

“TAGORE'S REVELATION OF GLOBAL EDUCATION: SIGNIFICANCE AND IMPLICATIONS FOR TOMORROW- A STUDY”

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Abstract

In this in a row age, the world is fast becoming a global village. In this context, it is relevant to look at the educational vision of Rabindranath Tagore; he tried to realize his educational vision in his schools and universities where the world makes its home in a single nest. His revelation of global education can help to prevent misunderstanding and war, promote peace, foster multiculturalism, connect human beings, and celebrate their common heritage of the culture. This present study focuses on Tagore's ideology for global education, its implications for tomorrow.

Keywords: Education, Global Education and Tagore's ideology.

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INTRODUCTION

Rabindranath Tagore on education, as one of the earliest educators to think in terms of the global village, Rabindranath Tagore's educational model has a unique sensitivity and aptness for education within multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations, amidst conditions of acknowledged economic discrepancy and political imbalance. Kathleen M. O'Connell explores Rabindranath Tagore's contribution.

This article investigates Rabindranath Tagore's educational vision, which underpinned the three institutions he set up in India – Santiniketan (1901), Visva-Bharati (1921) and Sriniketan (1922). It argues that this vision is still relevant for the world of today and tomorrow, and that it should be taken into account in designing any educational model for the future. Tagore rejected the modern mechanical learning that focuses merely on cultivation of the individual's mind, in favor of learning that encourages the creativity, imagination and moral awareness of students. He believed that education should be not for mere “success” or “progress” but for “illumination of heart” and for inculcation of a spirit of sympathy, service and self-sacrifice in the individual, so that s/he could rise above egocentrism and ethnocentrism to a state of global consciousness or world centrism. My contention is that although some may dismiss Tagore's educational principles as “rickety sentimentalism” in a world that is palpable and real, his ideas of human fellowship, unity and creativity, and kinship for nature seem irrefutable with the rise of multiculturalism and the looming ecological crisis threatening world peace. 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.

EDUCATION

"Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world"

-Nelson Mandela

As a versatile genius, Rabindranath Tagore was a very committed educator and I must mention he is in fact, one of the earliest educators to think in terms of the global village. Tagore's educational model has a unique sensitivity and aptness for education within multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations. According to Tagore, the aim of education is self realization. It means the realization of universal soul in one's self. It is a process which cannot be realized without education. His educational model has a unique sensitivity and aptness for education within multi-racial, multi-lingual and multi-cultural situations. According to Tagore, the aim of education is self realization. It means the realization of universal soul in one's self. It is a process which cannot be realized without education. He synthesized the ancient 'Vedantic' traditions with the modern western scientific attitude in formulating the goal of education. According to him, nature is the best of all teachers. Nature will provide students with necessary situation to learn things. No pressure should be exerted upon the student to learn anything. It is nature which will in graft the spirit of learning in the mind of a student to pursue the education he likes and shape his behavior and character. He is the one who said goodbye to the book-centered education for the first time which was almost unthinkable during the then pedantic bookish learning system. As he believed confining students only to text books does no good but perishes the natural instincts of a student as well as their creative skills. Students should be freed from the book-centered education system and should be given a broader avenue for learning.

Tagore is always emphasized in giving the freedom to learner. He said that the children should be given freedom so that they are able to grow and develop according to their own wishes. And most importantly what he used to think is that it is a mistake to judge children by the standards of grownups. Adults ignore the gifts of children and insist that children must learn through the same process as they do. Students should have their own freedom to learn as they please in various sectors of the realm of knowledge. According to Tagore, teaching should be practical and real but not artificial and theoretical. As he once said, "Educational institution must not be a dead cage in which living minds are fed with food artificially prepared. It should be an open house, in which students and teachers are at one". And like he said there, he always believed that there should be living contact between the teacher and the taught. Above all, Tagore attached great importance to the fine arts in his educational curriculum. To him, dance, music, drama, painting etc. should form a part of educational process. Students should take active part in these finer aspects of human life for these are very essential to enrich one's soul. Tagore was fully dissatisfied with the prevalent system of education at that time. "Not surprisingly, he found his outside formal schooling to be inferior and boring and, after a brief exposure to several schools, he himself refused to attend school in his early life. That is why as an alternative to the existing forms of education, he started a small school of education- "Shantiniketan" which was later developed into a university known as Viswa Bharati, where he tried to develop an alternative model of education that is stemmed from his own learning experience!

GLOBAL EDUCATION

It's an abode of peace where teachers and students live together in a spirit of perfect comradeship. The motto of the institution is "where the whole world forms its one single nest." It has open spaces and atmosphere of freedom surrounded by natural environment. It is open to all irrespective of country, race, religion, or politics. It is centered on simple living and high thinking and has spiritual and religious atmosphere. The establishment of Shantiniketan reflected the desired goal of Tagore in the educational sphere. The heart of global education is enabling young people to participate in shaping a better, shared future for the world. Global education emphasizes the unity and interdependence of human society, developing a sense of self and appreciation of cultural diversity, affirmation of social justice and human rights, as well as building peace and actions for a sustainable future in different times and places. Global education promotes positive values and assists students to take responsibility for their actions and to see themselves as global citizens who can contribute to a more peaceful, just and sustainable world. Australian global educators place particular emphasis on developing relationships with our neighbors in the Asia-Pacific and Indian Ocean regions. Global Perspectives, A framework for global education in Australian schools is a concise, practical and philosophical guide to including a global perspective across the curriculum. There is also advice for teachers and school leadership teams on how to implement the framework at a school level.

Global education has five learning emphases or perspectives:

1. **Interdependence and globalization** – an understanding of the complex social, economic and political links between people and the impact that changes have on each other
2. **Identity and cultural diversity** – an understanding of self and one's own culture, and being open to the culture of others
3. **Social justice and human rights** – an understanding of the impact of inequality and discrimination, the importance of standing up for our own rights and our responsibility to respect the rights of others
4. **Peace building and conflict resolution** – an understanding of the importance of building and maintaining positive and trusting relationships and ways conflict can be prevented or peacefully resolved
5. **Sustainable futures** – an understanding of the ways in which we can meet our current needs without diminishing the quality of the environment or reducing the capacity of future generations to meet their own needs.

GLOBAL PERSPECTIVE PROCESS IN EDUCATION

A global perspective offers students and teachers:

1. an approach which takes into account the whole of human society and the environments in which people live
2. an emphasis on the future, the dynamic nature of human society, and each person's capacity to choose and shape preferred futures
3. an opportunity to explore important themes such as change, interdependence, identity and diversity, rights and responsibilities, peace building, poverty and wealth, sustainability and global justice
4. a focus on cooperative learning and action, and shared responsibility
5. an emphasis on critical thinking and communication
6. An opportunity to develop positive and responsible values and attitudes, important skills and an orientation to active participation.

TAKING ACTION PROCESS IN EDUCATION

Taking action is the concluding stage of the inquiry process. It assists students to consider what they have learnt and encourages them to respond, applying their new knowledge and skills. *Global Perspectives* (2008, p 7) outlines these skills and attitudes to foster action and participation.

1. The ability to identify and investigate different opportunities for action and participation.
2. The ability to consider the consequences, positive and negative, for oneself and for others of particular actions.
3. A willingness to be involved in action to support desirable outcomes.
4. A capacity to identify possible barriers to successful participation and ability to devise strategies to overcome these.
5. A willingness and capacity to cooperate with others and to foster, encourage and value the participation of others.
6. A capacity to reflect on and evaluate forms of action, to review progress and to reconsider forms of action.
7. Action may be personal, based within a local community or as part of a global community.
8. Action may be varying levels of involvement:

To learn more – reading, viewing, and talking to others, interviewing experts

To act more – changing own behavior, discussing ideas with others, joining groups of like-minded people, signing petitions, educating others, creating displays, writing blogs, letters and opinion articles, creating film and drama, making speeches, talking to decision-makers, advocating change.

To share more – donating, fundraising, and volunteering

CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATION PROCESS IN EDUCATION

There are many types of groups through which people can join together to pursue shared interests and take action for change. These include community- and village-based groups, Indigenous groups, labor unions, cooperatives, charitable and faith-based organizations, professional associations, chambers of commerce, independent research institutes and the not-for-profit media. They vary greatly according to philosophy, purpose,

programs, working style, scope of activities, expertise and structures. The following organizations offer learning resources and opportunities for taking action:

1. Amnesty International Australia
2. Australian Red Cross
3. CARE Australia, Resources for teachers
4. Caritas Australia, Resources for schools
5. Cool Australia
6. Oxfam, Resources for teachers
7. Plan, Learning resources
8. UNICEF, Educational resources
9. World Vision, School resources

CONCLUSION

This article is focused on global ideology of Rabindranath Tagore; 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. Due to every human being is play a part ideology of Rabindranath Tagore, and think globally, to enhance global skills and to promote peace in international.

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