

MERITORIOUS TREND IN MUSIC EDUCATION

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Abstract

It can be said that there is no ideal method of music education. But all these methods starting from Gurukul to the modern methods of learning music have been contributing in the spread of music. History is evident that music has always been people's one of the major arena of interest. Music has always been serving and will always serve its purpose of entertainment, catharsis, purgation and also a source of earning livelihood for some. Thus, music and music education is an inevitable entity of man and mankind.

Key words: Meritorious Trends, Music Education, Gurukul.

“Music is a moral law. It gives soul to the universe, wings to the mind, flight to the imagination, and charm and gaiety to life and to everything”.

-Plato

Introduction

Music is not just an art form, created by organizing of pitch, rhythm, and sounds made using musical instruments or singing. It is way more than that. It is a form of living life. The melodies of music don't just amuse but they can also have a therapeutic effect. It is an expression of feelings and emotions. It is the best creation of man which has the potential of igniting man's unspoken desires and his humanity. Music serves both the purposes of bringing close to life as well as paving an escape out of it. All this and much more account for music being so significant and important for man, since time immemorial.

India has a rich tradition and heritage of music since Vedic age. The history of India has been a witness to various mediums of instructing music, like the Gurukul, Guru - Shishya Parampara, Institutional, University etc. There are broadly five epochs of Indian music history - Vedic period, Puranic period, Natyashastra period, medieval period and modern period. Though these periods had distinct characteristics but what they have in common is the ancient Gurukul system. It is quite obvious to say that this Gurukul system has undergone some gradual changes and has taken up new contemporary forms. The trajectory of music education in India can be traced back from Gurukul system to Vidyalay system, music teaching in regular schools,

individualized coaching and to colloquial training of music from various modern media.

To study the circumspect advances in the mediums and phases of music education in India, it is a pre-requisite to know about the above modes of music education.

Gurukul System

Gurukul means “learning while living with the Guru in his house”. In this system, also known as Ashram or Hermitage system, the teachers or the Gurus were savants. The student or the Shishya had to live in his Guru’s hermitage for many years and gain the knowledge by serving the teacher. The Gurukul system was quite flexible. Every student was trained by his master (Guru) in accordance with his or her potential and limitation. The Guru surveilled every student personally and the student was groomed under the Guru’s expertise. In primeval times, there was no written or notational instruction of music. It was transferred orally by the master to the student. In Gurukul, music was taught practically with experimentation. The student was taught for a specified period of time, tested by the Guru and then he was declared well versed in that art.

This concept of the Gurukul system and the Guru-Shishya concept led to the development of Gharanas. The Gharanas transpire from the creative style of a genius or the Guru, who gave prevailing structures an absolutely new approach, form and interpretation. This Gharana system was quite rigid as the students of one Gharana were not allowed to associate with people or students from other Gharanas.

The Gurukul system was prevalent in Vedic, Puranic and Natyashastra period for about 5000 years but the Muslim invasions in the medieval period gave it a major setback. The interconnection of education and religion led the Muslims to believe that the Gurukul system was a Hindu method of instruction and so they began to destroy it. During the reign of the Muslims, music was deprived of its stature as a serious subject. Rather, it was just a mere source of entertainment. Consequentially, it debauched the importance and true sense of music. Also, the status of musicians was abased. After the Muslim rule, came the British rulers who were unprejudiced about Indian music. They did not try to suppress the Indian music tradition. Instead, some British officers had a keen interest in Indian music and also undertook research projects on Indian music.

Vidyalaya System

Along with British rulers, the freedom of thought and expression also came to India. A new education system brought a change in music education in India. The new music education methods architected and trail blazed by Pandit Vishnu Digambar Paluskar and Pandit Bhatkhande had this milieu of western thought. To promulgate music in higher social stratum, a dire need for a cerebral, cogent and regularized method of music education was realized by Pandit Paluskar and Pandit Bhatkhande. For this, Gandharva Vidyalay, at Lahore, was established by Pandit Paluskar in 1901. He initiated an exam pitched method for teaching music in schools. Step by step music lessons were given to the students. This method was a synthesis of modern methods and traditional norms of teaching and learning music. This Vidyalay system accelerated the expand of music education. However, this system aimed at something else than the previously prevailing Gurukul system. In the Gurukul system, the objective was to develop a performer while in the Vidyalay system the focus was on shaping up a connoisseur. With connoisseurs, the Vidyalay also sought to make music trainers, researchers and critics. Hence, the Vidyalay system had a much wider substructure than the Gurukul system. Another major influence of this system was on 'Gharaneshahi' or the hegemony of traditional Gharana ustads and music was thus liberated. Music was thus, in a way, democratized.

Music Teaching in Regular Schools

Following the Vidyalay system, music teaching was gradually modernized and became a part of the school curriculum with fixed syllabus to be followed. This is also the contemporary and the prevalent medium of music education. The students are to go through certain tutorials, workshops and skill developing sessions. They have to submit their assignments and projects and then their learning is tested through examinations. Once they have completed their course work, they are given certificates or degrees.

Individualized Coaching

Considering the requirements of new age and the indispensability of time, the method of individualized coaching was introduced. This is a liberal and informal method of music education. This method meets both the Gurukul system and Vidyalay system halfway. However, in this one to one system of music education, the conventional formal relationship between the Guru and the Shishya was eased and relaxed. But at the same time, the student has no intimate acquaintance with the teacher. Also, there is a lack of seriousness and commitment on both the sides-the teacher as well as the student. It

seems to be more of a business than an enthusiastic and passionate field of work. Nevertheless, this type of education system caters to the needs of that section of society who wish to learn music only for self satisfaction or as a hobby.

Colloquial Training of Music from Modern Media

This form of instruction works best for those curious and inquisitive minds who want to quench their intellectual thirst of knowing music. This kind of music education is quite popular in the modern times. These days, basic introduction of music is provided by sources like television, radio, internet etc. Additionally, many books, interactive CD's, blogs and videos are also available. It is much obvious that this kind of education lacks an extensive or in depth training and so it cannot produce a musicologist or a researcher but media can provide an elementary knowledge of music which can further be instigated by the inquiring and inspecting minds.

Conclusion

Encapsulating it all, it can be said that there is no ideal method of music education. But all these methods starting from Gurukul to the modern methods of learning music have been contributing in the spread of music. History is evident that music has always been people's one of the major arena of interest. Music has always been serving and will always serve its purpose of entertainment, catharsis, purgation and also a source of earning livelihood for some. Thus, music and music education is an inevitable entity of man and mankind.

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