

Tagore's Philosophy of Education

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Abstract:

Rabindranath Tagore was a great philosopher, a thinker, a social reformer, educationist and also a great priest of Indian culture and tradition. He believed that the aim of education is self-realization. He himself was a poet and a saint, who had, through his imagination and insight, realized the universal soul in himself and in nature. He believed that this realization was the goal of education. To Rabindranath, the purpose of education is freedom of mind and spirit. Tagore's philosophy of education conforms to universal philosophy. The three fundamental principles of Tagore's educational philosophy are Freedom, creativeness, self-expression and active unity with nature and man. He tried to spread the Indian philosophical as well as cultural thoughts and ideas throughout the world. Tagore, who had a rare and a great personality, exhibited multidimensional ideas which have relevance in today's world. He had been endowed with versatile genius and untiring zeal. His knowledge, the Soul, Nature and Man earned him a second name 'Gurudev'. Tagore's philosophy reflects a perfect blending of Western and Eastern ideas.

Keywords:

- Shantiniketan: (Abode of peace), Guest house built by Debendranath Tagore, father of Rabindranath Tagore.
- Vishwa Bharti: University at Shantiniketan founded by Rabindranath Tagore.
- Gurudev: Derived from two sanskrit words GURU meaning influential teacher or popular expert like sage, spiritual master, guiding light and DEV meaning Lord. So, Gurudev means an enlightened master who could show the path.

Introduction:

Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) Asia's first noble laureate, was born into a prominent Calcutta family known for its socio-religious and cultural innovations. Within the joint

family, Rabindranath's thirteen brothers and sisters were mathematicians, journalist, novelist, musicians and artists.

Tagore's philosophy of education conforms to his general philosophy. Factors which influenced Tagore's Educational philosophy were influence of home environment, love for nature, love for nation, his extensive visits abroad and influence of school environment. The origin of Tagore's educational theory was his own home life and the freedom he had experienced with it. Tagore's home was filled with the musical, literary and dramatic pursuits. As such Tagore got his Education mostly at home by self study. Tagore recommended that education should be provided in the company of nature which will strengthen the ties between man and nature. Both man and nature are the creations of one and the same God. He considered nature as a powerful agency for the moral and spiritual development of the child exerting a very healthy influence upon the heart, mind and body of the child. Under the natural and healthy environment, pupils can find a natural outlet for their capacities and great chance of their development. He firmly believed that education is a vehicle of social reform. Any plan of education should involve both nature and needs of man in a harmonious programme. He was not in favour of only intellectual development but stressed that education should promote creative self expression. He believed that freedom given to the learner would bring originality. Tagore gave a very important place to the teacher. A teacher is to stimulate and guide but it is the child who is to choose and react according to his natural inclinations. Teacher should behave with him with great love, affection, sympathy and consideration. He should always be busy with motivating the creative capacities of children. Tagore did not approve the traditional methods classroom teaching. He recommended those methods which provide knowledge of concrete situations like frequent excursions and tours. Education must be given in geographical, historical, economic and cultural perspectives

Subject Matter:

Aims of Education: The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. He aims at perfection not only of body or mind but also that of soul. The school which he started at Shantiniketan placed the greatest emphasis on all round development of the child in a spirit of freedom. He says Education

should not be mere informative but it should be creative. Tagore believes in the moral development of the child and said that education must be based on moral value.

Curriculum and Methods of Teaching: Tagore was a naturalist and also an idealist. He wants things of beauty and nice virtue to be taught in the curriculum, lays stress on those subjects which make a child rich in knowledge. Tagore wanted to include History, Geography, nature study, language, science, fine arts, music, poetry, dance and drama in the curriculum. His view was that drama releases children's tensions and anxieties. Rabindranath Tagore does not believe in routine methods of teaching. His method of teaching is the method of freedom in teaching. He wants teaching learning to be a joyous adventure, full of activity, wonders, and surprises. He believes that children learn their lessons with the aid of their body and mind, with all senses fully active and eager. To give his ideas and ideals a practical shape, Tagore founded Vishwa Bharti University at Shantiniketan. It is located in natural surroundings. Classes are held in open under the trees. Students themselves make rules and run the university. Tagore declared that the educational institutions in India must not be only the centre of her intellectual but also of her economic life. Tagore's view of Education was very much similar to the concept of Mahatma Gandhi. Tagore held that education in India would be fruitful only if it was based on an integrated culture which preserved all the values inherited from the past and added to them the new values brought by west.

Conclusion:

Tagore was a great champion of Education for International Understanding. The core of Tagore's educational philosophy was learning from nature, music, life. This is the reason why his education is easily acceptable by human mind. He believed that education should help an individual to attain complete manhood so that all his powers may be developed to the fullest extent for his own individual perfection as well as the perfection of the human society in which he was born.

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