

Primary Education Through Music

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Abstract—The topic deals with the evolution of education over evolution of time. It also dwells into how the teaching also evolved in due course which leads to various changes among people society and surroundings. Even the subjects too got evolved which led to the interruption of art forms which had been used as an entertainment and relaxation purpose has to emerge in a mass form to help the people to get out of tension of the education evolution and make them fall in love with learning.

There are many art forms, in this topic, Music is used as a main art form to explain the concepts of education.

I. INTRODUCTION

Education is defined as the acquisition of holistic knowledge through skills, values and habits. Incorporating music into education becomes a universal language to make academic subjects more memorable and acts as a central pedagogical tool in personal development.

This approach serves as a vital bridge between global citizenship and emotional connectivity. This helps to build a profound sense of empathy and social cohesion. Music, as a whole, delves deeply into the development of skills, acquisition of knowledge, and learners' willingness to receive, internalize, and share what they have learned. So, dwelling on primary education through music helps beginners learn more creatively.

II. GURUKUL SYSTEM

The Gurukul system is an ancient model of education where students (shishyas) lived with their teacher (guru) in a natural secluded environment focusing on holistic development that introduces the students the academic, practical, moral values and spiritual growth.

The Gurukul system known as Guru Shishya Parampara played a crucial part in shaping the cultural

aspects of the society. It focuses on Mind, Spirit and Body.

The Gurukul system reflects the relationship between Guru and Shishya based on mutual respect and dedication. Guru guides the students in all aspects of their life like from daily day to day activities.

The daily activities include academic (Veda hymns, Philosophy, Astronomy) Practical (Warfare, Medicine and daily chores)

The key principles include Personal Mentorship, Experiential Learning and Discipline with value of respect, self - reliance and community service.

The methods of Gurukul system emphasizes the oral recitation, memorization, debate and experiential learning. The oral recitation is SRAVANA where teachers recite the lessons such as Vedas, manuscripts orally and students have to listen attentively. This form of learning helps students in acquiring listening skills and hearing skills. The memorization is MANANA where students deeply discuss, question and ponder the teachings and their thoughts for their better understanding purposes. This helps the students to reflect and contemplate the thoughts and desires in a quiet way. The practical learning is NIDHYASANA where acquired knowledge is applied in practice often through meditation or real-life activities. This helps the students to keep their internal thoughts, mind and flow in control and make use it in a positive aspect. The Experiential learning involves the hands-on activities, daily tasks like cooking, farming etc to build practical skills and independent living.

The Gurukul System is an earliest form of education which dates to 1200 - 1000 BCE (Vedic age) in which Guru means Teacher or Master Kula means Family. Here students are brought from different backgrounds are joined. They all remain as students until the age of 25. Gurukul are made to run by public donations. They are supported by rulers and are evolved into universities as TAKSHASHILA and NALANDHA.

By this evolution it is to be noted that during this particular period of time Gurukul system was a prominent form of education and is supported by every individual.

During the course of time, though gurukul system has not lost its significance it started to decline its prominence due to various factors such as societal changes, change of powers and the introduction of formal schooling system. Because of this traditionality of Gurukul system gradually decreased.

III. PIAL SCHOOLING SYSTEM

Before the advent of formal schooling system there is another form of system known as PIAL SCHOOLING SYSTEM popularly known as THINNAI PALLIKOODAM emerged and became prominent for some period of time.

Pial schooling refers to traditional, informal mode of indigenous school that was common in villages. The PIAL is nothing but a raised stone platform or veranda of a house or temple.

The learning method mainly focussed on Instruction typically through 3 R's (Reading, writing and Arithmetic) rooted towards local literature and religious texts.

The 3 Rs were considered as foundational skills were taught in a highly practical and simplified manner to the village children.

READING: Students focus on local literature and religious texts which begins with reciting alphabets and simple words.

WRITING: Students are first made to learn how to write using their fingers where they are made to write in fine sand sprinkled on the floor with the help of forefingers. Once they are progressed, they are made to write in dried palm leaves.

ARITHMETIC: Students are made to experience the problem-solving techniques with the help of their daily life activities.

The 3R's learning method slowly evolved into Monitorial system is a method of education where advanced students called as Monitors were made to teach the younger students or beginners under the supervision of the Teacher. This system was highly

influential during the early 19th century and were observed in Madras now Chennai.

This Monitorial method of learning was brought into England in order to provide a mass education to poor by ANDREW BELL who was Scottish chaplain in Madras. In England it was called as Madras System.

This Method of learning has been modified and introduced among the non – dominant educational masses independently by Joseph Lancaster a Quaker educator by profession. Hence this is also known as Lancastrian method. It was introduced in London.

Mahatma Gandhi called this as a beautiful tree of Indigenous Education. The decline of this system started due to the shift in the perceived value of education, change of informal mode of learning to a structured format of graded system with fixed curriculum. Because the pial schooling are made to pause at harvest seasons.

By the time of Independence this Indigenous mode of education was deeply uprooted and replaced by centralized system that persist today.

People too started seeing changes in traditional mode of learning and modern mode as there are no stable mode of employment opportunities nor social status. Therefore, they also started to accept the change.

IV. THE FORMAL SCHOOLING SYSTEM OR COLONIAL SYSTEM

After the Advent of Madras system in England by Andrew Bell, slowly the British started to establish missionaries and also, they modernized some pial schools. The complete modernization started due to the changes in educational policies.

The colonial system came into emergence by Lord Macaulay that officially shifted the focus of the government to fund towards the western style of education. Its aim was to create a bridge between educated English elite peoples and Indian masses. This theory was called as downward filtration theory.

Later it got evolved in a modern way where Magna Carta of English Education in India named document created by Sir Charles Wood in 1854 provided a systematic plan for modern education in India which successfully replaced the Indigenous system of education. This is the modern system that we follow today.

The modern education system introduced Graded schools, centralized control over all schools were monitored by the Department of Public Instructions and later Modern universities were started to develop the education in Madras, Bombay and Calcutta.

This education system evolved into 10+2 system at graded schools which is followed today as a standard format of education. This kind of evolution is said to be moved away from personalized oral based learning to a centralized examination model.

The learning methods include Rote memorization and Learning Standardized examination and strict language instructions were established.

The Rote Memorization emphasis heavily on memorizing textbooks in order to get through Examinations which completely forgot to evoke the creative thinking among students.

The Standardized examination introduced rigorous exams to monitor the quality and it helps to determine the eligibility of the students.

Before in the other two system of education only Local or Mother languages has been used. But here a dual system of education was introduced. One is Vernacular language also called as Local mother tongue used in primary schools which gets transformed and fixed as English medium for higher classes.

This system trained teachers which normally drifted from traditional or monitorial taught or gurukul methods.

The curriculum was redesigned based on the western knowledge and strictly secular useful subjects over traditional Indian literature religious and texts.

LEARNING METHOD AT GURUKUL SYSTEM

Though there are more learning methods in gurukul system, the primary one is oral recitation that happens by chanting known as SRAVANA and repetition by the students known as SMRITI. This helps the students to acquire vast knowledge by deep understanding the dialogue recited by the guru instead of rote learning.

By this method the students recite Vedas and Upanishads without the help of books they memory them thoroughly which will be in their mind forever.

The oral recitation of Vedas and Upanishads even help the students to seek attentiveness on how the guru are reciting the chants in what tempo, rhythm, sound pattern and vibrations.

The students are also made to recite the chants in group for their collective accuracy and also to rectify their mistakes from other fellow students.

The end part in this type of learning completely resides on the student as he is the one who has to be satisfied by his learning. Then alone the learning gets completed here.

The memory power, concentration and discipline of the students gets improved by chanting Vedic hymns through oral recitation. The guru can be able to observe each student individually and can see their pronunciation and all other things and correct them one by one.

After all these teaching and learning, the students are assessed by having debates and discussions of Vedic hymns, all the other important details they learnt rather than written examination.

Once the student got through all of this, he is decided by the teacher to carry on with his responsibilities by himself. So, the student gives Guru Dakshina to the teacher as a part of thanking him for his teaching and making him to learn about the world around them.

The oral recitation is sometimes called as Guru- Mukhi which is said to be as the student gets to learn from the words that directly comes from the teacher's Mouth.

There is also something called Guru-Mukhi Vidhya which means some learnings can be learnt only through teacher directly and also by oral transmission. Such methods can be used in Music, Vedas and spiritual Arts forms.

The other method is by Chanting which refers to the rhythmic, repetitive vocalization of specific sounds, phrases or mantras to induce spiritual energy. Whereas the oral recitation involves the systematic methods designed to keep the Vedic hymns unchangeable. In Gurukul both forms are taught like Oral recitation is done for memorizing a passage and Chanting is done on a specific phrase from that passage/

Oral recitation involves three stages namely Samhitha (reading the whole passage from to the end) Patha (reading word by word) Gana (repeated reading of the words of the same passage). All these are done to ensure error correction purpose.

The Bhagavadh Gita a religious text which one in Gurukul system is considered as a handbook of everyday living is taught to the children in precisely Oral recitation and Chanting format.

All these methods are done for over a period of years at a very high rate. After the decline of gurukul system, the learning methods have passed on to PIAL schooling system. If not at a prominent rate it showed a mere existence.

LEARNING METHOD AT PIAL SCHOOLING SYSTEM

We know that PIAL schooling followed 3R's technique Reading, Writing and Arithmetic.

These are attained by Oral recitation where instead of Guru here elder students recite the chapters and younger ones are made to hear and learn from them.

The Writing part was learnt by placing the fingers on the plain sand or palm leaves.

The Arithmetic part was learnt by reciting the maths Tables known as ENCHUVADI by elders and are made to write and learn by the students.

In PIAL schooling Virutham refer to as a poetic verse used in devotional and classical literature which goes by without any structured tala format. It is a fundamental concept introduced by the teacher to make sure the students have grasped the concepts clearly.

After learning everything in basics such as alphabets and number the students are made to an introduction of Tamil poetry. The Tamil poetry that are learnt by virutham are Aathichudi, Naladiyar and many more.

In PIAL schooling in order to express the cultural tradition and integration along with Oral Recitation, Chanting Virutham played a major role in it.

After the decline of ancient modes of education like Gurukul system; PIAL schooling, the modern formal schooling system emerged. Though new education system emerged the methods used in the ancient modes of education has not been drained, it has been used in a more effective way.

LEARNING METHOD AT FORMAL SCOOING SYSTEM

By the initiative of Andrew Bell PIAL schooling were introduced among the British which led to the evolution of education system from right then to till now.

The formal Schooling system is made by structured, standardized classroom-based mode, instead of verandah or separate houses. They also appointed teachers to take care of the children by giving training to them.

They all followed many strategies of learning methods such as Active learning strategies, Technological and structural strategies.

In here, the teacher plays a major role where they directly transit the lessons through scripted lesson plans.

The other type is that Learner improves their learning with the help of discussions, projects and also, they investigate on their own and learn. In this whole process teacher plays a side role of just guiding them. Since this schooling system follows a structure and standardized exam format whether the students understand or not, they have to rote memorize it and write the exam and get marks which considers to be eligible.

During ancient times, Studies were taught with the help of various art forms whereas here the studies and art forms are separated and even art forms got a standardized exam structure like up to class VII alone there will be extracurricular activities and after that there is no other activities other than studies. That too the extracurricular activities too had an exam format like Kalpitha Sangeetham and various other topics.

The students who are of the current generation are made to experience art forms as an extra-curricular activity rather than being included in their classroom studies. The art forms are exposed as an entertainment purpose to the current generation.

Because of this format the students get affected in studies like the academic pressure due to high expectations and intense competition among students their mental health gets affected.

Traditional format of learning is made to off which had made the students to stop thinking creatively and are made to forcibly think of the structured exam format. This format makes the students to think of their abilities and capabilities.

Therefore, as of from 19th to 20th century that is basically when the pial schooling format gets converted to formal schooling the art forms such Music, Dance and Drama were not included or integrated into the studies among the students that affected the students in a dire possible way.

So, in the present year the government is planning to reduce or completely eliminate the pressure and other reasons that affect the students in every way possible by Integrating the art forms into studies as the earlier forms and reduce the structure format of the exams.

V. CONCLUSION

It's good that Education got evolved in various different ways from centuries. But with the advent of the evolution, we should not forget the roots that had brought us to this level.

Music and other art forms are made to identify our skills that has been embedded in us, find them, improve them and implement them and experience their results in a good way.

Instead, due to invention of small things around we are all very curious to try them at the earliest and simplest way. Rather we are not implementing it into the ancient forms and experience it.

Therefore, integrating all the art forms into the studies will make the students to relish various success in their lives.

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