



RESEARCH ARTICLE

Relevance of Rabindranath Tagore's Thoughts on Education

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ABSTRACT

Modern world is changing day by day, but the main problems of world are same as in the past. World is divided in many parts on the different basis. Environment problems are reaching on alarming stage. Schooling system is such in which students and teachers both are suffering badly. In such a situation the thoughts of Tagore are still relevant not only for India but also for the whole world. According to Tagore a well developed educational system can eradicate all the problems of the world. His naturalism, humanism, internationalism and aesthetic values are the main pillars of his educational system. Today world can be benefitted with his views on education to a great extent. His educational thoughts were his experience gathered his travelling in whole world and his experiments made by him in Santi Niketan and Sri Niketan. The changing environmental condition calls for an innovative educational system; a new methodology, which will not only cater to the child's basic career, based formal training but that encourages hobbies, creativity and art, enriching survival.

Key words: Relevance, Rabindranath Tagore, Education

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INTRODUCTION

First Asian Nobel prize winner and well known poet, dramatist, author, artist and musician Rabindranath Tagore is a name in the literary field but most people are not aware of his educational thoughts and works. This is a shameful thing for us as we always worry about the current educational system of India and want to change it with the help of the thoughts of some western philosophers and thinkers, but we are not aware of Tagore who worked for the development and innovation of Indian education for more than 50 years of his life. He travelled many countries and learned their system of educating people. He applied his own thoughts of education in his educational institutes like Santi Niketan and Sri Niketan. Vishwabharti is the living example of his thoughts. He was a firstly a humanist later an educationist, so his humanist approach can be seen everywhere in his thoughts. According to him nature is the best teacher. He was of view that a child learns at his own pace with his unique qualities. We have to give him only the right atmosphere.

CHANGING PATTERN OF FAMILIES AND ITS BAD EFFECT ON NEW GENERATION

Today the scenario of our family system is changing day by day. Most of our families are converting in micro families, so the mental and emotional needs of a child which are fulfilled by the families in the past are not possible now. Its bad effect can be seen on individuals' frustration and their unsocial activities. They are uprooting from the main stream of the society and this situation is alarming. Today teen agers are engaged in the activities of murder, sexual abuses, loot and many other unsocial acts. So it is important to give strength to their mental setup.

ICT AND ITS DRAWBACKS

Today use of ICT i.e. Information and Communication Technology in education is enhancing day by day all over the world, Indian educational system is not its exception.

Many well known schools have included ICT in their educational practices, but ICT enhances only knowledge based skills and by using ICT we only develop only one dimension of our students i.e. Cognitive dimension. His motor and emotional development is not much affected by the use of ICT in education.

EDUCATION THROUGH FOR THE OVERALL DEVELOPMENT OF CHILD

Rabindranath Tagore has given us the idea to educate students in such a way that their overall development can be made possible. Tagore was a great follower of teaching of fine arts, music, drama and acting because according to him these are the powerful medium of human emotional expression. According to him, in student life the education of music, fine arts and drama has great importance. Tagore tells as we need a strong body to perform our acts we also need a healthy mind to control our body and acts. For healthy mind we have to fulfill the mental needs by music, fine arts and drama.

Tagore said that for the development of an individual, a society and a country music, fine arts and drama have a great importance. Music, fine arts and drama enhance the motor skills and emotional aspect of an individual that's why the importance of art education, music and drama become so important now days. We can feed our children's mind with gentle thoughts and calm desires with the help of education of fine arts, music and drama. This education can stop them from their unsocial acts.

EDUCATION IN THE LAP OF NATURE

Today word 'child centered education' is being heard everywhere, but most of our children lose their childhood between the narrow walls of curriculum, books, teaching methods and examination pattern. These tools of education are demolishing the present and the future of our students. Tagore suggested an open school concept in natural surroundings for students, because it gives them a natural place to learn. Students feel easy and they can learn more than they actual learn in modern huge schools with costly equipments. This way of schooling also connects them with nature. They understand the importance of nature in our life. This will help in the present problem of environment pollution to a great extent. Tagore forced that the education should be given in natural environment with its overall beauty, colors, sounds and its other means of expressions. According to him nature is the manuscript of god. So the education should be of such type that it can tell the individuals their intimate relation with the nature.

FREE INTERACTION BETWEEN SCHOOLS AND SOCIETY

Tagore also wanted to connect the schools to the society although he wanted to establish them far and wide from the cities in the lap of nature. 'Paush Mahotsava' is the living example of his concept of connecting school with society. In this festival student of 'Vishwabharti' and general people of society meet each other and both show their skills to each other and also learn from each other. These types of festivals help schools to understand the needs of society and hence develop curriculum and educational practices accordingly. On the other hand society also understands its duties towards the educational institute. This will also help the students to feel their connection with the society and this feeling helps them to work for the goodness of society after being educated.

UNIVERSAL BROTHERHOOD IS A WAY TO PEACE AND PROSPERITY OF THE WORLD

Today the world is being divided in many parts on the basis of religion, race, language, economy and political boundaries. These diversities have made our life so complicated that we all human are divided from each other. Terrorism and mutual attacks by the countries on each other become so common now days. Tagore had shown us a path of universal brotherhood. This concept 'Vasudhaiv kutumbkam' means whole earth is like a family - is basic concept of Indian culture. Basic philosophy of Rabindranath lies in equality of human beings despite of diversities. He always opposed the diversities among

humans. In 'Vishwabharti' he admitted students of different countries. He started 'Vishwabharti' to collect all the good things of all the cultures. He started researches on eastern and western cultures in 'Vishwabharti' as he wanted that humanity will get benefit from different cultures. This is also a way to bring different cultures and countries closer. When students of different cultures and countries live and study together, they learn a lot from each other about their cultures. This will help them in understanding the unity of human beings and all cultures. His humanism was out of the sphere of a man's nation. He advocated the hormonal relations in international relations.

FREEDOM OF STUDENTS FOR A GOOD TEACHING-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

In educational institutes Tagore was not happy with the way as students treated. He also experienced this in his school time. He wanted freedom for the students. By freedom Tagore meant child's self experiences and activities. For the emotional exploration of a child freedom is essential. Tagore was against the heavy load of books and bags students had to carry to the school. Tagore notices that, at the very starting age of the life of a student, his/her parents keep a lot of burden of bags and books on his/her shoulders. He wrote, "From childhood to adolescence and again from adolescence to manhood, we are coolies of the goddess of learning, carrying loads of words on our folded backs". According to Tagore, it makes education joyless. He was in favor of easy education, that is, education through music, art, literature and nature, etc. He wrote that the books we read have no vivid pictures of our homes and our society. He also felt that our education is directing us to a land of enchanting falsehood.

LACK OF EDUCATION IS THE MAIN PROBLEM FOR THE PROGRESS OF A COUNTRY

According to Tagore, lack of education is main obstacle in the way of India's progress and at the root of all its problems. It is true that in our country the basic objectives of education system, such as promoting creativity, freedom, joy and an awareness of a cultural heritage were completely ignored. At the time of Tagore, Indians have been divided into two parts due to the medium of education that was English. One who received this education and second those who did not. He worked hard for the improvement of education system in India.

JOYFUL LEARNING AND WOK EDUCATION

Tagore was not happy with the mechanical way of teaching at his time, in which students lack interest in the whole process of education. Main aim of Tagore was to provide study with joy. According to him picnics, excursions, games, music, metrical performances and celebrating socio-religious festivals constituted regular features of the calendar. New Year's Day, the Rainy Season festival, the New Rice festival, and the Spring festival were - and still are - all regular features.

Tagore was in favor of good education, in which a teacher can prepare the student for good future and character as well. So he introduced work education as - "a joyous exercise of our inventive and constructive energies that help to build up character" (Tagore 1931). It is right to say that in our childhood we learn everything with the aid of our body and mind, with all the senses active and eager. When we are sent to school, the doors of natural information are closed to us; our eyes see the letters, our ears hear the lessons, but our mind misses the perpetual stream of ideas from nature, because the teachers, in their wisdom, think these bring distraction and have no purpose behind them. But Tagore was in favor of teaching the things from nature a lot.

CONCLUSION

The achievements of Rabindranath Tagore in all these fields are so great that they mark him out as one of the greatest sons of India and, indeed, one who has a message for entire humankind. Everyone in India recognizes him as the winner of Nobel Prize in literature, the philosopher who stood with Gandhi and other great persons of his day. Some Indians

are admirers of his poetry and other works. But, throughout India, every student recognizes him as the author of India's National Anthem, *Jana Gana Mana*.

Kathleen O'Connell rightly wrote about the philosophy of Tagore: In Tagore's philosophy of education, the aesthetic development of the senses was as important as the intellectual- if not more so - and music, literature, art, dance and drama were given great prominence in the daily life of the school (O'Connell 2003).

In Tagore's view, the higher aim of education was the same as that of a person's life, that is, to achieve fulfillment and completeness. There was a lesser aim that of providing the individual with a satisfactory means of livelihood, without which a person would not be able to satisfy his/her basic requirements and thus fail to achieve either of these two aims. Tagore also thought that the limitless development of man is possible only in an environment free from any kind of bondage.

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