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Idea of Global Village and Rabindranath : Tagore's Internationalization of Education

Abstract - *Rabindranath Tagore is one among the very first educators in order to assuming when it comes to the idea of actual Global Village. Rabindranath Tagore's ideas of method of trainings, knowledge designs and instructional models include a unique sensitivity with awareness. These also offer aptness with regard to training amongst multi-racial, multi-lingual as well as multi-cultural points. These also show problems associated with recognized economic difference as well as political discrepancy. Thus, the aim of this paper is to explore the contribution of Rabindranath Tagore in education in terms of internationalization of learning and gaining knowledge. Through the approach of the idea of 'Global Village' its endeavors come with surprising findings that Tagore's philosophy of education is located without any institutional confinement and its significance was wider but not limited to literature, arts, music, dance and sciences.*

Keywords : Rabindranath Tagore, Global Village, Internationalization of Education, Multiculturalism.

1. Introduction

1.1 Background of Tagore

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) is the Asia's first Nobel Laureate. He was born in an outstanding Calcutta family proverbial for its socio-religious and cultural innovations throughout the nineteenth Bengali Renaissance. The philosophically and profoundly social and cultural involvement of his family would later play a powerful role within the formulation of Rabindranath's educational priorities and preferences.

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His grandfather Dwarkanath was concerned in supporting medical facilities, educational establishments and therefore the arts, and he fought for religious and social reform and therefore the institution of a free press. Moreover, his father was a frontrunner in social and religious reform. He inspired a multi-cultural exchange within the family mansion Jorasanko. In this joint family, thirteen brothers and sisters of Rabindranath were mathematicians, journalists, novelists, musicians, artists. His cousins shared the family mansion, were leaders in theatre, science and a brand new social movement.

1.2 Reflections

The incredible excitement and cultural prosperity of his extended family permitted young Rabindranath to understand and learn subconsciously at his own pace. It has provided him a dynamic and vibrant 'open model of education'. Later, he tried to restructure and remake this in his school at Santiniketan. Not astoundingly, he got his outside formal schooling to be inferior and boring that did not satisfy his quest and, following a short revelation to several schools. He could not gain interest and refused to attend school. It's been seen that the only degrees he ever received were honorary ones bestowed late in life.

His experiences and understandings at Jorasanko gave him with a lifelong sincerity and confidence regarding the significance of freedom in education. He also understood and realized in a thoughtful manner the significance of the arts for developing empathy and sensitivity, and the inevitability for a cherished and close relationship with man's cultural and natural environment. In taking part in the sophisticated, international and cosmopolitan activities of the family, he came to rebuff and refuse narrowness and restriction in general, and in particular, any form of restriction and narrowness that alienated and divided human being from human being. He understood and looked at education as a vehicle or a way for appreciating the richest as well as brighter aspects of other cultures, while upholding one's own cultural specificity.

As he wrote in “Ideals of Education”

“I was brought up in an atmosphere of aspiration, aspiration for the expansion of the human spirit. We in our home sought freedom of power in our language, freedom of imagination in our literature, freedom of soul in our religious creeds and that of mind in our social environment. Such an opportunity has given me confidence in the power of education which is one with life and only which can give us real freedom, the highest that is claimed for man, his freedom of moral communion in the human world.... I try to assert in my words and works that education has its only meaning and object in freedom—freedom from ignorance about the laws of the universe, and freedom from passion and prejudice in our communication with the human world. In my institution I have attempted to create an atmosphere of naturalness in our relationship with strangers, and the spirit of hospitality which is the first virtue in men that made civilization possible.

I invited thinkers and scholars from foreign lands to let our boys know how easy it is to realise our common fellowship, when we deal with those who are great, and that it is the puny who with their petty vanities set up barriers between man and man.” (Rabindranath Tagore 1929: 73-74)

Grown and brought up in a family that was the center of meeting place for leading artists and intellectuals from India and the West, Rabindranath Tagore got a further opportunity to get an experience which was remarkable for someone of his upbringing. Then, he was given in responsibilities of the family’s rural properties in East Bengal. However, his initial try with adult education were carried out there as he steadily became conscious of the delicate and sensitive material and cultural poverty that saturated the villages, and the enormous divide between the uneducated rural areas and the city elites. These experiences of him made him strong-minded to do something about rural strengthen, and afterward at Santiniketan, students and teachers were concerned with literacy training and social work and the endorsement of cooperative schemes.

Thus, as a substitute to the accessible forms of education, he initiated a small school at Santiniketan in 1901 that urbanized into a university and rural renovation and rebuilding centre, where he attempted to enlarge a substitute model of education that branched out from his own learning experiences.

1.3 Tagore's Works

Rabindranath Tagore wrote his very first verse at age eight, and by the end of his life, had composed over twenty-five volumes of poetry. He also had written fifteen plays, ninety short stories, eleven novels, thirteen volumes of essays, instituted, crafted and edited various journals, organized and made Bengali textbooks, hold up communication materials, massages and correspondence connecting thousands of letters. He beautifully composed over two thousand songs; and – after the age of seventy – created more than two thousand pictures and sketches. He devoted forty years of his life to his educational institution at Santiniketan, West Bengal. Rabindranath's school possesses a children's school and a university known as Visva-Bharati and a rural education Centre known as Sriniketan.

2. Key ideas and Approach

2.1 Idea of Global Village

"Global village" is a phrase closely connected with Canadian-born Marshall McLuhan. In his books, *The Gutenberg Galaxy: The Making of Typographic Man* (1962) and *Understanding Media* (1964) he made this term popular. McLuhan explained how the globe has been constricted into a village by technological development and the immediate movement of information from one place to another at the same time.

It is to depict the occurrence of the world's culture decreasing and increasing at the same time due to invasive technological advances that let for immediate distribution of culture (Johnson 192). The declaration is that it is likely for all the cultures of the world to become one global village. This idea or sense of global village highlights the significance of an empathetic and compassionate sense of interconnectedness with the surrounding world. This is the idea which informally initiated by Rabindranath through his works, writings and experiences that the universal education brings the whole world at one place.

12.2 Brief discussion of literature on the Ideas of Tagore

It is seen that Rabindranath Tagore did not compose a central educational treatise, and his ideas must be garnered and collected through his variety of writings and educational experiments at Santiniketan. Generally, he visualized an education that was profoundly embedded in one's instant surroundings but connected to the cultures of the extended world, logical learning and individualized to the traits of the child. He experienced and understood that a curriculum should rotate organically just about nature with classes happened in the open air beneath the trees to offer for a natural admiration of the flexibility of the plant and animal kingdoms, and seasonal changes.

Thus, children took their seats on hand-woven mats under the trees, which they were permitted to climb and run beneath between classes. Consequently, nature walks and excursions were an element of the curriculum and students were motivated to pursue the life cycles of insects, birds and plants. Moreover, class schedules were found to be flexible to permit for shifts in the weather or special concentration to natural phenomena and incidents, and seasonal celebrations were created for the children by Tagore.

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In the essay "A Poet's School," Tagore highlights the significance of an empathetic and compassionate sense of interconnectedness with the surrounding world :

We have come to this world to accept it, not merely to know it. We may become powerful by knowledge, but we attain fullness by sympathy. The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. But we find that this education of sympathy is not only systematically ignored in schools, but it is severely repressed. From our very childhood habits are formed and knowledge is imparted in such a manner that our life is weaned away from nature and our mind and the world are set in opposition from the beginning of our days. Thus the greatest of educations for which we came prepared is neglected, and we are made to lose our world to find a bagful of information instead. We rob the child of his earth to teach him geography, of language to teach him grammar. His hunger is for the Epic, but he is supplied with chronicles of facts and dates...Child-nature protests against such calamity with all its power of suffering, subdued at last into silence by punishment. (Rabindranath Tagore, *Personality*, 1917: 116-17)

In his philosophy of education, the aesthetic expansion and growth of the senses was as significant as the intellectual—if not more so. Moreover, music, literature, art, dance and drama were given immense eminence in the daily life of the school. This was chiefly so following the starting decade of the school. Relating to his home life at Jorasanko, Rabindranath attempted to generate an atmosphere in which the arts would become innate and natural. One of the initial fields to be emphasized was music. Tagore writes that in his youth, a “cascade of musical emotion” flooded forth day after day at Jorasanko. “We felt we would try to test everything,” he writes, “and no achievement seemed impossible...We wrote, we sang, we acted, we poured ourselves out on every side.” (Rabindranath Tagore, *My Reminiscences* 1917: 141)

He always kept a strong relation with his theory of subconscious learning. Rabindranath Tagore never discussed or wrote down to the students, but somewhat implicated them with whatsoever he was composing. However, the students had entrée to the place where he read his new writings to teachers and critics, and they were motivated to read out their own writings in particular literary evenings. To talk about teaching also he believed and understood in presenting complex levels of literature, which the students might not completely grab, but which would arouse them.

Composing and publishing of periodicals had always been a significant feature of Jorasanko life, and students at Santiniketan were motivated to generate their own publications and put out a number of demonstrated magazines. The children were motivated to pursue their ideas in painting and drawing and to receive stimulation and encouragement from the many visiting artists and writers. Particularly talking about dramas, Most of Tagore's plays were written at Santiniketan and the students participated in both the performing and production sides. He discusses how well the students were talented to get into the force of the plays and perform their roles, which needs delicate understanding and empathy without particular training.

As Tagore started envisaging of Visva-Bharati as a national centre for the arts, he motivated artists such as Nandalal Bose to stay at Santiniketan and to dedicate them full-time to endorsing a national form of art. Tagore exclusively wrote, without music and the fine arts, a nation cannot gain its highest means of national self-expression and the people stay inarticulate and mumbling. In line with this, Tagore was one of the first to maintain and convey together diverse forms of Indian dance. He assisted revitalize folk dances and initiated dance forms from other parts of India, such as Manipuri, Kathak and Kathakali. He, in addition, patronized modern dance and was one of the first to be familiar with the gifts of Uday Sankar, who was encouraged to present his talents at Santiniketan.

The convergence and meeting place of cultures, as Rabindranath imagined it at Visva-Bharati, should be a education centre where contradictory interests are diminished, where persons work together in a universal quest of truth and comprehends,

To give confidence and empathy, Rabindranath encouraged artists and scholars from other parts of India and the world to exist together at Santiniketan on a daily basis to distribute their cultures with Visva-Bharati. If we see at the Constitution chosen for Visva-Bharati as an Indian, Eastern and Global cultural centre whose objectives were:

- a. To learn and revise the mind of Man in its comprehension of diverse features of truth from varied points of view.
- b. To convey more close relation with one another through tolerant study and research, the dissimilar cultures of the East on the basis of their essential unity and harmony.
- c. To move toward the West from the point of view of such a harmony of the life and thought of Asia.
- d. To look for to understand in a universal fellowship of reading and learning the meeting of East and West and therefore eventually to reinforce the basic conditions of world peace in the course of the free communication of ideas between the two hemispheres.
- e. In addition to this, with such Ideals in view to offer at Santiniketan a centre of culture where research into the learning of the religion, literature, history, science and art of Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Zoroastrian, Islamic, Sikh, Christian and more on other civilizations may be followed along with the culture of the West.

Along with that straightforwardness and candor of externals which is essential for true spiritual comprehension, in friendship, good-fellowship and assistance between the intellectuals, thinkers and scholars of both Eastern and Western countries, free from all antagonisms of race, nationality, dogma or caste and in the name of the One Supreme Being who is Shantam, Shivam, Advaitam.

In the consideration of syllabus and program, Tagore promoted a diverse importance in teaching. More willingly than revising national cultures for the wars won and cultural dominance forced, he sponsored a teaching system that examined history and culture for the development that had been completed in breaking down social and religious barriers. This exclusive approach highlighted the modernization and creativity that had been prepared in incorporating individuals

of miscellaneous backgrounds into a bigger structure and formation, and in developing the economic policies which highlighted social justice and lessened the gap between rich and poor. Connecting to this, art would be studied for its function in furthering the aesthetic imagination and articulating universal themes.

With the following, it should be celebrated that Rabindranath himself was a living emblem of the kind of mutuality, sympathy and creative exchange that he supported. His dream of culture was not a static one, but one that sponsored new cultural fusions, and he struggled for a world where manifold voices were motivated to relate with one another and to settle differences within a superseding commitment to peace and shared interconnectedness. Tagore's bighearted and kind personality and his determination to break down blockades of all sorts provides us a model for the way multiculturalism can survive and found within a single human personality, and the sort of individual which the educational progression and procedure should be hopeful and confident towards.

More significantly Tagore's educational labors were innovative in many areas. He was one of the first in India to fight for a humane educational system that was in contact with the environment and intended at overall development of the personality. Thus, Santiniketan became a representation for vernacular instruction and the expansion of Bengali textbooks; additionally, it opened one of the initial coeducational programs in South Asia. The founding of Visva-Bharati and Sriniketan showed the path towards ground-breaking efforts in many directions, counting models for characteristically Indian higher education and mass education, plus pan-Asian and global cultural exchange.

Moreover, another feature that sets Tagore's educational theory apart is his advance to education as a poet. He avowed, at Santiniketan, his objective was to generate a poem 'in a medium other than words.' Originally, it was this poetic visualization that facilitates him to trend a scheme of education which was all comprehensive, and to formulate a distinctive program for education in nature and uniquely creative self-expression in a study climate amiable and pleasant to global cultural exchange.

3. Conclusions

By his hard works, efforts and achievements, Rabindranath Tagore, is component of a global network of ground-breaking educators, such as Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Montessori and Dewey. He is in the modern-day context, Malcolm Knowles—who have endeavored to generate non-authoritarian education systems suitable to their particular surroundings. Thus this paper recommends and opens for further elaboration on the deep inspection to look at the philosophy of education of Tagore. It also premises that free and internalization of education can be patronized for a better outcome.

I would like to conclude with a poem that articulates and fashions Tagore's goals for internationalization of education. He writes:

Where the mind is without fear
and the head is held high,
Where knowledge is free;
Where the world has not been broken
up into fragments by narrow domestic
walls;
Where words come out from the
depth of truth;
Where tireless striving
stretches its arms towards
perfection;
Where the clear stream of reason
has not lost its way into the
dreary desert sand of dead habit;
Where the mind is led forward
by thee into ever-widening
thought and action—
into that heaven of freedom,
my Father,
Let my country awake.

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