwamitri) which is in the new part of Baroda, whereas the old city is neglected. There is this divide of the east and west. People from this part are at least getting exposure to art...' Thus the three galleries included in this study are able to cater to the art audience of Baroda, but there is this old and new city cultural divide, which probably is affecting the reception and appreciation of art. However from the art gallery owner's perspective the location of the art gallery would signify the audience they want to attract. Art galleries are generally directed not toward the common public but its market oriented consumerist focus would naturally justify the location of art galleries in posh areas where the wealthy reside. Viewing art in art galleries creates over a period of few years a culture amongst the people who would then start engaging with art even if they are not related to it directly. This divide might just be one of the reasons why there are speculations over the inability of art reaching to the masses.

The question that arises is what is the significance of art gallery today? From the artists' perspective art galleries operating as intermediaries have reduced their work of finding prospective buyers for their paintings. According to majority of the artists, it would become cumbersome to seek potential buyers, organize shows and engage in publicizing it. In addition,

such activities require business and marketing skills which many of the artists may not possess. A few of the artists may possess well-honed business sense and a strong personal vision necessary for success. However most of the artists prefer spending their time in their studios producing art rather than being involved in selling their artworks. But now a days this has become a difficult task. Since artists are self-employed and paid separately for each piece of work they sell, good marketing skill has become the need of contemporary art market.

Art galleries usually follow certain selling strategies in order to publicize the exhibitions and to attract art buyers and art audience. The gallery has to undertake the job of printing attractive catalogues with write ups by a well-known art writer or art critic about the artists and their art. Invitations are sent out to buyers, investors, artists and people related to the art world. The exhibition is usually inaugurated by a renowned art related personality. According to a gallery owner, at times investors are unaware about the artist or art they are investing in but simply want to buy works so that over a period of time their value would appreciate and these may then be sold for a higher price.



Many of the art galleries have contracts with the artists, which is advantageous especially for younger artists, as they do not have to worry about the lack of regular income. Having a contract with a dealer/art gallery also lends value to an artist. Thus contrary to the popular belief, not only senior and more renowned artists, but many younger artists who are new entrants in the profession are also getting contracts. The reason is that a young painter may be regarded as a good investment. Through contracts the dealers acquire a monopoly on the sale of the artworks produced by such artists during the period of contract. In return the artist gets a monthly stipend on which the artist can live, work and buy materials. However there are defaults of the payments on the part of the dealers as well. Since there are fluctuations in art market, dealers who are not well established may not be able to pay the contracting artist on time. In some cases, they may even cancel contracts. There may exist conflicting interests between the artist and the dealer.

‘The economic interests of the artist and the dealer often diverge. A dealer will often want to hold a work for years while its value grows, but the painter wants the work shown, purchased, and placed where he can benefit from its being discussed by an audience which appreciates what he is doing and can contribute useful ideas and criticism. Finally the artist wants his reputation to grow as much

as possible, as quickly as possible, but the dealer may find it more advantageous to wait for the work's long term appreciation' (Becker 1982:117).

This indicates that the gallery-dealer system though an influential and vital organization in the art world functions in ways that may not always be advantageous to the artist. Successful critics and dealers who are considered to enjoy a good reputation for having knowledge of the art especially a good eye for aesthetic value tend to shape their clients' taste and thereby ensure their investment in the artists give profitable returns.

This discussion brings to the forefront the magnitude of the prominence that art galleries have today. In contemporary society, art galleries are places, which not only provide space to display artworks but today many have an art ambience that may include a library, a seminar room and art studios. Generally it is a place where art discourse and discussions would thrive. It is a place where the past, present and future course of art is decided.

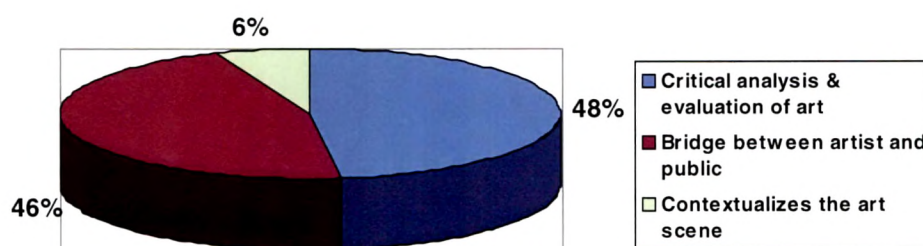
The Art Critic

Does the artist's reputation and position in the art world depend on support personnel such as dealers, critics and other art related systems? Such a question arises frequently in art circles. Debates over the possibility of judging a work of art through in depth study of the subject have existed and continue to exist. There is a need to examine the belief that the more assertive the creative drive in an artist the greater is his contempt for the critic likely to be.

The responses of the artists to the question regarding the role of an art critic echo similar connotations. According to forty eight percent of the respondent artists, art critic's role is to critically analyze, evaluate, or judge the art and the artists ideas which are transformed into artworks. A few also added that art critics are mouthpiece of artists as they convey what artist expresses on canvas in the format of written language. Almost an equal number of respondent artists (forty six percent) mentioned the art critic act as a bridge/ link between society and the artist. Others use terms such as a mediator, or interpreters of art to describe the art critic. A few (6 percent) of the respondent stated that an art critic basically contextualizes art scene. The

art critic's role as expressed by the respondent artist had definite and concrete function in the art world.

Figure 12 : Role of an art critic according to the artists



The response to whether the art critic's role is important in contemporary art world, ninety three percent of the respondent artists feel that the role of the art critic is important in the art world. This role, they stated has undergone drastic transformation. The artists who mentioned that art critic was not important, belonged to young group of male artists. The response of the young male artist regarding the importance of art critics in contemporary world indicates that these artists have yet to undergo “artistic experience”¹⁷ (Murray and Gregory 1980) which would enable them to experience and value the art critic's role not only in the art world but in their

¹⁷ Concept utilised by Murray, C.A., and Gregory S. K. referring to professionally-related activities which would have major socializing results, ie., to display work, to win an award, to have one's own show, and to have a job utilizing artistic abilities.

careers as well. Literature on art criticism demonstrates the function of art critic as interpretive and instructive. Technical matters were known more to the artist, but ideas, meaning of art, and communicating these ideas was considered to be within the domain of the critic who, in turn, would educate the public. It is interesting to note that art moved out of the critic's domain and squarely into critical arena of the public at large with the occurrence of an event in France in 1863. A scandal of the official Salon exhibition led to the emperor ordering an exhibition to be held of all those paintings that had been rejected from the official display. Further to deal with the fracas created over the rejections, he let the public decide and judge the art.¹⁸

There is a profound transformation in the content of art criticism since the mid-nineteenth century. This may be explained by changes in institutions and the market, as according to experts from the field of art history, the academic system lost its credence due to increasing materialism and impact of consumerism. Furthermore, it was by mid nineteenth century that the growth of the publishing world and the expansion of the print media made art criticism in journalistic form possible. Art criticism as an academic activity slowly began growing but it mostly remained a freelancing activity.

¹⁸ This is further analysed in Victoria Alexander's *Sociology of the arts* (2003) as a case study-*From Academy to public sale*. Here the shift from medieval guild system to establishment of art academy in France in 1648 is taken as a case in point of institutional changes in the art world.

Also the expanding market for the fine art gave an impetus to this field. Post independent India witnessed the growth of a range of academic fields.

In Baroda, in 1960s and 1970s the art history department of the faculty of fine arts was surging ahead with the amalgamation of artist and the intellect. At the global level, 'in the 1980s the critic acting as the advocate and decision maker for innovative art styles and the judge of the artist's work started dominating the art scene' (Zolberg 1990). They began guiding tastes (which art is worthy of appreciation and hence become valued) of the art related people as well as the broader public. In the years to come the critics' role began declining as it became an open secret that many of them had connections with particular artists, dealers, and publishers and that they operated on these lines which led to a few artists gaining popularity over the others. Discourse on modern art in the field of art history and other related disciplines brought forth objective and respectable voices outside the market-dominated world (*ibid* 1990). Hence market dominated world of today has relegated the art critic in the background and art critic has lost ground. Though art critics' role is considered significant, persons performing that role need to be reliable in terms of their understanding of the

subject as well as the principles of their profession, only then can their contribution to the field be taken seriously.

Critics in the past defended the mystery of art and it was said that art critics could make or break an artist's career. In the contemporary society the role of an art critic according to majority of the artists has declined. Art critic can help build or create hype about a particular artist but they do believe that an art critic cannot really make or break an artist. Today there are art writers or exponents and very few sincere art critics in India. A senior art historian expressed the view that there are not many avenues open to art critics to practice their expertise and apart from a few art critics, many choose to associate themselves with certain art galleries. They then become promoters of those galleries and their exhibitions. Catalogue writing and art reporting in few art magazines has become the only avenue open to those who would like to pursue art criticism as a profession. Art critics have also been accused of using high, abstract language, which sometimes becomes difficult to fathom. In a counter argument to this an eminent senior artist, G.M.Sheikh said, *'why can't the art critic write in their language style? They say, itene bhari- bhari words istemal kyo karte hai? Par mera kehna hai, aap itne bhari-bhari paintings karoge toh chalega? Aap itne complex,*

abstract karoge toh chalna chahiye...aap ke paintings ka meaning clear na ho toh? (Art critics are accused of using language that is difficult to comprehend. My question is, when the artists makes complex, abstract paintings why is it acceptable?) *Similarly a critic has a right to use their ideas and put them in their words.'*

Market driven forces have reduced the role of the art critic to becoming a mere art writer promoting certain artists for particular art galleries which would enable them to make profits. But the expectations from art critic were contrary to their changing role. By the mid – twentieth century scholars are supposed to be professionals ethically divorced from commercial activities, not direct beneficiaries of market processes but rather holders of an education that confers on them the credibility needed to be arbiters of aesthetic value (Zolberg, 1990: 204).

Most of the professions today are engulfed in consumerist money making world and not surprising that the critic is left with little options. But ninety three percent of the artists articulated that art critics are necessary to evolve an atmosphere of criticism and progress in the field of art especially in a developing society like ours. Art and money has always been intertwined, despite romantic claims to the contrary. However during the

past couple of decades the art world, especially visual art, has become a form of investment to earn profits for capitalists who have no interest in the paintings other than the profits they fetch. The visual art more specifically has become form of investment and speculation for the profit makers.

Patrons and Buyers

Patronage to art has a long history. Though an artist would desire appreciation and recognition for his art, patrons and buyers are equally important for the economic support they give to the artists.

‘In Patronage system, some person or organization supports the artist entirely for a period during which the artist contracts to produce specific works, or a specific number of works, or even just possibly to produce some works. The people who can afford to support artists this way come from wealthy classes of a society’ (Becker, 1982:99).

In the past, religious organizations such as church, assigned artists to make sculptures, or paintings or even decorate churches. Throughout history there have been instances where the patron not only paid the artist for his art, but also dictated what and sometimes how that art work should be produced.

The case with arts of the great civilizations of the ancient world in Near East is, ...art was very strictly controlled, and the artist was essentially the servant either of the religious hierarchy, or of monarchical or similar power, and his activities were almost entirely directed either towards the glorification of a particular individual, or towards the service of a religious creed (Rice 1967: 31).

Controlled production of art by the patrons was traced by Francis Haskell (1963) who looked at the relations between the patrons and painters of seventeenth century Italy. His work revolved around the relations between Italian art and society in the age of the Baroque.¹⁹ He brought out the general dimensions and problems of patronage system wherein the chief patrons were popes, the cardinals and religious orders. In such system patrons commissioned works which were meant to glorify themselves or the groups they represented , thereby leaving little or no autonomy with the artist. Although control of the patron is a dimension which may also exist in contemporary art world, however the nature of the influence varies. Today the artist has greater autonomy to decide what he would like to create and patrons may only suggest or give ideas to the artist they are supporting, which the artist may accept fully, partially or even reject.

¹⁹ Baroque- style in art, architecture & music which flourished in Europe between 1600 –1750 and was characterized as expressive, flamboyant and dynamic.

It sometimes appears, that compared to the past the system of patronage has taken a new form. Now the rich patron has been replaced by art galleries and dealers. Governmental patronage, is still one source of patronage but since government gives more importance to other pressing problems, this source is limited. Museums are even today considered important avenues wherein art works could be placed and such works automatically gain higher status. From amongst the respondent artists of this study, a few of them mentioned having patronage from museum or corporate houses. Twenty three percent mentioned having contracts with art galleries. A couple of the artists also said that their patrons are rich art lovers who do appreciate and are regular buyers of their art works. But most of the deals are done through art galleries. Buyers in a city like Baroda, according to the respondent artists are very few. In fact they find cities such as Mumbai and Delhi lucrative places as there are many buyers who are art connoisseurs and art lovers, as well as investors.

The city of Baroda has been renowned for its royal patronage to art in the past, during the reign of Sayajirao Gaikwad III. However, today the city, according to majority of the respondent artists, lacks buyers. There is no dearth of talent with the best fine arts college in the country being located in

Baroda. According to the artists, awareness and art appreciation seems to be lacking. Though there are various art exhibitions held here but unfortunately for the artist, it does not translate into buying due to lack of a substantial pool of buyers. Moreover there are not enough forums for discussions, debates and workshops to help create awareness and interest in art. The few occasional seminars or talks organized in the city witnesses' participation from the same known names and faces. A few artists have raised their concern over certain amount of stagnation that has crept into the art scene here. Apart from a few collectors, Baroda is not a major economic or commercial center due to which it does not have a pool of buyers and collectors. Art patronage is related to economics and economically Baroda city has not grown in the past decade is the opinion of an art promoter and industrialist (Baroda Times, Times of India, 14 May 2005:1). Mumbai and other metropolitan cities are therefore better options for artists. Nevertheless for most of the artists Baroda is a heaven for artists. Many respondent artists have attributed to the city characteristics such as, artists paradise, quiet and congenial atmosphere for creative work, away from the humdrum of chaotic life, economical and affordable especially for the students and for the new entrants into the field. Majority of the respondent artists also stated that

Baroda was strategically located between Mumbai and Delhi the two cities where art scene thrives.

Another upcoming trend, which is in line with the patronage system is that of holding art camps for artists. Many investors, dealers and art gallery owners hold camps for select artists in picturesque locations or organize trips to explore new places. Art works produced during and some times after such camps are organized, are owned by the funding persons of such camps. The advantage according to sponsors and organizers of the camps is that it gives the artist new dimensions to discover, it would give them an opportunity to go out from their studios and create, over and above they get to interact, discuss and see other artists at work. In this manner the patronage system, art galleries and dealers are shifting from the conventional ways of associating with the artists and their art.

Contemporary understandings of art, aesthetics and creativity are socially constructed. The art market depends on the network of dealers, art galleries, buyers and investors. Dealers according to Moulin (1987) integrate the artist into the society's economy by transforming aesthetic value into economic value, thus making it possible for artists to live by their art works.

Role of the Media

Print or visual media plays a significant role in giving publicity to art works. The politics involved in publicity as seen in the write-ups also draws the contours of what is acceptable as culture and cultural happening in society. Hence it is necessary to get the perspective of the artists' respondents regarding the role of local print media especially the local dailies of the city of Baroda. Majority of the respondents, ninety six percent stated that the print media – English as well as vernacular did not give enough coverage to the artist and the art scene in Baroda. Four percent of the artists mentioned English dailies like 'The Hindu' and 'The Indian Express' as extensively and quantitatively covering national art events especially related to painting and sculpture in their Sunday supplement section *Arts etc.* The art events in cities like Delhi and Mumbai are reported regularly while mention of Baroda artists and their art features intermittently in these national newspapers. Many were of the opinion that 'The Times of India' supplement -Baroda Times which previously featured columns such as *Jojo's jottings* and *art beat* (2000- 2003) providing information of the art events and artists have been discontinued and have given way to page three gossip of private parties and events. Ninety six percent of the artists mentioned that the vernacular/local newspapers are ignorant, and they do not

regularly cover art events of Baroda. A middle group male artist says *'Baroda times now has page 3 full of private party pictures which I find disgusting... it reflects where our culture is heading. At times, some exhibition inauguration pictures also on page 3 but instead of writing about the exhibition, venue and the artists... it is about who attended it.'*

A Gujarati daily 'Divya Bhaskar' in its introductory year carried articles, photographs and covered the art scene in Baroda in its supplement 'City Bhaskar', in which, a respondent male artist wrote about art and artists of Baroda. But within a year's time the space for art events got reduced. In contrast, it is interesting to note that in our survey of viewers, fifty seven percent of the art gallery visitors have mentioned newspapers as the source which gave them information regarding the art exhibition they were visiting. Consequently, though the artists have alleged that the print media, especially local media, does not give enough and quality coverage to art and artists in Baroda. It still is the most effective vehicle of providing information to the masses in a city like Baroda. The need is to enhance the quality as well as quantity of information disseminated.

In spite of the poor coverage of fine arts by the print media in Baroda, seventy two percent of the respondent artists mentioned that in the present times it is necessary to cultivate the media, maintain good relations with them and to indulge them once in a while if you want to draw attention to one's art. A few (from younger group) in addition mentioned that media can make artists 'popular' and 'famous' by regularly featuring them in their media. A couple of them even stated that besides their art being featured, it was necessary to feature write-ups on their lifestyle which would enable them to gain fame. Since fame and money are linked with popularity and sale, media's role comes into prominence. A few senior artists are of the opinion that dedication to one's work and sincerity would eventually pay off, but they constitute only nine percent. A middle group respondent artist, Soumen Das's view reflects a different concern, *'I am an introverted person...its an disadvantage today...aaj kal ke zamane mein aage badhne ke liye logon se...bade logon se meljhol rakhana jaroori hai...mujse wohsab nahi hota...mere paintings bahut nahi bikkte...kafi logon ne kaha ki style badlo par mujse wohbhi nahi hota...muje mere kaam se sukun milta hai...media ke picche toh bhagna door...apna kaam samjha saku toh bahut hai'*. (Being an introvert is an disadvantage today, in current societal scene, if you wish to move ahead, its necessary to keep contacts with

‘big’(influential) people. I cannot do this, even though my paintings don’t sell much. Many people have told me to change my style so that there is more salability but even that I cannot do. I get satisfaction from my work. Forget about running behind the media, even if I am able to explain my work to people it would be satisfactory). There are artists who shy from publicity. They feel that certain level of interpersonal skills of communication could be beneficial in present times. The present scenario shows that the media is an important means of not only popularizing art but it is also a vehicle of promoting a culture in society that would enable more number of people to appreciate art.

State and Art in India

There is a lack of state patronage for fine arts and Government’s interests in supporting artists and art organizations are usually tied up with other government objectives such as fostering a national culture. A majority of the respondents felt that even the apex body of art at national level ‘Lalit Kala Akademi’ has done little to foster art, in a creative cultural atmosphere. It was a commonly held view of several artists that the ‘Lalit kala Akademi’ was a hotbed of internal conflicts and manipulations with allegation of

appropriating funds. Renowned painter Gulammohammed Sheikh had written in an article published in the Indian Express,

The Indian council for cultural relations is meant to be our window to the world. Except for receiving a few, and for the most, non-descript exhibitions or sending similar ones abroad (along with dignitaries and official functionaries) it remains a slumber most of the time. The lack of understanding and supporting the vibrant art scene reflected in official attitudes, has led to the generations of support systems through private sponsorship and collective ventures (Sheikh, 2005:1-2).

A similar concern is expressed in another article published in 'India empowered to me is' series in Indian Express, where Satish Gujral writes, 'Our national Gallery doesn't fare much better. About ten years ago, when I was the chairman of purchase committee of the gallery, the total yearly budget was Rs.30 lakh. Much of it went on travels by members of the committee. That condition remains. In those days, when the budget was Rs.30 lakh, no painting of a leading artist could be acquired for less than Rs. five lakh. This ratio is manifold now. And the increase in budget is hardly more than earlier days. No thought is given on how to solve this problem' (Gujral 2005:1).

According to Becker, art works are affected by the pattern of constraints and prospects that exist in the art world and the society at large. The state also plays a role of controlling art works as it has a monopoly over making laws. The state would usually act according to their own interests that may conflict or not coincide with the interests of the artists. Some art, which is defined as radical, obscene, sacrilegious, or unconventional, may make certain sections of the society uncomfortable, discontented and they would like to believe that it destroys their moral fiber. In such situations they would like the state to take strong action. This brings to the forefront the question of creative autonomy with the artist. Within India only a few informal attempts have been made to protect the interests of the artist. Artists are usually not organized in a formal way and it is evident that attempts to group themselves are limited to periods of crisis.

Beyond the Environs of Aestheticism - *art as an investment*

The influence of a swiftly globalizing national economy on art is evident as the past five years have witnessed unprecedented growth in the appreciation of prices of Indian art. At the Sotheby's and Christie's

auctions²⁰, Indian artists' have reached a million dollar mark. However it has been the investors not the artists who have gained from it. Investors with an eye for the aesthetics are making more money than the artists themselves. An eminent artist, Satish Gujral in an article in Indian Express says, 'UNESCO has laid down a law which stipulates that an artist should also enjoy his share of an increased price that a gallery gets. I am afraid this often doesn't happen with private galleries. And artists would rather not complain for fear of losing favor with the gallery' (Gujral 2005:1).

Art is being associated with the asset class just like gold, equity and real estates. Some artists and art connoisseurs justify the current high prices by attributing it to market maturity; others feel it is a bubble, which can burst any moment. There is a consensus though that some well known artists over the years have developed their original styles and established their body of works gaining historical significance; hence their works demand such prices. This requires further exploration and the respondent artists were of the view that this investment bubble was good for art in general but it does not reflect any change in the financial standing of majority of the artists.

²⁰ A sale involving a series of bids by a group of buyers. The price of the object is not fixed. Instead, a reserve price is set, below which the works cannot be sold and the work is offered to the highest bidder.

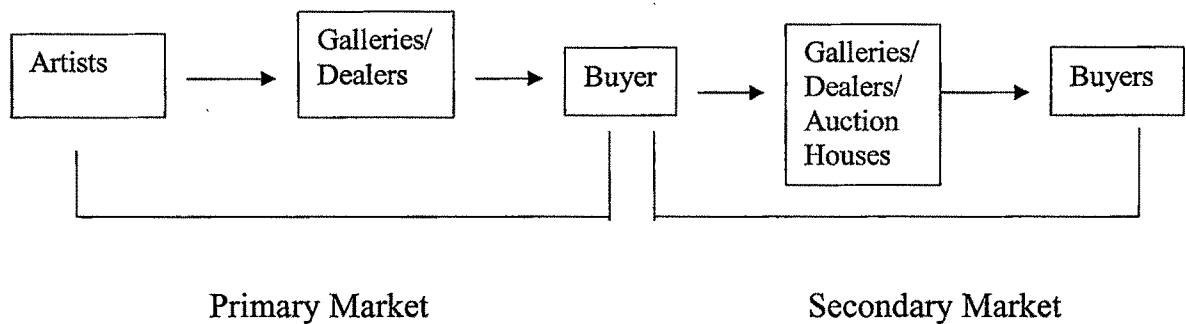
The artist usually sells his work through an art gallery or dealer. The buyer who may be a collector or investor who in turn retains it till he able to sell it for a higher price to galleries, dealers or auction houses, it is at this stage that the prices increase manifold. The auction houses have been operating as mediators and they charge a certain percent of the hammer price²¹. Nevertheless the artist does not gain financially from such hiked pricing of their art as it is the secondary seller who gains the financial advantage from such hiked pricing (Figure 13). The initial buyer can claim to have made a wise investment if the artwork gives higher returns and would justify the gain for the risk he may have taken in the first place by buying the artwork. The artists may not gain financially from such secondary deals but they can claim higher prices for their current and future works. Some art experts and artists are of the opinion that artists should charge a royalty²² fee on their works sold in the secondary market. Works of master artists, in the past were sold for couple of thousands and their art is priced in millions today. Unfortunately the money goes to the initial buyer and not the artist. According to a senior respondent artist *'galleries and auctions are part of the commodity culture. Auction houses in the west came into existence when collectors died and their inheritors wanted to get rid of*

²¹ Price at which the painting is finally sold after the bid.

²² percentage of profit from a book, public performance, painting or patent etc. paid to the author, painter, sculptor or performer.

their collections. At least they have hiked the price and helped people to value art in this country'.

Figure 13 : Primary and secondary art market.



Source: A guide to 101 Modern and Contemporary Indian Artists

It is evident through the media reports that an unprecedented level of trading over the last five years has led to a fundamental shift in pricing of contemporary Indian art; and it has had a significant impact over a short period of time because much of it has taken place through public auctions. There are several factors responsible for this growth. Apart from increased media attention, the promotional activity for art market has picked up significantly, within India and internationally. This in turn has elevated awareness across the world, widening the buyer and collector base. Along

with this, the success of the auction houses has led to a tremendous demand for Indian artists especially the progressive artists' group and their contemporaries. Further, with the technological advancement even art world is not far behind as there are online auctions of paintings and artist portfolios along with their resumes on the website which enable buyers to choose art works. An art aficionado and publisher of, 'Art India' magazine states, *"Today, the return from investment of the right art fetches higher returns than even gold"* (Batra 2007). In fact there are art funds²³ in which people can invest – on similar lines like mutual fund. Thus in contemporary world, art and money are interlinked and interrelated due to which there is augmented interest amongst people to engage or indulge in art investment. An art gallery owner narrates an incident reflecting this investment aspect, *'One buyer called up from Delhi asking for Nirranjan's (name changed) work, I said I have 3 of his paintings in this current exhibition and over the phone he said keep one for me, he was not even interested in the description of the paintings ...such things are happening now...the other type of buyer usually comes along with some artist-friend whose opinion he would take in buying the painting...they do not have any personal preferences or choices, its just the demand for a particular artist...the buying scene has changed so*

²³ Art funds operate like mutual funds as art funds invest in art works instead of investing in stocks or bonds.

much in past few years.’ It was explicitly stated by Bourdieu, ‘the autonomy of the artistic field was increasing threatened by the ‘heteronomous’ forces of the media and the market, forces to which a current generation of artists and intellectuals were all too willing to sell out in search of the immediate ‘temporal’ rewards of wealth and fame (Bourdieu 1996). Though this may be visible there are several artists who believe that it is eventually aesthetics in art that will emerge as the valued aspect in art.

There is speculation and wide-ranging views regarding the soaring art prices. Ernest Beck in an article ‘The Art World’s Boom Boom factor’ (Beck 2008) has tried to understand the art markets bullish run. According to him, firstly there are the ultra-rich who have the spending capacity and just like buying luxury goods now they have artwork added to their list. Secondly, people do not mind shelling out huge sums of money if possessing art works suggests cultural sophistication and a status symbol. Thirdly, due to more options today, there are more places to see and buy art from, added by the increased visibility of art on the internet. Fourthly, public art auctions have become symbolic of money and such auctions are frequented by mysterious and anonymous bidders as well. This has all led to popularizing art especially amongst the opulent section of the society. In

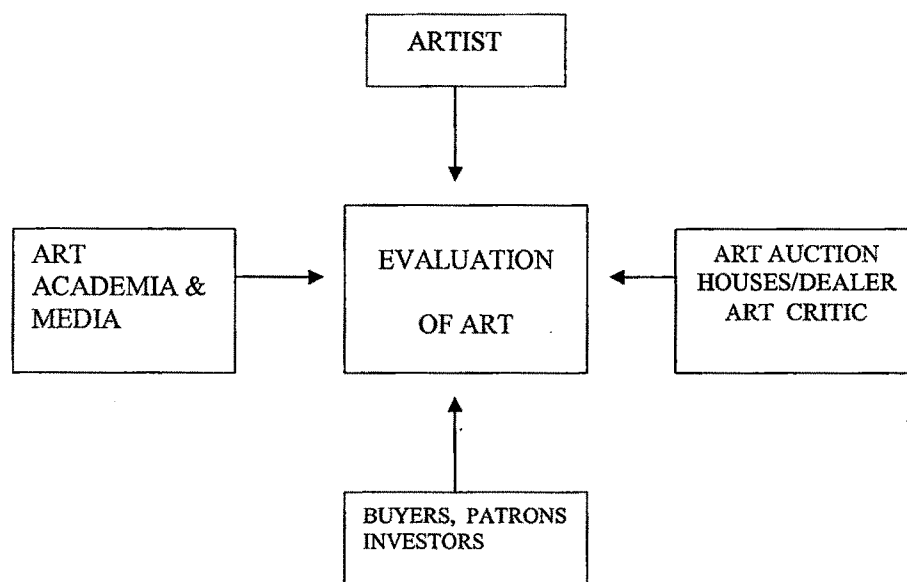
another article Beck says, 'the fabulous return on investment suggests that buying the right art at the right moment can significantly enhance your net worth.' According to Mei Moses Art Index, which tracks repeat auction sales of specific works, prices rose 18% in 2006. But the same index suggests that gains tend to even out over longer time frames...Art tends to have returns similar to equities and outperforms bonds, but it is riskier, says Michael Moses, co-creator of the index and co-founder of ArtAsAnAsset.com, which reports on the art market's financial results. Kevin Radell, senior financial strategist at artnet, a website that tracks the fine-art market for collectors and investors is quoted in the same article, 'The tastemakers and gatekeepers of the art world continually crown new art stars and catapult others into oblivion. After all, fashion and tastes, what is cool and what isn't changes' (Beck, 2008).

The evaluation of art is a debated issue and today with the investment becoming the center of art discussion it lends itself to investigation. Dealers, art critics, collectors, art academicians and artists themselves develop a consensus about the worth of work and how it can be appreciated. In the present times persons wanting to invest in contemporary art seek expert advice as evaluating art has become a fast growing profession. Dealers and

art gallery managers also tend to shape their clients taste and in the process ensure that their own investment in artists become profitable.

The prices of paintings are a debated issue. Apart from medium, style and the trend, currently in the art circuits the price of paintings is decided on the basis of the size of the art works. Thus huge paintings by renowned artists will be priced according to the rate per square centimeter of a painting. The rate in turn is reliant on who the artist is.

Figure 14 : Factors influencing Art evaluation



Technology and art

There is a need to bring in here the increasing influence of technology and especially the existence of 'virtual galleries'. The fast paced online access has led to the emergence of 'cyber art' wherein people can visit online galleries to view paintings and place orders to buy them. Most of the art dealers are not in favor of online galleries as was reported in an article 'Virtual Walls' in a national daily (Indian Express, Sunday Express, September 8, 2002). Some of the artists opined that viewing art online is incomparable to viewing art in art galleries, as the experience of actually looking at art is inexpressible. Those interested in investment may find it convenient to view art just on a click before investing in it. Saffron art, which has its own online gallery has begun to have traveling exhibitions and their online auctions also have physical preview. Virtual galleries are today an upcoming option especially for the younger breed of artists, as some of the respondent artists mentioned that their paintings can be viewed online galleries. The advantage is that it gives wider viewer ship as anyone across the globe can have access to such online paintings. A few also mentioned that it adds to the promotion of the artists and their art, a couple of the respondents have also sold their works through these virtual galleries. Only

time will tell whether the popularity of online galleries will further soar and gain prominence in the art world.

Baroda as 'sanskar nagri'

In the context of the present study it is pertinent to reflect upon the city of Baroda. Baroda is known as the cultural capital 'Sanskar nagari' (cultural city) of Gujarat. Baroda has a rich tradition of composite culture. The city has traditionally been a hub for the fine artists, but barring a few art galleries and select buyers artists have found little support in Gujarat's cultural capital. The location of Baroda is strategic as artists can lead a comfortable livelihood and yet be linked to Delhi and Mumbai as both have emerged as power center and commercial – entertainment cities respectively. There is a pool of investors and buyers in these cities.

The Faculty of Fine Arts is one of the prides of the city, it is a cultural hub and it has been successful in keeping its culture thriving. In fact it's a world within a world having its own subculture. The Faculty is also famous for the traditional *garba* performed during the *navratri* festival, in spite of the fact that the university has a Faculty of Performing Arts. It also has a film club which gives an opportunity to film lovers to view national and

international films. Culturally the Fine Arts Faculty has added to the aura of the city. The Faculty has developed a subculture of its own. In the 1970s and 80s an element of their subculture was the dressing style – a combination of traditional and modern. ‘The kurta, jhola and the jeans’ which still is recognized as the fine arts dressing style in Baroda. The faculty has successfully been able to maintain linkages with its alumni.

Though the city is slow paced, this has worked for some of the artists as it gives them serene atmosphere, which enhances their creative spirit. Many of the artists who came to Baroda as students, have stayed back and settled here and are contributing to the city’s cultural tradition. The following response of a senior male elucidates this sentiment, *“The best thing about the city is that it has the right combination of the quietness of a small town and a cosmopolitan touch of a big city, which is a perfect setting for artists to contemplate and create and also be in touch with the art academia”*. Contrary to this response is Sachin Karne’s view, *‘As a student I recollect we would attend classical music evenings at Darbar hall [in the Gaikwad palace], but those are rare now. Theatre is almost dead here, same goes with poetry sessions...Baroda is becoming a replica of Ahmedabad ...with growing multiplexs. The city has many artists and classical*

singers...in fact its far better than other cities of Gujarat...but it is losing its old charm...but change is inevitable.’ This reflects that in the past varied arts were appreciated and encouraged in the cultural capital, Baroda. However there is evidently decline in the following and appreciation of arts, and recent controversies about art and artists has affected the image of Baroda being a ‘sanskar nagri’.

THE ART AUDIENCE

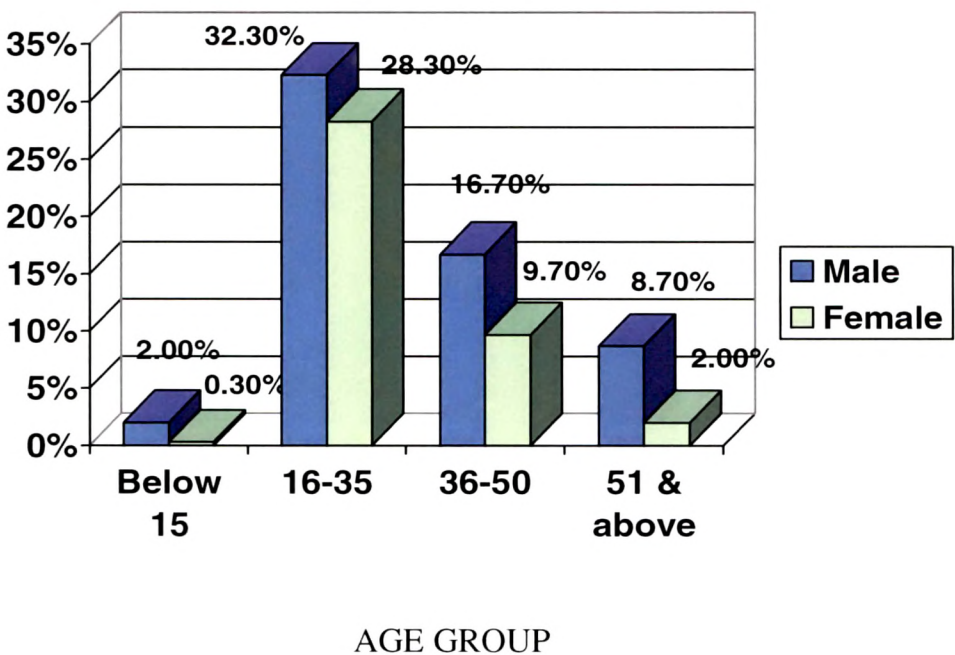
The ways in which people perceive 'art' expresses some of the most important aspects of their social existence. Even those who have no interest in art or dislike it, inadvertently reveal a lot about themselves when they make their opinions known. In the same way, a whole society's attitudes towards art can tell us a lot about that society (Inglis and Hugson 2005: 1). Art is a potent form of communication through which cultural development occurs. There are varied connections that art has with the society at large. This can be observed in form of cultural support, which the audience gives to art by interacting with it. Along with that the way it gets disseminated to the society through art galleries and is also received in a social space that is considered to have symbolic value. To understand these processes art audience at large need to be studied in detail.

For this study, three hundred visitors to art galleries in Baroda were administered a questionnaire. Their age, sex, educational background, their interest in visiting the art galleries was examined. The art public refers to the consumers of painting, who visit art galleries and react to the art works socially. This questionnaire was administered to people visiting three separate art galleries in Baroda city.

Social Background of the art audience

The majority of the viewers fall in the age group of 16-35, which is the youth category and they are mostly fine art students.

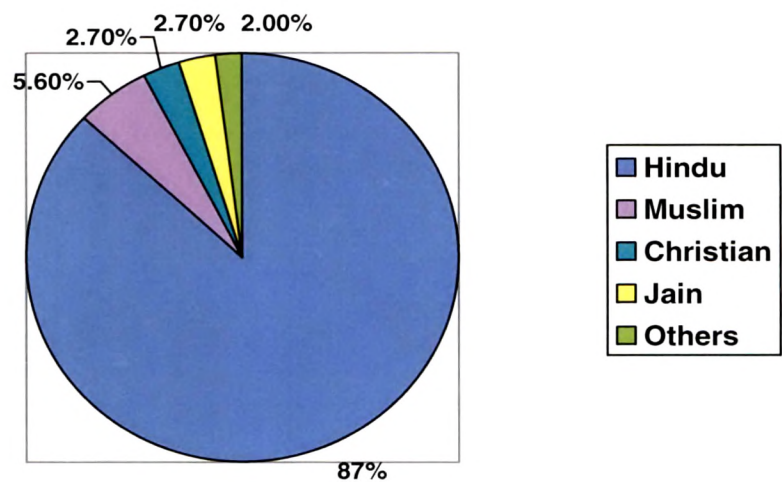
Figure 15 : Age-sex ratio of the art audience visiting art galleries



Sixty percent of the viewers were males and forty percent were females. There is a significant number of women visiting the art galleries today. Most of these women have some art background. For some of these

women interest in art was a cultivated hobby. For most of the men visitors it was a link either with their profession or had artistic inklings.

Figure 16 : Religious background of the art audience



The religious background of the art audience once again reflects the same religious equation which is true of the artists as well. It shows that majority eighty seven percent are Hindus and the rest of the art audience belong to Muslim, Christian, Jain, Buddhist and Parsi communities. More than 3/4ths of the respondents (76%) belonged to higher caste, 5 percent of the respondents belonged to Other Backward castes (OBC), 3 percent were Scheduled Castes and 0.7 percent was Scheduled Tribes. This reflects that fine art, is considered unique and is still a prerogative more of higher castes than lower castes. This can be seen in the way the lower castes since the

inception of the caste system. This inability of the lower castes had limited access to varied social and cultural spaces to create and to view the so called 'higher cultural forms' had influenced their social perceptions and inclinations, making them probably disinterested to have a decided perception of present elite forms of art. Popular art on the other hand does not have any classification and therefore is also casteless. It is generally for the masses. It is more comprehensible and is usually considered to be common to replicate. Therefore in this study there is visibly more percentage of higher caste art audience visiting the art galleries than the lower ones.

Bourdieu's statistical survey of attendance of European art galleries, 'The love of art' (1966) suggested that the works of art consist of 'messages' that require prior knowledge of the appropriate 'code' to be adequately 'deciphered' or 'interpreted'. As his survey revealed that those from working class or peasant backgrounds were statistically far less likely to visit art galleries this was because, he argues, they lacked the requisite codes with which to decipher the meaning of the artworks on display. Could a similar interpretation be made here? People with little or no formal or informally acquired knowledge of the field of art would not visit art galleries as it would require not only, deciphering or understanding the displayed art but

also an inclination to appreciate and be interested in it. Such an explanation may be considered narrow and parochial. In fact it could be explained on the basis of the socio-cultural context within which they have been brought up. Also to be noted is that sociologists emphasize that different groups of people have different sets of tastes and ways of engaging with cultural products. In fact a renowned artist K.G. Subramanyan in his recent book states,

Art is confined to producing a kind of privileged commodity that does not reach out to everyone but a kind of cultivated specialist. So there is a cleavage of contact between the modern visual artist and the common man, partly because the artist strives to be more and more exclusive and the common man more and more common (Subramanyan 2007:119).

Does this hold true in the context of the present research is subsequently examined.

The art audiences economic and educational background may enable us to understand their propensity towards art. Let us examine their income and educational background.

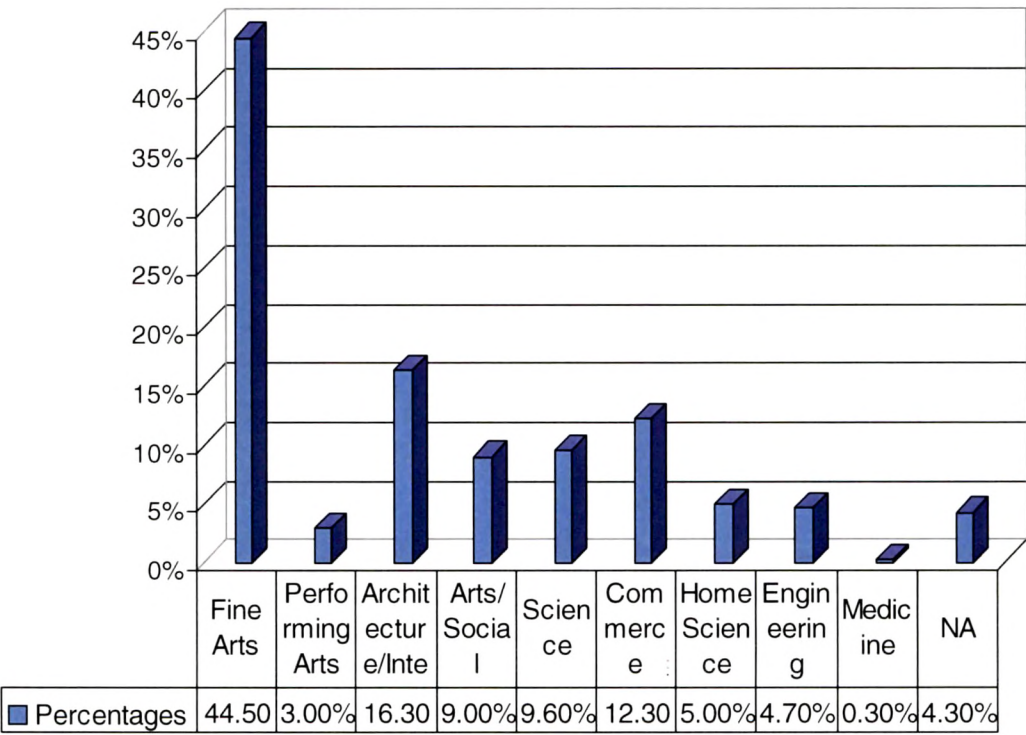
Table 10: Monthly Income of the art audience

Monthly Income in Rupees	Frequencies	Percentage
Not Earning	116	38.5
Up to 5000	21	7.0
Up to 20,000	107	35.5
Up to 40,000	37	12.3
40,000 & above	16	5.3
No response	3	1.3
Total	300	100.0

Majority of the viewers fall in the category of those who are not earning since most of them are students. This is an obvious occurrence, as the exhibiting artists need moral support, which naturally is provided by their own fraternity. The students in turn have their own advantages as it helps them to learn, build contacts and it acts as a fertile ground to prepare for the future professional course of action. Ten percent of the viewers are housewives and hence fall into the category of not earning. Almost one third of the viewers are earning between Rs.5000-20,000 per month. Some of these were young aspiring professional artists who frequented the art

galleries. This group also had persons who were into other allied art related occupations. Five percent were from affluent economic backgrounds and possibly were also the potential buyers of art. The urban regions have a large middle class population and the majority of visitors barring the group that was not earning belonged to the middle class.

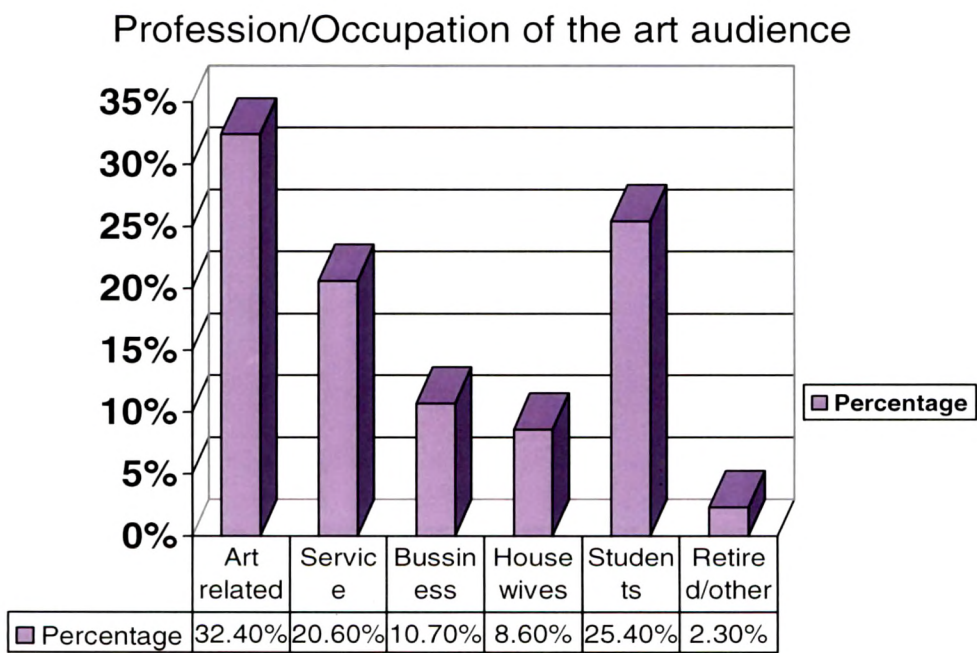
Figure 17 : Educational background of the art gallery visitors



The above graph shows that sixty three percent (fine arts, performing arts, architecture and interior designing) of the viewers from the field of fine

arts or from fields related to creative art. Not surprising that more than half of the art audience visiting art galleries have their higher education in creative art related fields. The way in which subgroups are differentiated in society according to their educational backgrounds and professions would lead to each group having specialized knowledge in their particular fields. Many would lack the conventional knowledge necessary to understand art works but at the same time there may be some who have interest in art related fields and have hence made efforts to gain knowledge and understand the artworks.

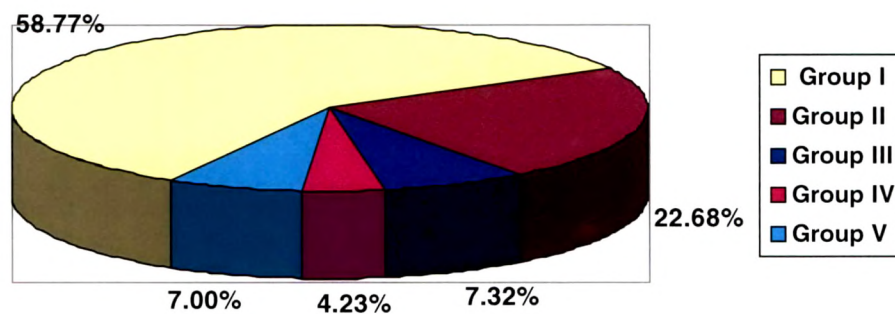
Figure 18 : Profession of the art gallery visitors



The visitors visiting art galleries belonged to different professions but 32.40 percent were directly from art related fields such as visual arts, performing arts, architecture, interior designing and advertising.

ART RELATED PROFESSIONS

Figure 19 : Varied art related professions of the gallery visitors



Group I which is the largest chunk refers to painters, sculptors, ceramists, printmakers who are directly from art field. They make 58.77% out of these 32.40 percent who belonged to art related occupations. Further from amongst the art related occupations, group II made up of 22.68% who were from the fields of architecture, interior designing, and textile designing. Group III, 7.32% were from the fields of advertising were illustrators, creative art directors and art visualizers. Group IV refers to professional creative photographers who formed 4.32% of the art related persons visiting

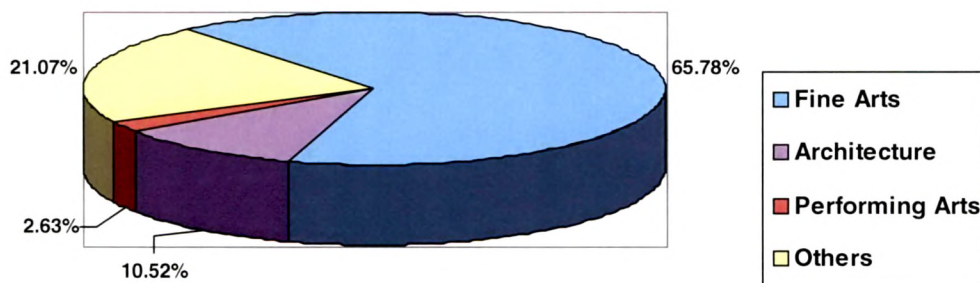
art galleries. Group V made up 7% of the gallery visitors who were freelance writers and journalists who covered art related events and creative arts was their specialization. These figures signify that from amongst the art related profession, more than half were directly from the field of fine arts.

The gallery visitors who were in the working category belonged to varied types of services. Out of 62, almost half i.e. 25 were working as teachers. Out of them nearly half of the teachers were art teachers from schools, college and art classes. The remaining art audiences were from the fields of engineering, accounting, medicine, software programming and corporate field. From those of the art audience who mentioned business as their occupation, few were into businesses related to the art field, such as art dealers, and art gallery owner. The rest were from diverse businesses. The reason for their visiting art galleries could be they were prospective buyers of the displayed art works.

From the art audience who were housewives (n=26), their educational background revealed that forty six percent had done their fine arts (n=12) but were not professional artists. These women were using their leisure time to visit art galleries. Some of them may want to keep themselves abreast

with the latest art trends. They probably may have desired to practice the art profession, however due to social circumstances they may not have had the opportunity to do so. The other housewives were from arts, commerce, home science and science backgrounds. Some of them said they just wanted to pass their time and were hence visiting the gallery.

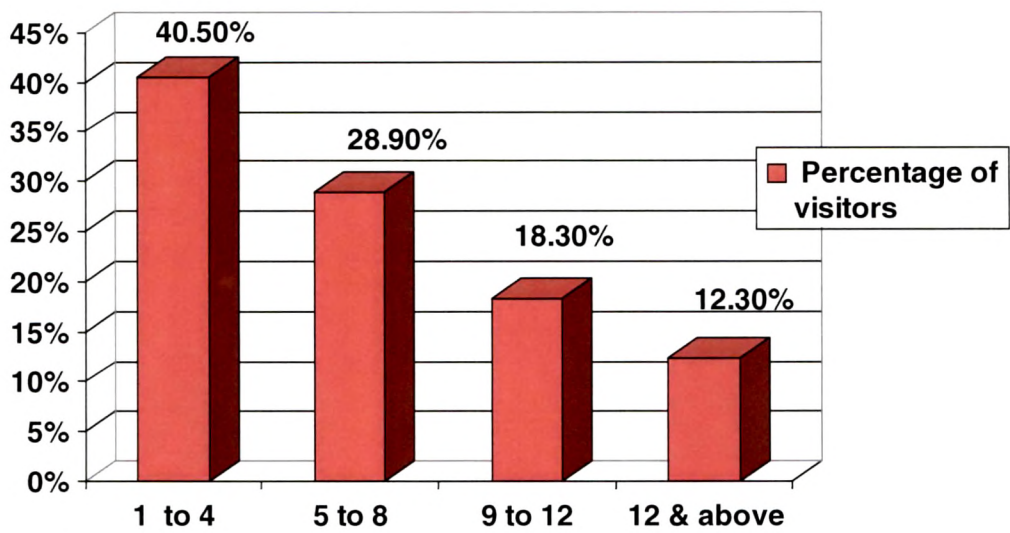
Figure 20 : Educational stream of the art related group of students



It is evident that majority, almost seventy nine (78.93) percent of the students were from art related fields. Those from other fields belonged to social sciences, commerce, science etc. Interestingly some of them had come because they had been asked to be present in the art galleries by their friends who were either friends or relatives of the artists. Some of them had come to provide moral support to the artists. Few of the respondent art audience were

still in school and had responded that they wished to undertake fine arts as a career once they were out of school.

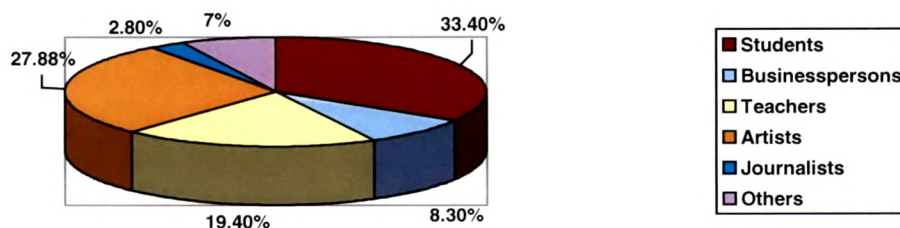
Figure 21 : Number of art exhibitions visited in the last year



Data on the number of visits to art galleries can provide us with information that will enable us to gauge whether the respondents visiting galleries were frequent visitors. Further it can even throw some light on the deep interest which certain groups would have in art as it is their occupation or those who are interested in art but have not taken it up as a occupation. Most of the art gallery visitors had visited less than five exhibitions in the

last twelve months. The reason could be that the common man/woman is under informed about the exquisite leisure pursuit that art happens to be. They are not inclined enough to understand the nuances of the art. Which is quite understandable as there are societal influences at work. Apart from their occupational concerns, they are not willing to negotiate the decided form of recreation. The societal trajectories can also be seen as the reason for it, as it has over the period of time, decided that occupation is the only quest and everything should gyrate around it. Therefore an occupation decided what is going to be the choice of recreation itself. These social observations are noticeable from the professional background of the art audience.

Figure 22 : The occupation of gallery visitors who visited twelve or more art exhibitions in the last one year



From amongst the art gallery visitors who visited twelve or more exhibitions in the past year majority, i.e. sixty two percent were students and artists, it is evident that the maximum art gallery audience is from art related world. There were others who may include persons not directly related to the art world but were genuinely interested in art. There were journalists who would be regular visitors to different galleries as they maybe covering the art exhibitions and some may even have deeper interest in it. 19.40 percent were teachers, out of which 2/3rds were art teachers in school and college. The data does reveals usual trend that the majority of visitors as are from art related fields.

Art galleries have emerged not only as display centers, but also have emerged as a social hub where various social activities take place. New relationships are formed between the artist and the art audience; artist and a buyer; artist and the gallery owner. In conjunction with that there is also a demonstration of attachments, loyalties and faithfulness by friends, relatives or any other member belonging to the artist fraternity or outside it. The opening day of an exhibition might just resemble the opening day of a new film. The apprehensions of the actors can at some point of time be equated with the apprehension of a debutant artist. The social backing from any

corner is always welcomed by the artist and can be seen as a motivating factor. Consequently the responses of that art audience who claimed knowing the artist personally become important for us to understand this dimension. Thirty percent of the art gallery visitors mentioned that they personally knew the artists whose paintings were on display. These people were friends, neighbors, their mentors, students or teachers. For them it turns into a social obligation, which has to be done since they are personally familiar with the artist.

Table 11 : Number of art audience who personally knew the artists whose works are on display.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	90	30.2
No	209	69.5
No Response	1	.3
Total	300	100.0

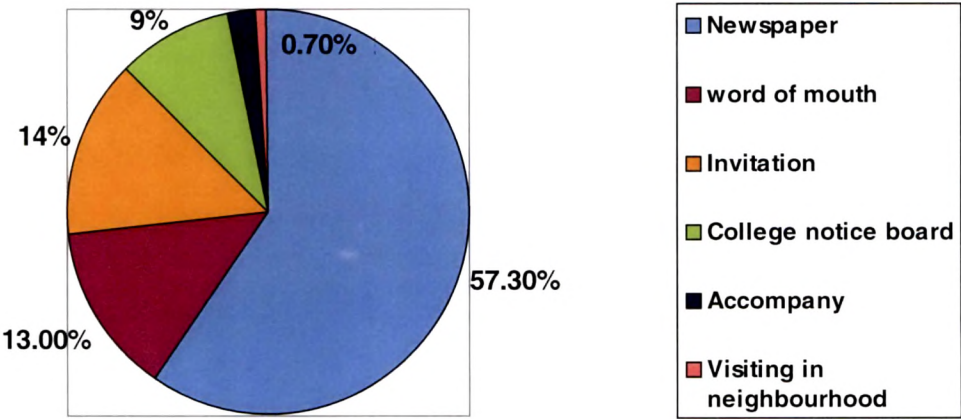
Table 12 : Relationship between the artists whose works are on display, and the art audience, who knew them personally.

Options	Frequency	Percentage
Relative	3	1%
Friend	45	15%
Acquaintance	33	11%
Teacher/Student	9	3%
Total	90	30%

The above tables depict that almost thirty percent of the visitors knew personally the some of the artists whose work was on display in the exhibition they were visiting. Out of these five percent mentioned that the artists were their friends while eleven percent said they were acquaintances and three percent mentioned that the artists exhibiting their works were either their students or their teachers. This data reiterates that apart from majority of the art audiences being from art related fields, the art audiences also know the artists and even if the art audience is unable to relate to art, as

mentioned earlier knowing the artist is a motivating factor that may make them visit the art galleries.

Figure 23 : Source of Information about the exhibition you are visiting



Newspaper is the chief source of information regarding the exhibitions held in different art galleries. Fourteen percent were invited to the exhibition through invitation cards and 13 percent said that they heard about it from someone and were hence visiting the exhibition. Publicity for any display or exhibition is one of the marketing strategies. Which medium is used to publicize depends on the gallery policy and contacts. An art gallery owner had explicitly mentioned, *“we do not publicize much as our goal is to reach out to the buyers. These are persons who we are in touch with, generally the opening of an exhibition does get coverage in the local*

newspapers but we do not make any extra efforts to publicize it." Newspaper is the strongest source of disseminating information.

To an ordinary person, popular art becomes an object, which pleases the eye. Fine art has more connotations to it, which dominantly includes an aesthetic pleasure, sense of creative purpose and element of originality in every creation. The sensibility to fathom fine arts is what is expected of the art audience at large, though it will narrow the purpose if just seen in that context. The data suggests these very paradigms of their visits to the art galleries. Fifty percent of the art audience was motivated and inspired by the paintings displayed in the art galleries that they had visited. Almost thirty (29.8%) percent of the art viewers reported that they obtained visual experience which was pleasurable and also enjoyable. Besides this there were some viewers (1.7%) who reported that the paintings were thought provoking and provided them with some kind of mental stimulation. There were some interesting responses from about five percent (5.2%) they were there in the art galleries to pass their time. There were few others (5.8%) who were visiting the art galleries in look out for a better business deal as art for them had more of economic value than aesthetic value. There were some viewers who said that the paintings that were exhibited did not really give

them anything as they were there because of some social purpose .i. e. to support the artist or perform social obligation.

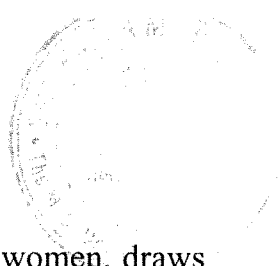
Visitors of art galleries respond to the paintings at many levels-they may be intellectually stimulated, emotionally touched, spiritually uplifted or even a combination of all three. They may also react to the tension that an artist can set up by juxtaposing their expectations with something out of the ordinary in beauty, form or subject. At the same time there are viewers who may not be able to relate to what they see. Landscapes and figurative paintings are popular with audiences from all walks of life however many a times other abstract and complex depictions may require an eye as well as deeper knowledge of fine arts. Audiences from certain sections of the society may not appreciate such art works. In contrast, mass or popular art especially audio-video depictions are predominant in the experience of most people and it tends to mould their ideas, preferences and tastes in general; therefore it may not be easy for them to appreciate something different that is not in accordance with their taste.

From amongst the respondent artists ninety seven percent mentioned that the art audiences are important for them. These artists were of the

opinion that their artworks are created, so as to be shared with the wider public. They also felt that audience's appreciation was a major source of motivation for them. It was interesting to note that only two percent of the respondent artists mentioned that they consider the feedback book (placed in art galleries for the viewers to give their feedback) as a very important source to get the viewers responses and that it also enables them to understand the pulse of the art public. Three percent of the artists stated that viewers are not important. As Shantana Gohain, middle group female artist states, *"I get immense satisfaction from the process of painting, I get involved with my work and who is going to see it or discuss it does not really matter, I am happy when I paint... the rest of the world recedes into the background"* Such artists were satisfied with the process of creating and did not seem to be concerned about the receptivity of their artworks.

The profile of the art audience in Baroda emerging from the analysis of this study shows that the painting exhibitions in Baroda have an intermittent flow of viewers mostly related to the art world. In contrast to this gallery audience, is the popularity of rangoli²⁴ exhibitions held at the renowned 'Kirti mandir' in Baroda city during the Diwali festival. This

²⁴ Rangoli is a popular everyday art form in India, wherein powdered colors are used to create art on the floor.



exhibition of a 'popular everyday art' practiced in homes by women, draws large crowds. People throng the venue and stand in long queues to view the realistic 'rangoli' depicting popular personalities, characters, scenes and landscapes. Perhaps the reason for the painting exhibitions not attracting such a crowd is that it is that the common man's perception of art may be more akin to popular art forms. Another cause for distancing of the fine artists, and their art from the wider public is that artistic success has become linked with financial value. Artists whose art is valued in millions becomes a great master artist but his art then caters to art collectors or corporate investors and hence is beyond ordinary people's reach.

Artists do not merely create to satisfy their own self. The creative process is incomplete without the reaction of an audience, thus art consists of communication between artist and audience. The study of audiences for fine arts in sociology can supplement the growing information about art audiences and their interest in various art forms. Artists directly or indirectly depend upon the social structures that provide them support. These social structures may include patrons, buyers, connoisseurs, networks and groups interested in commercial value of the art and the artist. However it is important to note, 'cultural support, creation, dissemination, and reception

are not merely processes of economic exchange, but symbolic ones as well' (Zolberg 1990: 136). There exists hierarchy not only in the varied arts forms but also among people patronizing those art forms as there is social status attached to it. There are material, symbolic, psychological gains for those who engage in the fine arts. This art public is a small group within the larger society, and this group is slowly growing but it would take great efforts on the part of the state and the artist community to usher in a wave wherein every individual learns to appreciate art.