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RESEARCH ARTICLE

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SUSTAINING THE HEART OF EDUCATION: A STUDY ON TAGORE'S PERSPECTIVE

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ABSTRACT

Tagore state that 'man is born, both into Nature and the human society.' Education, Hence, can attain fullness and human life its wholeness. Therefore, the aim of education is to realised fully (*Human Potentialities*) through, *knowledge and action* the entire purpose of human life. Tagore want to build or formed modern education with the based on Ancient Indian or Tapovan centric education system which promote the universal love and humanism. Tagore do not believe on any fragmentation or separation, he affirmed that the human knowledge is the product of the joint endeavour and sacrifices of all mankind. It is not confined with any casts, creed, situation, locality and economic standard, its free from all monopoly of any people. Tagore realised that the true education is that which help us realised the fundamental truth. Tagore firmly believed that the human 'Mukti' is possible through the realisation of inner self and free from all kind of attachment or bondage from the individuality i.e. attachment towards darkness. Tagore's song express that the '*amar muktialoi*' here aloi means light which remove the darkness of human mind as well physical world, light is the ray (Kiron)that uncover the secrecy of human ignorance and leads to eternity. Within the Tagorian educational doctrine and activities we have seen that Tagore explore his educational experiment with artistic and aesthetic point of view. He firmly believed that education is far from information or knowledge of word it is the means of realising the one own individuality as well as the whole personality. Therefore, in Tagorian education thought and practices, educative process is considered as a heart of education. In his educational experiment namely Santiniketam Tagore wants sustaining the heart of education i.e method of teaching and teacher -students relationship. Here educative process refers to the method of knowledge transformation or dissemination from one pupil to another. In the Tagorian educational experiment teacher and the taught are co-learner they learn to know and judge the things with very closely. Through this thematic paper researchers want to know the aims of education, curriculum, discipline, examination, or evaluative process in association with pedagogic perspective applying in Tagorian University. Keeping the mind of above objective researchers collected primary and secondary data from various authoritative sources such as library, documentary films, newspapers and other means. Through the analysis and interpretation of various data researchers reveals of the heart of education and how to sustained this heart with modern educational process.

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INTRODUCTION

Tagore's educational philosophy focused over the realisation of the truth, beauty and goodness, according to him the function of education does not supply to the information or knowledge of fact but to help us to realise the supremacy of the creator. If we are able to nourished the human value, human potentiality than we can sustain our educational process, in this regard Tagore give us a very clear message that 'Education is highest which not only imparts information and knowledge to us, but also promotes love and fellow-feeling between us and the living beings of the world.' In his short story 'Balai' (1928) he express the love and sensitivity towards

nature, 'One morning I was reading the newspaper, saying that I was busy and took me to the garden. When he showed me a sapling in one place and asked me, 'Uncle, what is this tree?'

'I saw a sampling of a Shimul tree growing in the middle of the road in the garden'. Alas, it was a mistake to call me. So much so that when it sprouted, like a child's first delusion, it caught Balai's eye. Since then, he gave a little water to his hand every day, and was constantly amazed at how much it grew. Shimul Gach also grows fast, but cannot keep up with Balai's interest. When the hands are raised a couple of times, when you see its foliage, you think that it is a wonderful tree, just as a mother think of a wonderful child when she

sees the first glimpse of a child's intelligence. Just thinking about it, would make me wonder too.'

With the Tagorian educational practices and thought it was reflected that the Tagore explore the nature within his creative endeavour, actually he explored the natural relationship with the building of some selected character 'Balai' is such an example. Where he explored and express the love toward nature and tree, how a child was care about the nature it was reveals through this writing. Another tremendous incident reflected within this text.

A portion of the story "Balai" from Rabindranath Tagore's 'Galpoguchcho'.

'I said, 'Tell the gardener, it will be uprooted.' He was surprised to say. What a great thing! Said, 'No, uncle, fall on your two feet, don't pull it off. 'I said, 'What you say is wrong. Right in the middle of the road. If it is big, it will spread the cotton in all directions and make it unstable. 'When he could not with me, this motherless child went to his aunt. Sitting on her lap, hugging her neck and crying, said, 'Aunt, you forbid uncle, not to cut the tree. 'Dalem, 'If you really like the Shimulgaccha, then I will bring another sapling and bury it by the fence, it should look nice. 'But when the spoke of cutting, he was shocked, and his aunt said, 'Oh, how bad it must look!'. Through this small story Tagore express the strong relationship between man and nature and how a child deeply sensitive towards nature.

Tagore find the principle of joy and happiness through his creative work as well as the he believed that the true freedom lies within the creative work, so we teach our students through creative and innovative power through creative work. So, they can be able to incorporate the value and joy in their life. In Tagore's word 'if there is no joy in the heart, life, lacks sufficient power to protect itself it gives way at the slightest opposition'. In this regard our Gurukula education system focused over the all-round development (360 Degree) among the children. Our gurukul system leads towards unique aims of education, teaching method, curriculum, Teacher-students relationship (Guru-Sisha Parampara) and discipline.

*'Apon hotebahir hoya bairadara'
Viswa loke sabarmajepabishara' (Gitanjali-1916)*

Gurudev want to build and developed a world outlook, opined that a man can not confined with narrow domestic world. In Tagorian educational practices it was noticed that the, he nourished the child 3 aspect equally i.e HEAD (Cognitive aspects or knowledge domain), HEART (Affective or feeling domain, that leads to humanity and uphold the human aspects, its associated with the heart) and HEAD is associated with action or deed or performances.

It is observed that in Rabindranath Tagore revive and rebuild our education system through the based on Ancient Indian education process. Balai's crude handwritten letter was shown to me .I said, 'That tree has been cut down.' Balai's aunt did not take food for two days, and did not speak to me for a long time. Balai's father took him from his arms, as if he had torn his pulse; And when his uncle removed the tree of his love for Balai forever, it was as if his whole family was broken, and he was wounded in his chest. That tree which was the counterpart of his speech, is his soul mate. Once again, this incident shows that the Balai's love & sensitivity towards nature.

Need and significance of the study: Selection of a research problem is always an insightful and creative endeavour. It means whenever a researcher selects any research problem at that time researcher must be well acquainted about its essence and value as well as the important of the problem in the contemporary era. Whether this problem is important for social and individual. Therefore, through this study researcher has sought to explore the environmental awareness in Tagore's writings and his educational experiment (practices). At present juncture environmental education is emerging discipline. Therefore, its urgent need to incorporate this environmental value and practices in the formal teaching-learning process. We must think our

schooling for sustaining our mother earth, unless we will be lagging behind day by day. Hence the researcher explores Tagore's writings and his educational practices in the context of environmental point of view.

1. Gurudeva Tagore stressed on three elements of our mother earth i.e., *man, nature and cosmic reality*. R.N. Tagore expressed his firm opinion regarding relationship of man and nature through his famous writing 'The Universal Man'. Tagore was very much concerned about environmental issues and its challenges.
2. He deeply sensitization towards sustaining our mother earth. environmental protection. His mission towards environment is very much relevant, fruitful, and practical.
3. Tagore perception toward environment was very practical and thoughtful, he established an open airing school for direct contact with the nature and the natural environment.
4. Tagore always wanted to maintain some harmonious relationship between man and nature. In Tapoban he wrote, the amazing fact is that in India there is seen a mutual coexistence between river, ponds, plants and human being (*Rabindra Rachanabali, vol-7page690*). Tagore strongly denied the disruption of this harmonious relationship in between man and nature by the name of progress (*Sarkar2012*).
5. Tagore's immense love for nature is found in his songs, poems, plays, in short in almost every branch of literature he has travelled. Tagore talking about the universal humanism, he not believed that the fragmentation, narrow domestic well '*Basudhara rakhe nai khudra khanda kori (Naibedya, 1901)*'. Tagore wrote song under the label '*Prakriti-Parjaay*' where '*Prakriti*' stands for nature and '*Parjaay*' stands for Position, in which he uttered the need for maintaining adequate balance between human activities and environment and urged for protecting the mother's earth.
6. Tagore was in strict opposition for the self -defeating nature of development activities, which cares little about nature, and the balance between man and the surrounding environment. Tagore's view on environment and development make it amply clear that much before the western development thinkers campaigned to maintain ecological balance, Tagore appeared on the scene to convey in many of his writings that development activities are necessary but not at the irreparable cost of environment. He was always in favour of a balance between progress and preservation. In this study researcher juxtapose two major components i.e., educational Thought and educational Practices of Rabindranath Tagore for environmental awareness.

Research Questions of the study: Researchers frame the research questions on the basis of the research title. Firstly, researcher want to know components of environmental Awareness reflected on Rabindranath Tagore's educational Thoughts and Practices and secondly researcher want to know how environmental awareness build through Tagorian educational Thoughts and Practices, it means what is the method of environmental Awareness. Basically, Researchers frame the questions on what and how environmental awareness inherent of Rabindranath Tagore's Educational Thoughts and Practices.

4. Objectives of the study:

- a. To know the various components of Environmental Education reflected the R.N.Tagore educational thought and practices.
- b. To know the Methods of Environmental Awareness reflected within the R.N.Tagore Educational Thought and Practices.

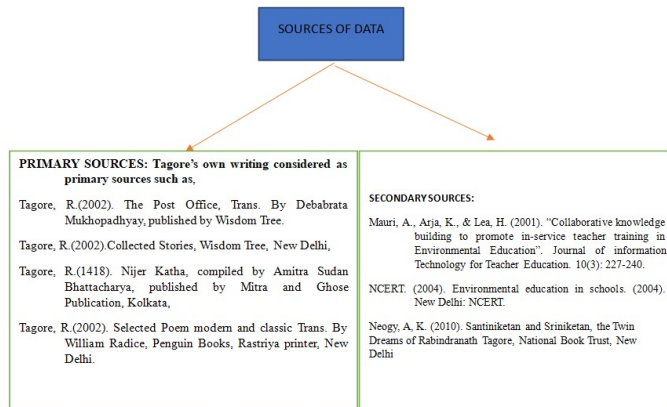
5. Delimitation of the study: This study is delimited in the following's ways:

- a. This study is only confined only in the Tagorian educational perspectives only associated with environmental and nature dimensions.

- b. This study focuses over the Methods of Environmental Awareness reflected within the R.N.Tagore Educational Thought and Practices.

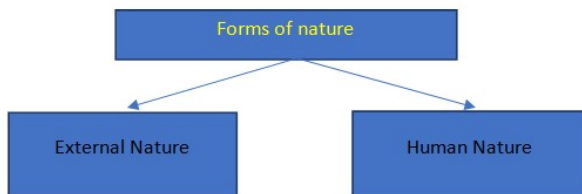
METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

a. **Nature of the study:** By nature, this study based on Quasi-Historical research design. Researchers collected data from both sample Human and Non-Human sample. Rabindrik, Ashramik, Teachers and Library personally considered as Human Sample and all the primary and secondary documents are Non-Human Sample.



Objectives wise data analysis of the study

a. **To know the various components of Environment Education reflected the R.N.Tagore educational thought and practices:** R.N. Tagore acknowledged the kingship of man, with nature the unbroken relation of man and nature. According to him the unity of man of nature of felt the Ancient Indian Education system from the beginning. He felt in the depth of human mind is flourish with interaction of natural energy which is the endless form of the world. It helps us to Manifest itself in our inner being as consciousness and is no break in unity (Tagore 1972). According to him there is no such think which is absolute isolated in existence or fragmented each other. Tagore criticizes the western perception towards nature. Attacking their reason-based attitude to measure the value of objects he says, "According to it, everything that is low in the scale beings is merely nature, and whatever is the stamp of perfection on it intellectual or moral is human nature (Tagore, 1972, P/7).



According to Tagore, Human potentiality can be developed through the proper interaction with the nature and natural circumstances. Nature is our mother, its nurture us, lead us, determined us with her gentle touch. In the other hand Tagore's realization that the Indian mind never has any hesitation and fragmentation in acknowledging its kinship with nature, its unbroken relation with all. Indian mind celebrates the diversity of learning and knowing. Tagore realized that because of wrong perspective of man nature appears separate or alien or antagonistic to us. Tagore brings the analogy of the goals and road, sometimes he uses the metaphor 'the rivers and its banks'. All these analogies show that in his opinion the boundaries or the bondages that we see in nature are ways of our onward direction. In his nation of men, the concept of 'unity' and harmony has always been emphasized, being an Upanishadic poet, he can easily make the philosophical foundation of unity of man and nature. In contrast with western cultural tradition the Indian cultural projects a holistic all life embracing view. An all-inclusive thought is in the center of all the

Upanishads. Rabindranath, in the trust sense of the term, Was an Upanishadic poet who harmonized the diversities and interconnectedness among human beings and other life forms. In his short story titled 'Balai (1928)', Rabindranath Tagore has shown the unity of man and nature very beautiful. Balai, the central; character of the story, expands his consciousness to the whole nature by uniting himself with the black clouds of the sky, with the raindrops, with the sunshine. He feels the harmony of the nature at the time of his playing with grass and sorrow when grasses are cut by the gardener. R. N. Tagore explore the aesthetic value to nature. The nature in this view of R.N.Tagore should be preserve because, it beauty causes of aesthetic appreciation. Tagore passive nature an instrumental perspective. His close observation toward natures shows him to natural beauty an important. Actually R.N.Tagore wants to revive our 'Tapovan' centric education with for closely involvement to the nature. Tagore whole that in our aesthetic experience nature, the relation of love and hard work. When we love anyone, we cannot think of smile with beloved light of any useless. Thus, Tagore love and nature is beyond the pragmatic outlook. The harmony can be felt through affection, love and care but not by power or force. This message of Tagore focus over the voice of Eco-feminist, Tagore unfold the causes of ignorance, symbolic and symbiotic interconnection of the nature on the sustainable world. Tagore always oppose to materialistic development he focusses over the re-construction wise on our own socio-cultural heritage.



Biksho Rapon Utsab

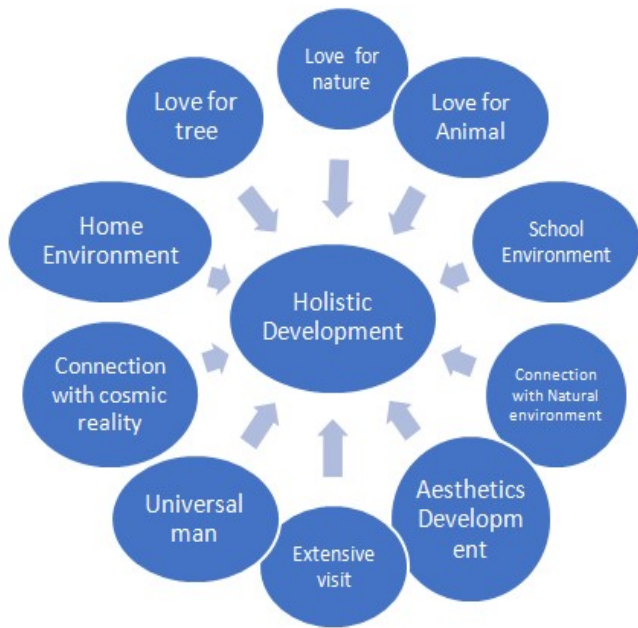
Tagore's publication towards Education:

1. 'Shikshar Herpher' (Our Education and Its Incongruities). Its published in the year of (1968).
2. 'Shiksha Samasya' (The Problem Of Education); Its published in the year of (1893).
3. 'Abaran' (Culture or Covering); Its published in the year of (1885).
4. 'Tapavon' (Forest Colony); Its published in the year of (1909).
6. 'Hindu Visvavidyalaya' (Hindu University); Its published in the year of (1936).
7. 'Strishiksha' (Women Education); Its published in the year of (1921).
9. 'My School'; Its published in the year of (1933).
11. 'A Poet's School'; Its published in the year of (1928).
13. 'Ashramer Shiksha' (Education in Ashram); Its published in the year of (1908).
14. 'Bodher Sadhana' (Education of the Feeling); Its published in the year of (1915).

Factors influencing Tagore's philosophy of education: Tagore's philosophy of education was influenced by the above factors: Influence of the Home Environment, Influence of the School Environment, Love for Nature, Extensive Visits.

Influence of the Home Environment on Rabindranath Tagore: As we know Tagore was born in a renowned family which the time-honored ways of Indian life and tradition of the land. Tagore's father taught him ancient Indian literature for imbibing the values and morality of past of Indian cultural ethos. He set before the family the

Indian ideals by the example of his own life, by his talks and writings he reveals that the harmonious development is the key factors for cosmic realization and revitalization. After leaving the school, Rabindranath Tagore spent a good deal of his time in the company of his father.



This constant companionship of his father exerted a great influence on his life and visits to different countries of the world and his contacts with people of different nations, developed in him faith in the brotherhood of man and spiritual unity of humanity that promote the universal humanism. This universal Humanism have great practical aspects in this contemporary era. Through the practicing of universal brotherhood, we can promote social sustainability.

Components environmental awareness reflected in the Tagore educational practices:

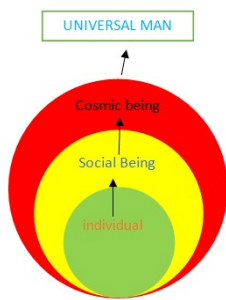
Educational Practices	Environmental Awareness
Natural atmosphere /Education through natural engagement	Students become more sensitive towards environment and they can develop the unique perception towards nature.
Freedom of primeval nature	Freedom and Joy are the integral parts of R.N.Tagore experimental school.
Tagore believe on freedom of mind, freedom of heart and freedom of will	This kind of freedom accelerates growth of its fullness also prepares oneself to search within a continual 'Tapasya'(true spirit of development)
Rabindranath Tagore wanted to create joyful school environment.	Through these environmentally friendly approaches students can learn and know to the environment by active participating of teaching - learning process.
Tagore also said that the school environment / atmosphere is a great deal of importance to him -no less that teachers, teaching material or teaching aids.	Thus, researcher explored that atmosphere is very crucial and important for unfoldment of the child inner nature or inner potentialities.
The open-airing class students can know the nature very deeply and they can able to understand the nature with personal schemata. It means they can form the schema with direct experiences.	This approach of learning forms the attitude, value, feeling and skills towards environmental awareness.



Researcher at Brahma Upasana Griha /Kanch Mandir

To know the Methods of Environmental Awareness reflected within the R.N.Tagore Educational Thought and Practices.

During the field visit of the researcher it was observed that the R.N.Tagore focused over the all-round development of the human being he not only emphasis over the cognitive aspect of the human mind, simultaneously his teaching method based on '3D' i.e. Cognitive, Affective and Conative. For his teaching method cognitive development happened with reading ,writing and calculating and Affective development is happened with the dance,drama,songs,social gathering (such as 'Poush Mala', 'Magmela', 'Basantausab', 'Anada Mela' and so on),Tagore firmly faith over that the true education does not confined into word or letter but true education is realization of boundless joy ,happiness and feeling of ownness of cosmic universe, there is no fragmentation or separation of all living creature. 'Brahma' can be realised through Ananda and guru, who can help to realizeto ब्रह्मानन्द= BrahmAnandam = Brahma + Anandam = bliss of Brahman. When a person realized the true self at that time, he can able to know the 'Brahma' or absolute or universe. In Tagotian educational philosophy it is reflected that the one who is above or devoid of Gunas makes him balanced yogi. The word yoga means balance. Balanced and beyond attributes makes Guru non-judgemental. Sadguru is no other than GOD himself. "GU" means darkness/ignorance "RU" means the one removes. So, Guru means the dispeller of darkness or ignorance.



ACCORDING TO TAGORE UNIVERSAL HUMAN BEING HAVE UNLIMITED LOVE AND COMPASSION AND FREE FROM ALL KIND AROGENT AND NERROW OUTLOOK.

Methods of Environmental awareness: Tagore emphasized that together with various subjects, different types of co-curricular activities should also be made an essential part of curriculum. In his Vishva Bharati, even today, History, Geography, Nature Study, Agriculture and practical subjects are taught with Horticulture, Gardening, Field Study, Laboratory Work, Original Creations, Arts, Sculpture, Vocational, Professional and Technical subjects. As to co-curricular activities, there is a bewildering variety of these as Dancing, Singing, Painting, Designing, Sewing, Cutting, Knitting, Cooking and what not. Vishva Bharati is known the world over for its wide and varied studies, hobbies and cultural refinements synthesizing the ancient and modern achievements of Indian people in all fields of human activity:

Methods of Teaching: Like his condemnation of the lifeless and dull curriculum of his days, Tagore also condemned the artificial and mechanical methods of education prevalent during his times. He emphasized that methods should be full of life and vitality. They should be based on the real problems of life. To Tagore, methods should bring out the development of the child according to natural interests and tendencies. Hence, the child should be provided with more and more opportunities to investigate and research from original resources by his free activities so that he gains knowledge directly. Tagore considered the following methods of teaching as proper and effective:

1. **Teaching while Walking:** Tagore believed that education imparted in the class room does not influence the mind and body of the child. He remains passive, inert and inactive. Tagore believed during walking, the mind keeps awake and the child easily grasps knowledge of things by coming directly in contact with them. In his own words- "Teaching while walking is the best method of education".
2. **Discussion and Question-Answer Method:** To Tagore, real education is not mere cramming of books. It must be based, upon real problems of life. Thus, he advocated the Question-Answer method as very effective. According to him, problems should be put before children for discussion so that they are able to think logically and argue out. Thus, they will be able to develop their knowledge and gain essential knowledge.
3. **Activity Method:** Tagore emphasized the activity method as a method of great importance because its activities all the faculties of body and mind. Hence, he made the learning of some handicraft compulsory in his 'Vishva Bharti'. Tagore so implicitly believed in activity method that he allowed any physical exercise or activity even during class teaching or regular study at some place.

Teacher: Tagore believed that only man can teach another man. Thus, he gave a very important place to teacher in his scheme of education. According to him, a teacher should do the following activities:

1. Believing in the purity and innocence of child, the teacher should behave with him with great love, affection, sympathy and consideration.
2. Instead of emphasizing book learning, the teacher should provide conducive environment to the child so that he engages himself in

useful and constructive activities and learn by his own experiences.

3. The teacher should always be busy with motivating the creative capacities of children so that they remain busy with constructive activities and experiences. Like a staunch idealist, Tagore says, "A teacher can never truly teach unless he is still learning himself. A lamp can never light another lamp unless it continues to burn its own flame. The teacher who has come to an end of his subject, who has no living traffic with his knowledge, but merely repeats his lessons to his students, can only load their minds; he cannot quicken them. Truth not only must inform but also in crime.



Satiniketan Ashram

CONCLUSION

Through the fulfillment of above objectives researchers reached at a point that Tagorian educational experiment has great influence over the Environmental context. His vision towards man and nature is unique and sensitive towards nature, Gurudev feeling towards nature he expresses his famous writing *Balai (1928)* and based on above findings researchers revealed that the R.N. Tagore educational thoughts, experiment (practices) are keenly relation with man, nature and total atmosphere. Through his writings, it is also observed that man and nature (environment) relation is very closed and coordinate. Human nature and cosmic nature have deep connection. Tagore express that the environment is the heart of human development, throughout environmental interaction our children learn and construct the ideas with known to unknown. Therefore, researcher reach at conclusion that Tagorian educational thoughts and practices have implications for environmental awareness and his educational experiment is incomparable with any other educationist in environmental perspective. Tagore took arm against the attack of

human beings of modern society in environment in the forms of modern, machinery life. He was not attacking the science but destructive human tendency toward environment and technology. Tagore strongly opposed and criticize the capitalist exploitation of the natural resources by the human beings by the name of the religion's faith and maturity. Tagore philosophy towards environment is very crucial and significance for the overcoming the challenges of humanity. Tagore's writings and practices towards environment give us a new dimension for environment regulation. Through the analysis of Tagore 's writings it was observed that his perception towards environment is based on aesthetic sense, humanistic ground, he treats our earth mother as our own mother, a mother nourishes her children, earth also nourish us in the same ways. He not only wanted the peace of mind of an individual. But perceive peace as broadest vision, a means of realization. Gurudev wanted to shapes the human mind with full of love, affection, brotherhood, moral virtue and characteristics. These are path braking means of environmental awareness and sustainability and sustaining the heart of education.

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