

Music Education in Schools in Developed nation vis-a-vis India: A Review

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Abstract

Music has been a part of the public-school curriculum in developed nations for a long. Many educators have highlighted the importance of school music education, as music helps to improve cognitive abilities and holistic development of students. Numerous studies are present about various aspects of school music education in other countries. However, study related to school music education in India is limited and our previous pilot study with a small sample in the east district of Sikkim indicated lacunas regarding this. This article explores the evolution of school music education in a developed nation and also shows its status in India from a perspective.

Keywords: Music Education, School Music Education, Musical Training, Art education.

Introduction:

The teaching of music initially was done privately at singing schools in developed nations like USA. Since 19th Century music was gradually incorporated in the public school curriculum of USA (Rager, 2008). Johann Pestalozzi, a Swiss educator first highlighted the importance of the study of music in schools (Volk, 1993). Lowell Mason, who is regarded as 'Father of Public School Music' in the United States, introduced music into the curriculum of Hawes in Boston in the fall of 1837 (Rager, 2008; Volk, 1993).

Earlier proponents of music education believed; the study of music involves direct sense experience which improves various functions of brain. Many studies later proved the fact that music education improves verbal memory, cognitive abilities and IQ (Chan et al., 1998; Portowitz et al., 2009; Rager, 2008; Schellenberg, 2006).

Literature search has resulted in numerous study on various aspects of music education in schools of many countries. (Rager, 2008; Rodríguez-Quiles, J. A., 2011).

The aim of our present article is a narrative review of evolution of music education in school of developed nation like USA and the status of school music education in India. The article also highlights the benefit of music education in school.

UGC-CARE enlisted & Indexed in the EBSCO International Database of Journals**Materials and Method:**

Articles were searched in 'Google Scholar', 'Jstor', 'Pubmed' with the key word i.e., 'Music Education in school'; 'School music education', 'History of school music education', 'Music Education and IQ'; 'Music Education and Cognitive abilities'; 'Benefit of Music Education'; 'School music education in India'; National Education Policy in India; National Curriculum Framework in India.

Articles which were available in full text English language were included in our study. All the initially selected articles were studied thoroughly and finally included based on aim of our review. The narrative review is presented in different subheadings of various aspects of school music education. The limitation of our present review is only evolution of school Music education of developed nation in Europe and USA; Status of school music education in India, and also the benefit of music education in schools.

1. Plato and Aristotle's Concept of Music Education:

Plato's concept of education was aimed at forming the whole person. Gymnastic developed the child's body and music was aimed at the development of the soul. All the young creatures are full of fire energy, and they cannot keep their limbs and voices quiet. They are moving and crying disorderly. However human being is endowed with the power of a sense of order which can be developed by Choric training. This is very easy to perform even by babies and is the combination of gymnastic and music. According to Plato, music strikes the senses; rhythm and harmony goes more deeply into the soul and creates strongest hold upon it.(Bailey, 2006)

Aristotle says, as music imitates emotions and affects the character, it can either imitate well-ordered or disordered emotions. As music has the power of forming character, the music should be incorporated into the education of the young.(Bailey, 2006)

2. Evolution of School Music Education:

Internationally, music education differs from one country to another in the perspective of teaching and learning situation. As Fautley & Murphy, 2015 points out in an editorial of the British Journal of Music Education, 'What counts as music education in one national context may be very different from that which is practiced elsewhere'(FAUTLEY & MURPHY, 2015).

2.1 Music Education in Europe and America

Initially music used to be taught in private at singing schools only and people performed at church. In the early nineteenth century, music started to be included in the curriculum of American schools.(Rager, 2008)

2.2 Pestalozzian principle

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi (1746-1827), a Swiss educator believed, the foundation of learning is based on sense awareness '*anschauungen*' through perception and every children

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should be taught music instead of simply book knowledge (Rager, 2008). For developing the sense awareness, he introduced some fundamental exercise consisting of form, number, and language. The concept of language was developed through reading, speaking, and singing (Efland, 1983; Silber, 2019)

After the French revolution, Pestalozzi initially began teaching in Stans (1799) collecting poor war orphans, later he directed educational institute in Bergdorf (1800-1804) and famous Yverdon institute (1805-1825) which attracted educators from different countries. Many schools started to develop in different parts of European countries and follow the principles of Pestalozzi (Wikipedia Contributors, 2021a).

2.3 Dissemination of Pestalozzian principle to America

William McClure (1763-1840)

William McClure, a Scottish-born geologist, businessman, and philanthropist from USA, being interested in Pestalozzian ideas, visited his school in 1804 and requested great Swiss educator to come to United States. Pestalozzi declined to his idea due to health reason, however suggested Joseph Nicholas Kneef, who was indoctrinated into Pestalozzian principle and a teacher of music, gymnastic and French at Burgdorf (Keene, 2009; Kipnis, 1972).

Kneef arrived in USA in 1806 and three years later first 'Pestalozzian' school was established in Philadelphia. Music used to be taught in that school but what was the method of teaching is not so clear.

William C Woodbridge (1774-1845)

William C Woodbridge was an educational reformist and a geographer from USA. Initially he used to teach at the Asylum for the Deaf and Dumb in Hartford, later he travelled to Europe twice, to study and for improving his health. He was inspired at the work of Pestalozzi at Yverdon and another Swiss educationist Philipp Emanuel von Fellenberg at Hofwyl. He also watched teaching of vocal music by Nægeli, Pfeiffer and others and collected materials from Europe (Wikipedia Contributors, 2021b)

Elam Ives, Jr (1802–1864)

After returning back at Hartford, William C Woodbridge, worked with a musician named Elam Ives, Jr and wanted to use the translated materials brought from Europe for school music in America, which resulted in publication of books like *American Elementary Singing Book*, a *Concise manual on Pestalozzianism* by Elam.

Lowell Mason (1792-1872)

Lowell Mason was a church musician in Boston, composed over 1600 hymn tunes and regarded as the 'father of public-school music' in USA. He became influenced by Pestalozzian principle by William C Woodbridge and Elam Ives, Jr. Later he published book such as, '*Juvenile Lyre*' in 1831 as joint collaboration with Elam Ives, Jr (Keene, 2009)

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From 1826 to 1838, few key events happened which led ultimately to inclusion of Music into school curriculum in America.

Through public addresses by Lowell Mason and William C. Woodbridge, people in Boston became more aware about the need of music instruction in school for reformation of church music.

Boston Academy of Music, was founded in the year of 1833 by Lowell Mason and William C. Woodbridge, which acted as another step towards school music education.

The most crucial was, Mason was determined and able to convince Boston School Committee to introduce music into the school curriculum at the Hawes School in Boston experimentally from Dec 1837 to Aug 1838. On 14th August, 1838 a demonstration concert by the school children, before school committee convinced that music should be part of school curriculum that led to resolution on 28th Aug 1838, which is known as “Magna Carta of Music Education”(Pemberton, 1988; Rager, 2008) and Mason was appointed as superintendent of Boston school system. This landmark incident set an example and by 1874, 26 states had implemented music in different city schools.

Nineteenth century found an era of growth in music, however at the end of it, the music teaching was changing and instead of specialist, regular teacher taught music in schools. Being concerned about the change, John Eaton, commissioner of United States Bureau of Education, conducted a survey on School Music Education.

During the start of twentieth century, public school started to include instrumental music along with vocal music following a philosophical change, after the treatise of **John Dewey** “Democracy in Education” in 1916.

In 1950, Music Educators National Conference (MENC) came out with landmark resolution, “The Child’s bill of Rights in Music”, which gave every child an opportunity to explore music to the fullest.

Later art became part of basic components of public education in American Education, along with mathematics, physical science and social science. Teaching of art was comprised of language art which is the teaching of music (theory, harmony, vocal singing, and instrumental) visual arts (drawing, painting, photography) theatre and dance.

2.4 Evolution towards aesthetic education:

Slowly music education was evolving towards esthetic education as music educator and philosopher Bennett Reimer in 1970 stated in his book “A Philosophy of Music Education.” He believed, music serves two purposes in society, it helps to develop talent for musically gifted people and also cultivates aesthetic sense of all people.

2.5 Role of Orchestra in Music Education in USA:

As pointed out by Rager D(Rager, 2008), attendance to orchestral concert by the school students was very important part of music education, as it used to motivate the students.

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Since 1921, every year more than 30,000 students were familiarized to classical music by the Cleveland Orchestra Education Concerts.

2.6 The Future of Music Education in USA:

The Association of Performing Arts Presenters (APAP) assembled in San Francisco in May 19-21, 2005 to discuss very relevant issues about the fate of music education including classical music which was growing to be a matter of worry for years. Pertinent issues were found to be...

- 1) The decline of music education among K-12 students and
- 2) The slow-moving, conservative and fundamentalist outlook within classical music industry.

As, Rager D states, “without music education there would be no orchestra”, so the relationship between music education in school and sustenance of classical music is often symbiotic. However, there is a need of redefining the classical music today incorporating modern technology used by mass media. So, everyone involved in making of music should work together to hold its value(Rager, 2008)

3. Music Education in India:

As evidenced by Natyashastra, music existed in Indian subcontinent as a very sophisticated art form, which passed from generation to generation as oral tradition through sacred relational engagement between *Guru* and *Shishya* in an ecosystem of *Gurukul Parampara*. In the Gurukula system, an wholesome development of students used to happen under the tutelage of Guru, who was also qualified in spirituality, science, mathematics, yoga, language, writing etc (Kumar, 2012). However, this unique pedagogical system failed to integrate itself into the mainstream postcolonial education system (Sankaran, 2020). In some ancient universities, like Takshsila and Nalanda music used to be taught as an art form (Akanksha, 2020).

3.1. Sourindra Mohun Tagore of Bengal (1840-1914):

First evidence of institutionalized music education started in later part of nineteenth century in Calcutta based on western Model. Calcutta was the capital of India and was centre of cultural and economic revolution during British period. Raja Sourindra Mohun Tagore established first music school of India, Bengal Music School in 1871. Vocal and instrumental music was taught with the help of notation system (Alter, 2000; Kumar, 2012). The first music school offered diploma to the students and awards to the renowned musicians.

3.2. Sayajirao III of Baroda (1863-1940)

Sir Sayajirao Gaekwad – III was one of the progressive Maharaja of Baroda and a visionary. He started compulsory primary education in his state and in 1886. He established “Chookrao ni Gayan Shala-Singing School for children”, which presently is known as, faculty of

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performing arts at Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda (*The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda*, n.d.) (Alter, 2000).

3.3 Madhavrao Scindia of Gwalior (1873-1925)

Gwalior was one of the richest states of India at the end of nineteenth century. Madhavrao Scindia supported many musicians and artisans, who were employed in the royal family and were associated with the Gwalior *gharānā*. In the early 1900, he established Madho Sangeet Mahavidyalaya, which presently known as 'Madhav Music College' (Alter, 2000).

3.4. Pandit V. N. Bhatkhande (1860- 1936)

Pandit Vishnu Narayan Bhatkhande was trained in Gwalior *gharānā* and later became music advisor to the Maharaja. He was more than a performing musician and he is acclaimed for his scholarly contribution in Hindustani music. He firmly felt that Hindustani music was passing through a critical stage because common people in those days stayed away from Hindustani music as they associated it with degenerated court life. His vision was to increase appreciation of music among the common people by creating an efficient and modern instruction method in music. He published numerous articles and devised a new notation system for systematising Hindustani music. Between 1920 and 1930 he established music schools in Lucknow, Nagpur, and Bombay. After that, many music schools opened in India rapidly and the school were having structured system of instruction method, curriculum, and examination system which was envision by Bhatkhande and desired by Tagore (Alter, 2000)(Bakhle, 2005).

3.5. Pt. Vishnu Digambar Paluskar (1872- 1931)

Pandit V. D. Paluskar was another eminent musician of Gwalior *gharānā* like Bhatkhande. He was equally concerned and contributed immensely in the field of Hindustani classical music. In 1901 he initially founded in Lahore, Gandharva Sangeet Mahavidyalaya which was later shifted to Bombay. Presently the college is known as Akhil Bharatiya Gandharva Sangeet Mahavidhyalaya which has many affiliated institutions. The teaching methods and curriculum followed by this institution were similar to the other music colleges (Alter, 2000)(Bakhle, 2005).

3.6 Rabindranath Tagore's thought on music education:

According to Rabindranath Tagore, the ultimate aim of education is the all-round development of the individual which is harmonious with the existence. He believed, aesthetic development is as important as intellectual development of an individual, which can be done through, music, literature, visual arts, dance and drama.

Although, Tagore gave great importance of learning arts, music is not present in the curriculum of primary schools under Visva - Bharati University. However, there is a culture of spending the leisure time with music and other art subject.

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As Irena points out “It is interesting that Tagore completely rejected education about the arts, instead advocating education through the arts”(Lesar, 2016).

Study related to music education in Indian schools are critically less.

In 1980 Anderson published an article on “Music Education in India”, where he shares his personal experience in a positive note that, study of music is compulsory in primary grade, which becomes elective in middle and high school standards. He also described in details how music is taught in different schools (Anderson, 1980).

4. Music in the school curriculum of India:

According to National curriculum framework (NCF) - 2005, all the four divisions of arts i.e. music, dance, visual art and theatre, should be compulsory up to class X.

However, National council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) expressed deep concern about art education. Despite much debate about the importance of art education in curriculum, very less progress has been made. The position of art education has been reduced to ‘leisure activity’ in current education system. At the best it only serve to enhance prestige of school in Independence Day, Founder's Day and Annual Day (NCERT, 2005).

In a study done by Vishal et.al. with only 18 schools, points out many lacunas, which are present in music education in the schools like absence of music education in every schools, lack of proper infrastructure, absence of standard curriculum etc (Vishal, 2015).

We have done a pilot study (Saha, 2019) in 16 schools of Sikkim in 2019. Among 03 Government and 13 Private schools, music was taught in 01 government and 07 private schools. Dedicated music specialist was present only in 06 schools; one school was managing music classes by classroom teacher and in another school both music specialist and classroom teacher took classes. Among 08 schools, where music is taught, 06 schools have specially equipped spaces; 04 schools provide musical instruments to the students; 07 schools stated the funding of music lesson as part of their school budget. However, only 04 schools conduct music exam for their students.

Another very interesting finding from our study is that most of the schools are teaching the genres of devotional or prayer songs and patriotic songs. Along with these, 3rd most prevalent was western classical music but Hindustani classical music was found to be the last in the rank order.

5. National Education policy 2020

According to the new education policy adopted in 2020 (National Education Policy 2020) (Government of India, 2020) – awareness about Indian art and culture is essential for every individual for developing sense of identity and belonging to their own culture and gratitude to other distinctive culture.

Learning any kind of art like music develops cognitive abilities, sense of wellbeing and happiness in children.

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To convey our culture in the next generation, music is the strongest form. It improves thinking and artistic skill in every single child, giving pleasure to children in learning, once they are taught the art forms from childhood to adulthood. This action must be started at the pre-primary level and continued through higher education to introduce the Indian music and culture, to the students. The main target of the NEP 2020 is to encourage new generation to save and promote our Indian culture. (Government of India, 2020)

6. Benefit of Music education in childhood

Studies have shown music training in childhood can lead to long-term positive effect on verbal memory. MRI imaging have shown among musician the left temporal lobe, which is associated with the verbal memory is better developed than non-musician(Chan et al., 1998).

Portowitz et al. evaluated impact of music education on development of cognitive skill and social development among high-risk elementary school children. Significant positive impact was found between the group who were exposed and not exposed to the musical training (Portowitz et al., 2009).

Schellenberg et al. have found significant positive association between childhood musical training and development of IQ and academic performance, which remained long lasting (Schellenberg, 2006).

Conclusion:

The status of music education in the developed nations like America was initially evaluated through the literature review. Influenced by the Pestalozzian principle, idea of teaching of music started to be disseminated from Europe towards America. In early nineteen century, music started to be included into the school curriculum of USA.

In our country, we have found contributions of many musicians and other music enthusiasts for contribution in institutionalising music in India. Notable among those are Pt. Bhatkhande and Pt. V. D. Paluskar for their unparalleled work. However, we could not find any direct contribution for school music education. According to Rabindranath Tagore, all-round development was the aim of education, where music and related subjects formed integral component for aesthetic development. National council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT) has expressed deep concern that position of art education has been reduced to 'leisure activity' in current education system.

Studies on school music education in India are critically few. However, previous studies and our own pilot study have shown multiple lacunas in school music education in India.

Further studies and intervention are necessary with the objective of incorporating music education in school for its long-term benefit among students.

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