



## **ECHOES OF TAGORE: A REFLECTION OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S EDUCATIONAL THOUGHTS IN NEP-2020**

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### **Abstract**

Philosophical thoughts of Rabindranath Tagore based on universal brotherhood and humanity, which is very important in present day context. Rabindranath said “our education should be in full touch with our complete life, economic, intellectual, aesthetic, social and spiritual, and our educational institutions should be in the very heart of our society”. Research question of this study were what were the contribution of Rabindranath Tagore to Indian education? And what is the relation between Rabindranath Tagore’s educational thought and NEP-2020? The historical method is used in present study. For data collection the researchers used primary and secondary sources. The educational ideas expressed by Rabindranath in his educational essays can be seen in the NEP-2020. Rabindranath emphasized on experiential learning, holistic development, creative self-expression, universal brotherhood, active communication with nature and man, which can be seen in the NEP- 2020.

**Keywords:** *Rabindranath Tagore, Educational Thought, NEP-2020, Educational Philosophy*

### **Introduction**

Rabindranath is on the one hand a poet, philosopher, educator and on the other hand, a social reformer and freedom fighter. According to Rabindranath “That Education is highest which not only imparts information and knowledge to us, but also promotes love & fellow- feeling between us and the living being of the world”. According to him, the child’s education should take place in the natural environment to develop love for the surrounding objects. He emphasized on understanding learning instead of rote learning and he emphasized on learning through mother tongue. According to him education will develop all round of student. He emphasized on developing the creativity of the students and on global brotherhood and internationalism rather than narrow mindedness of students. NEP- 2020 principle is similarity with Rabindranath’s educational thought.

### **Review of Related Literature**

Saha (2021) in a study “National education policy- 2020 in the vision of Rabindranath Tagore” found that the NEP-2020 focused on employment enhancement, environment protection, multi-disciplinary learning and research which was similar to Rabindranath’s philosophy and he earlier implemented in his work place Santiniketan and Sriniketan.

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Ramchiary (2021) conducted a study on “Rabindranath Tagore and Swami Vivekananda’s Philosophy of Education and its Relevance in the Present Scenario”. The researcher found that Rabindranath emphasized on freedom of child, Education is not a collect of information, Harmonious education, culture of imagination, real life experience which philosophical thought is related to present education system.

Singh & Singh (2022) in a study “Indian Educational Philosophy & New Education Policy-2020” revealed that NEP-2020 has various similarity with the Rabindranath’s educational thoughts. NEP-2020 has emphasized on experiential learning, multilingual and multicultural, real-life experience, mother tongue, which was similar to Rabindranath’s philosophy.

Mondal (2023) in his research paper “Educational Ideas and Contribution of Rabindranath Tagore”, analysed the philosophical thought’s, principles, method of instructions and educational contribution of Tagore which was reflected in his work. According to study, Tagore’s educational thought emphasized on universal brotherhood, nationalism, adult education, women education.

Haldar (2023) in his study, “Philosophical Thoughts and Contributions of Rabindranath Tagore towards Reforms in Indian Education System”, discussed Tagore’s educational philosophy and contribution on education. According to study Tagore’s philosophy is a synthesis of eastern and western philosophies.

Biswas (2022) in his study, “Educational Philosophy and Educational thought of Rabindranath Tagore and its Relevance in present scenario”, analyzed educational thought of Tagore and its relevance in the present situation.

**Objectives of the Study:** The objectives of the present work were as follows:

1. To explore the contribution of Rabindranath Tagore to Indian education
2. To analyse the relation between Rabindranath Tagore’s educational thought and NEP-2020

**Research Questions:** The research questions of this study were framed as:

1. What was the contribution of Rabindranath Tagore to Indian education?
2. What is the relation between Rabindranath Tagore’s educational thought and NEP-2020?

**Methodology:** The method used in present study is historical method. The Present study used primary and secondary sources of data. Various essays written by Rabindranath Tagore on education system were analysed to reach all the answers to the research questions framed out for the present work. Original writings of Rabindranath Tagore were used as the primary sources of data. Alongside references by acknowledged authorities on his works have been used as the secondary sources of data.

### **Data Analysis and Discussions**

- **Shikhar Herfer:** Rabindranath said in his essay “the work is ripe when the collection and the construction are progressing little by little at the same time. That is, knowing the use of the collectible whenever it comes to hand, finding his true identity is a formal education, is building a shelter for life along with life”. Rabindranath’s philosophy of education is paralleled by the present-day emphasis on experiential learning in NEP-2020. NEP-2020 states that some of the experiential learning process at all stages of the education system, such as hands on learning, art integrated learning, sports integrated learning and storytelling etc. will be adopted as educational standards and explored to find relationships between different subjects. That is, there will be experiential learning among students. (NEP – 2020, P13)
- **Siksha Sanskar:** Rabindranath said in his essay “on education reforms that if education was the objective of the National Board, Irish should have first thought the student to read and listen in her own language and then teach her a foreign language with the help of her mother tongue. Here he emphasizes on mother tongue and about foreign language learning after mother tongue learning”. In NEP-2020 emphasis is placed on education through mother tongue, where mother tongue means the language spoken by the family or a particular region or community. If such is the case in a family where different members have different mother tongues but the family speaks only one language which may not be the mother tongue of the other members of the family. The medium of instruction

up to at least class-V and even up to class-VIII or above, if possible, should be the mother tongue or the regional language or the language spoken in the family. Both public and private schools will follow this policy. This principle of NEP- 2020 is similar to Rabindranath's thought of teaching through mother tongue.

- **Shikhyasamasya:** Rabindranath Said in the essay education problem “if we understand our need right now then we have to make such a system so that school can make homework, also the diversity of the subject can be mixed with liveliness of teaching. The school can also take the responsibility to give subject education as well as building mind and heart of the students”. So, Rabindranath suggests to learn the subject of which is relevant to reality. NEP- 2020 states that the context of the curriculum should be the integration of subject matter, skills and ideas to ensure that the learning must be relevant, engaging and interesting.
- **Abaran:** Rabindranath said in his Abaran essay, “teacher used to make us memorize books from childhood, but it is not the nature of our mind to accumulate knowledge from inside books. It was nature's law that our powers of thought should be exercised very easily by seeing, hearing, moving and seeing tangible things. All our minds respond easily when we hear the experienced and tested knowledge from other people because word of mouth is not just words, word of mouth has life with it. The gestures of the eyes, the face, the voice, the simple gesture of the hands, the language heard by the ear acquires from and music and both the eyes and the ears become objects. Not only that, if we know that a person is giving us the contents of his mind from his mind, he is not just reading a book, then the direct combination of Mind with mind causes the flow of knowledge”. Rabindranath's emphasis on understanding of the subject here is similar to the principle of NEP-2020. NEP- 2020 states that the content of the curriculum in each subject will be narrowed down to only the essential parts so that critical and analytical thinking becomes more holistic, inquiry based, discovery based and analysis based. The teaching and learning process will be through more exchange of ideas and active participation of the teacher and student. Questioning will be encouraged and the whole process of classroom teaching will be more fun and enjoyable for students to learn more deeply and experientially. That is, students will be able to derive and apply content knowledge logically through comprehension. Similarities can be seen in Rabindranath's above mentioned educational thought with this principle of NEP-2020.

In the Abaran essay, Rabindranath says that “the book's approximation relies on several arguments. The main materials of those arguments should be laid before them as far as possible and their own speculative powers should be stimulated. From the very beginning, if they feel in their minds little by little how the books are made, then they will get the proper result of the book and get rid of its blind rule and the natural power of the mind to acquire knowledge by its own free will; and thereby not to be overwhelmed and overpowered by the burden of knowledge imposed on the hack from without. If the boy learns stories, education will not be imposed on him. That pressure will sit on education”. Rabindranath's educational thought similar to experiential a learning of NEP-2020.

- **Jatiya Vidyalaya:** Rabindranath Said in his Jatiya Vidyalaya essay that “the national school should free us from the confines of rote learning and impart liberal courage and individuality to our boundless intellect. Let us not be ashamed of what we do not agree with the textbook and we shall not be ashamed to make mistakes. Because he who does not have the right to make mistakes does not have the right to discover the truth. It is much better to try to make mistakes than to memorize the next hundreds of mistakes, because the attempt to make a mistake led to the violation of the mistake”. That is, Rabindranath speaks here of learning through reasoning which can be found in NEP- 2020.

In NEP- 2020, school management practices or culture should aim for assessment to be more formative and learning skill based than the traditional rote memorization of skills and to ensure successful learning and development of student and higher order skills such as analytical critical thinking and conceptual clarity of content are said to be more emphasized. Rabindranath's above thought parallels this principle of NEP-2020.

- **Tapovan:** Rabindranath said in his Tapovan essay that “the main aim of Indian education should be the education of the senses and not only the education of knowledge but the education of the senses should be given the main place in our schools”. NEP- 2020 has similarities with this teaching spirit of Rabindranath. NEP-2020 states that the emphasis will be on shifting the entire education system from the current rote culture to real learning through curriculum and teaching reform at all levels. The aim of education is not only to develop knowledge but also to develop the character of the student with overall self-efficacy and to develop a well-rounded personality with useful 21st century skills.
- **Chhatrader Prati Sambhashan:** Rabindranath said in his essay Chhatrader Prati Sambhashan that “The foundation of knowledge can be matured only if the education of knowledge goes from the familiar to the distant to the unknown. By learning to master the known fully and accurately, the power of accepting the unseen and the unknown will arise”. Rabindranath’s approach to learning method is similar to that of NEP-2020. In NEP- 2020, the teaching method of School Education states that subjects’ teachers should be appointed for subjects so that students can acquire a understanding of abstract topics in all subjects at the middle stage. Student should be encouraged to learn experientially and to study each subject inquisitively and to find interdisciplinary commonalities within each subject, despite subject specialist teachers.
- **Sikha Bidhi:** Rabindranath Said in his Siksha Bidhi essay “education by the teacher is not by the provision, the human mind moves and only the moving mind can understand it. Derezio, Captain Richard, David hare was the teacher, not the roofer, not the bearer of notes. At that time, the university did not have such strict rules, there was a way for light and air to enter it, then teachers could take their seats outside the rules”. Rabindranath’s philosophy of education is similar to that of NEP- 2020. NEP-2020 stated that the school’s service culture and the main aim of improving its service will be to enable teachers to carry out their work effectively and to ensure that they are capable of a vibrant caring and inclusive and that goal is to ensure student learning and also to give teachers more freedom to shape pedagogy so that they can design what they think is best for students in their classrooms and community. Teachers will focus on emotional social learning which is one of the critical factors in the development of any student.

## Conclusion

The above analysis and discussion show that Rabindranath Tagore is a pioneer in the modernization of education system. Many of his essays and writings show his serious concerns regarding the pitfalls and loopholes in the existing education system. Learning from within is more important than information burdened from outside. NEP 2020 also follows this path of acquiring knowledge. NEP 2020 upholds the principles of learning which were strongly emphasized by the educationist poet Rabindranath Tagore. The very principles of learning like hands on experience, discovery learning, learning through questioning, sense training, learning in a Tapovan like environment, development of life skills, learning through interest from within and not from outside pressure, a cordial relation between the teacher and the student, experiencing the surrounding nature and environment- all these find important place in NEP 2020; thereby building its pillars on the philosophy of the educational thoughts of Rabindranath Tagore.

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