Indian classical music and value pattern : a study on the school children of Guwahati, India.

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Abstract

India has presently witnessed a tremendous growth and development in science and technology ever than before. As a result, a paradigm of shifting and drifting of education towards westernization and technological know how how leaving aside our rich traditional heritage, values and ethics have been realized almost at all levels. The growing concern over this erosion of essential values and pervasive cynicism has brought to focus the need of readjustment in educational curriculum in order to make education a forceful tool for the inculcation of values and great virtues of Indian life. Indian Classical Music, originated in early Vedic age has been an ideal fabrication of our religion, culture and heritage and greatly contributed to the mankind through centuries. This devotional music had reached Assam as Hindustani music, one sub-genre of Indian classical music during the period of Koch and Ahom kings and flourished at the hands of their successors. It has arrived at a turning point in Assam with the effort made by Lakhiram Baruah in the last part of 19th century AD. The king of Gouripur, Prabhat Baruah and a number of artists of classical music who had training in Lucknow remarkably contributed to the development of music in the state. At present, there are a large number of private institutions and cultural organisations imparting education and training on classical music in the state. Besides, the State College of Music at Guwahati (1980) and Kokrajhar Music and Fine Arts College (1995) have helped the young learners to join higher education in music. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the influence of Indian classical music in the inculcation of moral and aesthetic values among school children of Guwahati, India.

Keywords: Indian classical music, hindustani music, value, value education, school.

1. Introduction

Value education has become as one of the potent components of 21st century education in India. The lack of morality and incapable of differentiate good from bad, truth from untruth, beauty from ugliness have reached such a level that many of our educated and responsible individuals do not refrain from indulging in any level of malpractice, corruption and crime. The overall erosion of values in the society at large has left a negative impact upon the mindset of the student community as well. ‘The youngsters have fallen in the clasp of eroding values such as dishonesty, insecurity, lack of punctuality, disrespect for elders and disregard for work culture and entrepreneurial activities etc. This has been resulting in gun culture, greed for earning money and wealth by easy and foul means, lack of patience resulting in student unrest, absence of value of true leadership, loss of compassion and so on since the fast changing scenario taking place in the society in view of science and technological advancement in last two decades’ (Charles and Selvi, 2012). The evil impact of popular mass media is also one of the causal factors of overall erosion of human values in today’s society. This unwanted situation has raised a serious question regarding the effectiveness of modern education in the way to build a future human civilization with all its glory and grandness of human values and virtues. Hence, the need of an appropriate value based education is being realized at all levels of education.

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1.1 Value based education

Value based education stands for the development of a whole man in whom all traits of goodness are integrated. He will be efficient in his profession, affectionate in his relation, considerate in his dealing with others, humanistic, merciful and law abiding. Value based education concentrates on the various means and methods of inculcating desirable values of higher order so that the students rise above their narrow selfishness, partial ideas and attributes. They develop humanitarian spirit and become truly man of virtues and high moral. In short “Value education refers to a deliberately planned education aimed at the development of proper attitudes, values, emotions and skills for holistic development of students” (Charles and Selvi, 2012).

1.2 What is value?

Value stands for ‘quality’ or ‘standard of an individual which is useful and desired or accepted by the society. John Dewey stated as ‘ The value means primarily to prize, to esteem, to appraise, to estimate, it means the act of cherishing something, holding it and also the act of passing judgement upon the nature and amount of values as compared with something else’ (Aggarwal, 2003). According to Goldsmith, ‘values are principles that guide human behavior in certain ways. Thus the values are the deep seated psychological construct that direct our preferences to achieve what is good in life’. So, values can be considered as the good qualities of the human being needed to have a happiest life and for harmonious coexistence in a society. ‘Values are nurtured even by the habits in our everyday life’ (Charls and Selvi, 2012).

1.3. Music and value

Music and values are two essences of human life that have been enchanting man’s living since time immemorial. Among many other important means to inculcate values among new generation, music is the most vital one. It is a universal language and unique creation of mankind. ‘Music is the combination of sounds produced by human voice or musical instruments with a view to beautify the form and expression of feelings and emotions (Nigam,1992). It is infinitely more than a recreation and plays a decisive part in the development of the theoretical, spiritual, aesthetic and social faculties of the individual which inculcates values as well. Devotional music cultivates love for God and promotes harmony of body, mind and spirit.

Pt. Sharagadeva in 13th century A.D. defined music in his ‘Sangeet Ratnakara (the ocean of music) as Geetam, Vadyam, Tatha Nrityam, Trayam Sangeet Muchyate’ (Mathur, 2003). It means music connotes or includes within its three folds-vocal, instruments and dance. In brief, Music or Sangeet may be defined as the art of singing, dancing and playing an instrument. It is more or less a delicious fluid to the dying and ambrosia to the lover of it. This is how music is the sublime art in the universe (Nigam,1992). Music internalizes the universal message of the values and promotes feeling of joy, harmony and confidence both within the group and within the child.

1.4 Indian classical music

Indian classical music has been enriched with spiritual, moral, social and aesthetic values at the hands of Priestly class in ancient Vedic period and the Regal patronages in medieval period. It was more an idealistic than a pragmatic activity in Vedic period because of its deep rooted relation to religion and Indian spiritualism. The original source of Indian classical music was the ‘Sama’ music which was considered as ‘sweet melody’ or tone relied on hymns taken from Rigveda. In the course of time, this sacred music recited to perform sacrifice in order to propitiate to God and accepted as ‘Margi’ sangeet (Ranade, 1991).

During Muslim rule, some Arabian tones and style of singing had entered into the realm of classical music in Northern India. Music of Southern India rested on some classical orthodox rules and remained uninfluenced by those external forces and hence, some differences between both the systems came into existence. Today, both the music systems exist as the two sub genres of Indian classical music. The chief difference between the two lies in their two perfectly independent primary or foundation scales. The primary scale or ‘shuddha’ scale of Hindustani system is called Bilawal scale while primary or ‘shuddha’ scale of Southern music is called Kanakangi scale (Nigam,1992). However, both are essentially melodic and they follow more or less the same rules of raga construction.

Classical music of Northern India or Hindustani music system has been reorganized, grammatized and systematized scientifically by two eminent musician namely Pt. B. N. Bhathkandre and Pt. V.D. Paluskar through their life-long dedication to music. Moris College of Hindustani Music was established by Pt. Bhathkandre himself in 1921 and Gandharva Sangeet...
Mahavidyalaya at Bombay in 1908 by Pt. Paluskar. Then onwards, a number of universities such as Delhi, Allahabad, Banaras, Lucknow established department of music and started to introduce courses on musicology.

After independence, at a number of cities and state capitals, music schools, colleges and academies came into existence. Radio too started to impart elementary lessons in music for the beginners. The existing printing media, broadcasting and telecasting networks cover about 90% of the population. It is, therefore, can be accepted that music of various categories, forms and contents have reached almost every corner of the country. More recently, the newly developed Compact Disc, Mobile Phone, Computer and Internet facilities have helped a lot to the preservation and development of Indian classical music not only in national level but also in international level.

1.5. Rationale of the study

Normally, apart from formal schooling, parents and society play an important role in grooming the children in the right path. Among many other pathways for development of character and personality of our budding generation, music can be considered as very influential one. The present picture of music education in the state of Assam has become as a field of attraction for the student community as well as educational and socio-cultural activists and researchers. The Centre for Cultural Resource and Training (CCRT), New Delhi under the Ministry of HRD has taken interest to restore and develop Indian Classical Music and Xatria dance by providing national level scholarship among its learners. The govt. of Assam also has introduced music as optional subject and Xatria dance in +2 level in Secondary Schools in the state. In the present day situation music has become not only as an academic achievement but as a noble profession also it has gained popularity in the society.

Considering the above mentioned aspects and to check our new generation from evil influence of value erosion and finally to integrate some traits of goodness for developing good human being and a better human society, this type of study may be considered as appropriate. Moreover, it is hard to find any research literature in this area of knowledge in Assam. It is hoped that, this investigation will be useful to crate generous concern on this area of knowledge among the people in general and to knowledge as well as to the educational plan and action in future in particular.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To study the organizational, academic and administrative aspects of the music institutions.
2. To study the influence of Hindustani classical music in the inculcation of values among its students.
3. To find out problems and to suggest remedial measures.

3. Methodology of the study

3.1 Research design

The study has been a ‘field study’ under the category of Descriptive Survey Method. The tools and techniques used to collect first hand data and information were as follows:

a) Self prepared Interview Schedule.
b) Self prepared Questionnaire.
c) Observation.

3.2 Population and sample

All the students between 10 to 18 years of age group of 25 music institutions of Kamrup Metro district (affiliated to Bhatkhande Sangeet Vidyapith (BSV), Lucknow have been considered as population of the study.

The investigation has been carried out on a representative sample of 5 music institutions and 80 students of both sex (50 girls and 30 boys) have been taken through the simple random sampling technique. The investigator selected 10 teachers, 5 Principals/Secretaries randomly. Moreover 5 devoted performing artists of classical music and 2 of Xatria dance from the whole of Assam including one External Examiner and classical artist from Rajasthan appointed by BSV, Luknow interviewed for confirmation on some of the agreements.

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<td>1.</td>
<td>Performing Artists</td>
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<td>Principals/Secretaries</td>
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<td>3.</td>
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<td>4.</td>
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<td>5.</td>
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3.3. Delimitation of the study

1. The present study has been delimited to the
students, Teachers, Principals/Secy. of music institutions of Kamrup Metro district only.

2. The institutions which are affiliated to BSV, Lucknow only have been taken for study.

3. The students of vocal, instrumental and classical dance have been selected.

4. No sex difference has been considered in the study.

**4. Results and discussions**

After a careful review and analysis of collected data and informations from both Primary and Secondary sources, it has been found that the private institutions of Hindustani music in Assam have played an important role in the development of character and personality of the new generation. The institutions, in spite of some limitations and genuine problems, they try to cultivate intellect, high moral and dignity among its students. In the context of major objectives and assumptions of the study, the results and discussions can be summarized as follows:

**Objective-I**

1. The institutions of Hindustani Classical Music have been developed remarkably in the state and a large number of student are undergoing education and training in all three branches of music-vocal, instrumental and dance. Xatria dance form also has been gaining popularity among budding generation after its national recognition since 15th Nov. 2000.

2. Presently the number of institutions only under BSV, Lucknow raised to 125 in Assam out of which 25 are there in Kamrup Metro district. The Sangeet Xatra Pariksha Parishad, Guwahati, a reputed teaching and affiliating institution established in 1972 has been maintaining Xatria culture (songs and dance) in more than 200 institutions throughout Assam.

3. 40% music institutions are running in their own building and rests are in government buildings. (primary & secondary schools).

4. The performing artist group expressed their concern on the teaching-learning process in the institutions in Assam. According to them music is a performing art and the teacher should be more sincere, dedicated and professionally trained. The artists and teachers are not satisfied with the role of the television in the development of classical music in Assam. The TV programmes on classical or devotional music are not adequate to create a healthy atmosphere of classical ambience. According to them, the newly popularised TV programmes based on competitions and SMS, though interesting and exciting to young adults, they are deterrent to music learners.

5. A satisfactory number of students in Assam have got selection for higher training in music and Xatria dance under CCRT, New Delhi under Talent Search Scholarship scheme in last 3 decades.

6. Almost all the institutions organise workshop, seminar, lecture cum demonstration programme time to time for the improvement of academic environment of the institutions.

7. 30% students of both sex have expressed their willingness to offer music as subject in +2 and degree level if they get the opportunity in future.

8. The music institutions have been run mainly on Tuition fees collected from the students. The system of grant-in-aid from govt. end is not scientific, inadequate and irregular.

**Objective - 2**

1. The teachers were found keen to the aesthetic and moral life of the students. They encourage students to respect elders and teacher, to speak truth, maintain discipline and punctuality. They believe in the importance of Guru-Shishya Parampara and try to restore it in the institutions.

2. Majority of the institutions encourage the practice of meditation and ‘Omkar Dhwani’ in the beginning of the class.

**Objective - 3**

5. **Some problems**

1. Financial status is not good enough to be self-sustained.

2. Space are limited to accommodate students.

3. Lack of infrastructure, insensitive students, ignorant parents, low remuneration are some of the problems faced by the teachers which prevent them to take teaching music as profession fully.

4. Students are more busy with their general academic activities (private tuition, home assignment) and they are unable to give much time to practice music at home.

5. Students were found not well acquainted with
the conceptual and theoretical part in comparison to practice part of the course.

6. Some suggestions

i. Government should reorient the existing system of grants in-aid to the society registered music institutions run by NGOs and cultural organisations.

ii. Provision of scholarship in the model of CCRT, New Delhi can be introduced by the state government for talented students.

iii. Necessary steps can be taken to open music department in the University and Colleges of Assam to encourage meritorious students for higher learning in music within Assam.

7. Conclusion

In conclusion, it can be mentioned that music can be considered as an integral part of child’s life for the harmonious development of character and personality as a whole. The development of classical music and Xatria dance or Borgeet and any other art form in Assam considered to be useful for the inculcation of values and quality of life among our budding generation as well as a tribute to our glorious cultural heritage. In the context of modern way of life, music can also be best utilized as best physical exercise, best mental food and best professional career.

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