

---

# THOUGHTS OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE AND THEIR RELEVANCE TO EDUCATION

---

**Anup Kumar Samal,**

Research Scholar, Department of Education, Himalayan University

**Dr. Poonam Madan,**

Research Guide, Department of Education, Himalayan University

---

## ABSTRACT

Educational ideas are the fundamental weapon of a country's social, religious, political and economic progress and reform. According to Tagore's writings and activities exposed, Rabindranath Tagore became more focused in educational reform to modernizing India.

Tagore's philosophical thoughts on education in particular, are found in many dimensions, such as the aim of education, educational practices, curriculum designing, teacher-student relationship, and the role of teacher. Tagore believed that education should help an individual to attain complete manhood. This research mainly analyzes the attributes of educational philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore; how his educational philosophy made every individual a complete human being; and providing new recommendations to the field of education. This research was purely theoretical based. Data of the research was collected from primary and secondary sources to be analyzed qualitatively.

Historical methodology, analytical methodology, and descriptive methodology are used here as research methodology. The conclusion of the research is that, Rabindranath Tagore's educational system can develop an individual intellectually, physically, morally, socially and spiritually while paving ways to an individual to attain complete manhood. When Tagore's educational and philosophical thoughts incorporated in the policy of education, the student will be able to excel not only in education but also in extracurricular activities with spiritual, moral, and aesthetic values which will enable them to acquire knowledgeable human qualities. These values form the basis for the students to build a non-violent and nondiscriminatory society.

**Keywords:** *Educational Philosophy, Educational Practices, Harmony, Intellectual Development.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Modern education system was initiated in India from British who laid great emphasis on Indian education system. In 1935, Lord Macaulay introduced English to India and modern education was propounded by their commendation of Woods dispatch which is known as Magna Carta of Indian education system. The whole scenario of was changed from then. As per there commendation of Lord Macaulay, the British government planned to impart education to Indians. So that they may learn western education and can become western

intellectually and culturally. When India got freedom on 15<sup>th</sup> August, 1947, the control of British over India diminished. Due to this, national awareness was developed in Indians. Moreover, the philosophy of British education was not beneficial for the welfare of Nation. So, many Indian thinkers criticized this and Rabindranath Tagore was one of them. Rabindranath Tagore keenly observed that the aim of British education system was totally against of Indian culture and educational interest. Tagore was keen observer, philosopher and a prominent Vedic scholar. He has established Vishwabharti at Shantiniketan where there is a unique harmony between man and nature.

## **According To Tagore- Nature of Education**

Tagore understood the meaning of education in a very broad sense. He believes that education is conducive to a person's physical, intellectual, and moral development.

He wanted to build a self-reliant and spiritually well-organized personality through education. According to him education is that which creates harmonious relationship with all the existence of our life. Tagore has called this state of complete humanity. According to Tagore, education should be given in a simple and accurate way away from artificial environment and situation, education should have sympathy, love, and humanity and at the same time education should be given in a rhythmic and free manner with nature, which is full of mental freedom.

## **Need of the Study**

There is a tendency in the 21st century in India and the society as a whole to break the law of education, the tendency to break the laws established by it, the abandonment of Indians, the craving for foreign things and the mindset of adopting everything wrong. The path of self-realization is embedded in the nature of every individual today.

In human life Tagore attaches great importance to education. According to him the meaning of education is to enable the mind to attain the ultimate truth. Therefore, due to the importance of his educational philosophy, we have selected the present subject. Through which, along with studying Tagore's educational ideas, we will try to study how it is possible to develop values through his education philosophy.

## **Objectives of the study**

1. To study the Philosophical views of Rabindranath Tagore on the basis of original works.
2. To study about the relevance of his educational thoughts in perspective of present education in system.
3. To analyze the educational thoughts of Tagore and his basic conception of education.

## **Delimitation of the study**

The present paper will be concentrated on the contribution of Tagore in the inherent development of education in India and the pertinent educational philosophy.

## **Methods of study**

For the current study, historical survey method will be followed along with analytical method. Data will be taken from various secondary sources. After collection of data those will be analyzed by different analytical methods like \_internal criticism and \_external criticism and the theories will be developed and facts will be established.

## 2. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study was undertaken to determine the nature of Tagore's educational theory and practice and its impact on Indian education. Material for the research was collected through the various studies and the writer's knowledge of Tagore's philosophy of education was useful in obtaining significant data from Tagore's voluminous writings on education.

During the course of study a review of Tagore's writings on education and others on Tagore was found. A discussion of the major educational problems that existed in the British period in India, added to the early educational experiences of Tagore is presented to give a complete background for the basis of Tagore's theory. The core of Tagore's educational theory puts greater emphasis on the complete harmonious development of individual personality.

## 3. EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE

To describe Tagore's philosophy of education, it is necessary to examine some of the elements of his general philosophy. Tagore was an artist, poet, philosopher, prophet of freedom, humanist and educationalist who exercised tremendous influence on the development of twentieth century Indian educational thought and practice.

There are four fundamental principles in Tagore's philosophy of education: individualism, naturalism, spiritualism, and internationalism. Santiniketan and Visva-Bharathi are both based on these ideologies.

**Individualism:** Individualism refers to the fact that every individual has the freedom to express his or her individuality.

**Naturalism:** Naturalism is prevalent in his thinking. His love of nature can be seen in his poems. He also said that every living thing should live in harmony with nature.

**Spiritualism:** His Santiniketan plays a major role in the development of spiritualism. He said, "Every individual should attain spiritual perfection". Tagore has given religion a place of importance in education. Religious training for him is a spirit, an inspiration, pervading every aspect of human life.

**Internationalism:** He founded Visva-Bharati and sought to build internationalism with it. He said an international relationship is essential to share and learn good things.

### Tagore's Educational Vision

According to him, "Education means enabling the mind to find out that ultimate truth which emancipates us from the bondage of dust and gives us wealth not of things but of inner light, not of power but of love. It is

a process of enlightenment. It is divine wealth. It helps in realization of truth”.

The purpose of education is to bring about human perfection by dispelling ignorance and spreading the light of knowledge. It should enable us to live a full life economically, intellectually, aesthetically, socially and spiritually. As per Tagore's views about education, it must be a carrier of independency, consciousness, humanity and culture. He wanted to expose the children to a new education which could make them think about the individual and the infinite as well as concerns of the welfare aspects. He wanted the students to follow the traits of Gurukula system by being self-dependent, self-reliant and hard working. He was strictly against the corporal punishments, examination system and strict disciplinary measures as preferred by many educational systems of his times.

Tagore's educational system was based on educational philosophies of Vedas, Upanishads and old traditional doctrines through which he wanted to revive and extend the Indian culture. He wanted education to be free of the burden of the text books home work and walls of institutional compasses.

### **Tagore's Views on Different Aspects of Education**

According to Tagore, the aim of education should be self-realization. As he was a poet and a saint, so he has such imagination and insight which can really help to honor a soul in himself and in nature. He believed that such kind of realization was the real aim of life should also be to reach that universal soul of which all of us are parts.

He said that an individual can attain true knowledge by participating in activities with nature for true knowledge.

1. **Perfection** – If a child wants to get perfection in his life, he should be self-educated. Perfection here shows that the child must try to develop each and every aspect of his personality and all the abilities and powers with which he has been blessed by nature.
2. **Independence** – In Rabindranath Tagore's view, the child should be given complete freedom of every kind whether it was the freedom of intellect and freedom of decision, heart knowledge action and worship. In this reference, the child should be learnt to practice equality harmony and balance in life. Rabindranath explained independence as to live freely in natural surroundings.
3. **Universality** – A child is not able to acquire path in universal soul, 'God' he does not remain perfect and complete. So, it is necessary that child should identify/know his own soul and try to connect himself with universal soul.

With such an idea about child's education Tagore opposed then prevalent education system because in this, the child was taken away taken to artificial environment instead of lap's nature. This education system snatches the infancy period of child and pressurizes him to be confined in four come walls of classroom.

### **Aims of Education –**

Although Tagore did not specifically write about the aims of education in his book, yet from this writings and speeches and as we discussed before the philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore, it is clear that he believed in 'simple living and high thinking', so educational aims are set on the basis of Indian culture and traditions his self- realization concept etc. Rabindranath Tagore does not find any dichotomy between thought and life philosophy and education. He believes that everyone is potentially divine and every one can realize his potentiality. He was however very well aware of the educational ideas prevalent in the west. Therefore like Vivekanand he also synthesized the ancient Vedantic traditions with the modern western scientific attitude in formulating the goal of education.

- **Harmony with Environment:** According to Tagore, the main and ultimate goal of education was to create harmony with the environment. He said that harmony should be created with the help of nature and true knowledge should be imparted. "True education helps in collecting useful material and to acknowledge with real nature a strong bond should be created." Through education cultural heritage can be assimilated. The cultural education should be preserved.
- **Vocational Development:** Tagore wanted to provide economic skill to all people, so he laid for most stress on the education for handicraft, art is an and agriculture. He said that vocational training should be given to a pupil during their education period. Tagore considered vocational education necessary for the economic development of the country.
- **Individual development:** Rabindranath Tagore believed in the individual differences of men. He opined that education should be used to effect Children's development according to their own interest aptitudes and capabilities. But this development would take place in the society itself. In his view, every man has spiritual relationship with another due to which they are motivated towards each other's welfare and create social organizations. Education should necessarily develop the spirit of welfare of all in all the children.
- **Intellectual Development-** Rabindranath Tagore also emphasized intellectual development. But by intellectual development he did not mean the knowledge of certain subjects, rather by the development of different mental faculties – memory, imagination, thinking and logic, and their powerful organization by which man gets knowledge of different types, separates useful and useless facts, searches and constructs new useful facts and thus succeeds to make his material life happy and experience spiritual wholeness. In his view this intellectual development can take place by taking part in the real activities of life. Earlier, Rabindranath said he had criticized the education system for putting too much emphasis on memory and too little on imagination and thinking.
- **Integral Development-** While discussing the goals of Rabindranath Tagore's education, he supported integral development. He said that education did not to only enrich an individual personality but also

it should be focused on overall development of child which will develop the feeling of national integration and international understanding. He said that with mental development of an individual, his physical, spiritual and aesthetic development should be kept in mind.

#### **4. ANALYSIS OF DESIRED VALUES OF EDUCATION IN INDIAN CONTEXT**

Concerning his views on the "goals of education", he was in favor of education which could affect the physical and mental development of man and also considered them as goals of education. According to him, the main aim of education is all round development of a child and creating perfection in human being. He follows the path of truth, beauty and aesthetic values. The unique aim of education is holistic development of an individual. And by education, he wanted to create harmonious relationship and social and spiritual unity.

It also promoted physical development, intellectual development, personal and social development, cultural development, national and international mental, moral, professional and spiritual development.

He considered physical development as the goal of education in a broad sense. In his view, man's body should be healthy and beautiful his muscles should be senses should be capable in their functioning. So, he wanted to keep the children in the beautiful lap of nature to allow them to climb up the trees and to the dive in lands and let them to do different types of tricks with the nature as these activities will effect their physical development. In Shantiniketan, Tagore suggested to promote yoga, games, and exercises also.

Tagore also believed in universal brotherhood and international understanding to certainness throughout the globe. For this, he wanted to create love for humanity which was his main aim of education.

'Freedom' is also considered as an integral aspect of Tagore's educational philosophy. He considered education as a man making process and helpful in exploring the innate powers inherent in the man. So he used to say that student should be given utmost freedom for their all round development. He also considered moral and spiritual development as an essential aim of education. According to him, "a child should provide moral and spiritual education rather than the bookish knowledge". He did not support rote learning. He stated that integral education should be provided for integral development. All should develop social relationships and fellow feelings from the beginnings of one's life. So, according to him aims at developing the students socially which will enable than to live as worthy.

To achieve the above aim, Tagore constructed detailed curriculum. In this scheme of education, there should be balance between the nature of education and human being and between the culture of east and that of west oriental and occidental culture. His curriculum was flexible dynamic and child centred and aimed at development of personally in all its aspects. In the list of subjects, he included literature and language , historical perspective, socio-economic studies and art, and music in the list of useful activities, he included gardening, agriculture of different objects and laboratory to games play, music, dance, creative writing, also



included the teaching of languages religious philosophies and cultures of international significance in the circular for secondary and higher studies. The Vishwa-bharti, established by him, conduct this type of curriculum. Technology has also been included in it.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Rabindranath Tagore's educational system mainly focused on how help an individual to attain complete manhood. Tagore suggested that good educational system not only develop the knowledge but also influence the intellectual development, physical development, moral development, social development, and spiritual development. It further develops harmony and artistic self-expression. Tagore constructs individualism, naturalism, spiritualism, and internationalism through his educational philosophy. In general Tagore believed that the success of any education system does not depend on education equipment but depends on the personality of the teacher and the relationships to the students.

## REFERENCES

- **Aggarwal Dr. Nishi; Chaudhary ,Mona (2015)** A Study Of Educational Thoughts Of Rabindranath Tagore In Present Era, International Journal of Education and Science Research Review ISSN 2348-6457 Volume-2, Issue-2, pp- 64-67 <http://www.ijesrr.org/publication/19/IJESRR%20V-2-2-13.pdf>
- **Mondal , Prosanta Kumar (2018)**, Educational Thoughts of Rabindranath Tagore's And Its Relevance in Present Education, JETIR March 2018, Volume 6, Issue 3, ISSN-2349-5162, <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR1903F01.pdf>
- **Bhattacharjee , Sreeparna (2014)**, Relevance of Tagore's philosophy of education in postmodern era- a conceptual analysis, IOSR Journal Of Humanities And Social Science (IOSR-JHSS) Volume 19, Issue 9, Ver. IX (Sep. 2014), PP 34-40 e-ISSN: 2279-0837, p-ISSN: 2279-0845. <https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol19-issue9/Version-9/F019993440.pdf>
- **Halakeri , Barakatali (2017)**, Educational ideals and contributions of Rabindranath Tagore, International Journal of Advanced Research and Development ISSN: 2455-4030 Volume 2; Issue 6; November 2017; Page No. 779-781, <http://www.advancedjournal.com/download/890/2-6-272-496.pdf>