



Philosophical View of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore: An Overview

Prova Henry

Research Scholar, Department of Education, RKDF University, Ranchi

E_mail: Prabhahenry60@gmail.com

Abstract:

Rabindranath Tagore, a polymath whose contributions span literature, music, and education, also developed a distinctive philosophical framework that intertwines spirituality, humanism, and nationalism. This article provides an overview of Tagore's philosophical views, exploring their origins, key tenets, and contemporary relevance. Rabindranath Tagore's philosophical views represent a rich and nuanced perspective that integrates spirituality, humanism, and cultural identity. His efforts to harmonize Eastern and Western thought, advocate for global citizenship, and reform education reflect a profound understanding of human nature and society. As we navigate contemporary global challenges, Tagore's philosophy offers enduring insights and inspiration, emphasizing the importance of empathy, creativity, and unity in shaping a more inclusive and harmonious world.

Keywords: *Philosophical, Spirituality, Humanism, Cultural Identity, Global Challenges.*

Introduction:

Rabindranath Tagore, a distinguished figure from India, is a teacher and wise thinker who devoted his entire life to the rejuvenation of humanity through his philosophy and educational efforts. His educational philosophy aims to achieve self-fulfillment through a connection with nature and God. He believes that education should not only focus on personal growth through knowledge and understanding but also on fostering connections of friendship and love among people. Tagore discovers the universal spirit within himself using his imagination. The objective of education is to achieve this realization. He sees nature as the ultimate being. He envisions the creator's presence in the natural world. His realistic perspective is balanced by idealistic beliefs, and his spirituality is influenced by his exploration of ancient Indian texts and philosophy. Therefore, he attempts to revive the traditional culture of India as a realist.

The strong influence of Tagore's family's social and cultural environment greatly shapes his educational philosophy. Tagore, despite lacking a professional degree, forms a cohesive perspective on life and the crucial impact of education in society. Based on his own hands-on experience, he firmly believes in the need for a fresh approach to education, which he has implemented in his own educational institution. In his role as a poet philosopher, he further develops his educational theory to promote global unity among the diverse cultures of the East and West.

Significance of the Study:

Rabindranath Tagore, a multifaceted genius, made profound contributions to literature, music, and art, but his philosophical views are crucial for a comprehensive understanding of his work. His philosophy integrates elements of spirituality, humanism, and nationalism, and exploring these can reveal deeper insights into his literary and artistic creations. Tagore's philosophy often bridges Eastern and Western ideas, reflecting a unique synthesis of traditional Indian thought with modern Western influences. Studying his philosophical views helps in appreciating how he harmonized these diverse perspectives and how this synthesis impacted his writings and worldview. Studying Tagore's philosophical views provides valuable insights into his diverse body of work and offers a broader understanding of his contributions to literature, education, and social thought. It also allows for a deeper appreciation of his impact on both Eastern and Western intellectual traditions

Objectives: The present study has been carried out with the following objectives-

- To Explore the Foundations of Tagore's Philosophy
- To Investigate Tagore's Humanistic Ideals

Background of Rabindranath Tagore's Philosophy:

Tagore's philosophy is theistic philosophy. His philosophical view is as follows. There is an initial difficulty in the philosophical interpretation of Tagore's ideas, because his medium of expression is poetic rather than philosophical. The prevalent method of philosophy is the proof of the evidence, the intellectual tips. The poet does not give much importance to philosophical logic, but it is basically a jeer. He expresses the truth that he has expressed in the language through literary figures and analogies. But this difficulty is natural. Philosophical studies mean that the expression of the poet understand the idea behind the medium and catch the evidence. There is a fear of mischief in this type of study, there is a danger if error, but as Rabindranath Tagore says that if we stop the path of chance of misconception, then the path of truth will be closed. Therefore, necessarily, in the poet's heart, entering into their perceptions and emotions creates a suitable site to understand them. Similarly, here an attempt to understand the views of the poet.

Common incidents of Tagore's life were some of the same. In addition to "Nobel Prize" and "Establishment of Shantiniketan", other incidents of his life were externally normal in some way, as a member of a prosperous family decreases in life. But this outer cover of their life clearly indicates. A powerful and fully dynamic life that they have won in their differences. In his 'memorial texts,' Rabindranath Tagore does not describe the external events of the chord in that form. In the form of his inner perceptions and his feelings and aspirations. Therefore, it can be said that in describing Tagore's ideas and beliefs, we are literally telling the story of his life.

Sometimes the details of Tagore's ideas are also given as an example of „mysticism“. Perhaps this is because Rabindranath Tagore does not place his thoughts on logical cognition. Such perceptions are like the realities of the wicked. That is why here mystical portions also appear. Tagore's ideas can be naming and explaining in different ways. The characteristic of their details is that there is no wrong description of these, because all these details have a clear expose of Tagore's idea-obviously.

Philosophical thinking of Tagore:

Rabindranath Tagore poet is philosopher. Their philosophy is based on a complex logical method, based on the experience of a mystical vision. They feel free to call themselves philosophers. Some people believe that Rabindranath Tagore has no vision of him, so they cannot be classified as philosophers. According to Tagore, only poet and artist is not philosophical. But we do not agree with their views. They have definite

roles in the subject of various philosophical elements and they have kept their ideas in very clear form. There are one of the few philosophers who were great poets and one of the poets who gave their philosophy of self image.

Rabindranath Tagore believes in the great man and accepted that great man as the supreme power of the world. For them, God is the symbol of Satyam, Shivam and Advaitam. Even though being a monotheistic and brahmanical, they provide the personality of supreme power- The basis of their philosophical ideology is the three principles of Upanishads. First principle is to get self knowledge, it can be attained through soul purification. By keeping control over your senses, the person can make his soul raging by overcoming desires, anger, greed and ending with the knowledge of his own self. In every person the stunning soul is hidden like a fire in the smoke as a mirror that is covered in dust. Therefore, unconsciousness should be eliminated and then the soul will be as bright as the sun. As a result of this process, the person will learn equality and speech and his residence will be in knowledge. The second thing is that the person, after achieving this self-consciousness, will rise above all national and national sentiments and experience unity with the whole universe. An conscious soul sees a soul in all creatures and considers them as self-image. The third principle is to see the existence of God in each and to see God in everything.

Truth and God:

It would be appropriate to say in the beginning that for Tagore, these two words do not indicate “Truth” and “God”. The thing is that in the tradition of philosopher chintan, there has been a distinction between them. Such thinking is given importance in elemental thinking and religion related thinking. For this reason, both these names are being discussed together, but it is to be remembered that Tagore’s opinion is necessary to distinguish this kind of difference. Sometimes there are such impressions in some places that Rabindranath Tagore is also using these two words in different meaning but seeing through meditation becomes clear that there is no conceptual distinction due to the difference in expression.

Proof in the favor of God-existence:

By the way, Rabindranath Tagore does not consider given evidence to prove the existence of this supreme man “God”. According to them, God is not an object which should be made subject of intellectual and logical explanation. God is the basis of existence. His existence can be assimilated. It can be invented in its own differences. The inevitability of intellectual proofs-is not required.

But Rabindranath Tagore knows that intellectual Discussion, Debate are important in own common life. Our decorated with intellectual discussions and thoughts. Rabindranath Tagore talks about his experience that experience has not anyone. So, intellectual instructions is an important role in normal life, if such ideas get the basis of any idea or are recognized, then we accept it, start believing in it. On this point of view, Rabindranath Tagore occasionally gave some evidence to support God existence. Some of them are similar to the traditional evidence given in favor of God- existence and some are based on Tagore’s own intuition.

Delusion: Rabindranath Tagore gives importance of Delusion in God and world thinking. The concept of delusion is taken from Vedanta, but Rabindranath Tagore has envisioned it according to its specific creation. Like Vedanta, Rabindranath Tagore also says that the realization of the universe is only Maya-inspired. They call “Maya” the basis of the most comprehensive ignorance; it is the cause of world-delusion. According to them the truth is in uniformity, Maya is delusional.

Humanistic philosophy of Tagore: Tagore’s view of human beings maintains their dignity and uniqueness without diminishing God’s goodness. Tagore is frequently referred to as a philosopher of humaneness. This might be because his philosophy places human beings in a very elevated position. In terms of metaphysics, they possess many qualities similar to a deity but are also firmly grounded in the physical realm. The crown of creation is how humans have been perceived. Tagore attempts to emphasize the significance of both the

material and the metaphysical dimensions of human beings. Tagore never diminishes the dignity of a human being. In his view, the pinnacle of creation is the human being. He writes: “*Man, as a creation, represents the Creator, and this is why of all creatures it has been possible for him to comprehend this world in his knowledge*”.

A full depiction of Tagore’s religious views would be lacking without acknowledging his humanistic convictions. His focus on human values is present in all his thoughts, but he prevents it from becoming strictly anthropocentric. Tagore has a way of making not just nature and objects, but also God, more human.

Additionally, humanism advocates for social service to be the ultimate goal of religion. It is necessary to show reverence towards a human being or certain human qualities, rather than towards God. While Tagore emphasizes social service in his religion, it is not understood the same way as it is by a humanist. Tagore emphasizes the importance of social service without focusing on material gain. He hopes that people will find God or the Infinite by participating in social service. This unity is present with the rest of creation.

Finally, Tagore’s faith revolves around elevating humans to a divine status and humanizing the concept of God. The core of humanism is not the deification of humans. It views humanity and human virtues as the desired standard to which individuals should strive. Humanism does not include supernatural terms such as divine or divinisation in its dictionary. However, it cannot be denied that Tagore has been a prominent thinker emphasizing the importance of humans in his religion.

Human Nature: Tagore’s human thoughts are eccentric, because they fully acknowledge the ultimate form of God, giving humanity a specialty and dignity and honoring it with specific place in the world. Some scholars have called Rabindranath Tagore as the philosopher of humanity. Perhaps the reason for this is that in their philosophy, humans get a central place. In principle it is “God” in many forms, yet he is clearly a creature of this world. The amazing confluence of both of these forms is human.

Rabindranath Tagore has portrayed the history of biological evolution, and attempts to show from there that changes in the form of development occur only with emergence of human in the evolutionary order. The way to develop before the development of human was progressing in some mechanical form. The order of development was fully determined and controlled by physical powers and some mechanical critical rules and elements such as aggregation, adjustment, cooperation, inheritance etc. The development and revision of this kind or organism also continued to exist.

Tagore’s View of Nature: Tagore’s conception of the structure of nature can be explained with reference to the doctrine of Maya. Maya can be defined as the virtual appearance of an object, which is an actuality, not the way in which appears. It is tantamount to nescience. Tagor, however, accepted the reality of world as well as the doctrine of Maya. He wrote: “The world as an art is ‘Maya’... It ‘is’ and ‘is not’. Its sole explanation is that it seems to be what it is” Tagore does not reject maya as mere non-existence or nescience. In his view, maya exists in a sense, and it does not exist in another, P.T.Raju wrote: “*Maya according to Tagore, has being, because finitude is experienced; but it is nonbeing also, because, when our infinitude is realized, It vanishes*”.

Tagore’s concept of maya, differs from that of Vaishnava philosophers who think that maya cannot be apprehended apart from Brahman (the ultimate Reality). Unlike Vaishnavas, Tagore often uses the term maya and avidya in the same sense. He objects to the views of orthodox Hindu philosophers, regarding the concept of maya. He said : “*Some of our philosophers say that there is no such thing as finitude, it is but Maya, an illusion. The real is the Infinite, and it is only Maya, the unreality, which causes the appearance of the finite. But the word ‘maya’ is a mere name, it is no explanation. It is merely saying that along with truth at one and the same time is incomprehensible.*”

Actually, creation is the lila (play) of God. However, while assuming that world without God cannot exist, Tagore at the same time argues that God too cannot be imagined without world. Hence, God and world are interdependent, “without the God would be phantasm; without God, the world would chaos.”

Tagore believed that creation is the revelation of truth, through the rhythm of forms, and it is real. He maintained that reality and unreality of the world depend on how an individual perceives it. “The world appears to be an illusion only to those who approach it intellectually. It becomes positive and real to us when we enjoy it.” Tagore is thus able to find out a synthesis between contradictory approaches. In the words of Naravane: “*Tagore’s interpretation of Maya accounts for the remarkably tolerant attitude which he shows even towards the most extreme forms of this doctrine*”.

Tagore views maya as smoke that kindle fire .Smoke here is maya and fire is reality. Existence of smoke indicates the real presence of fire though it is not visible. According to Tagore:

“When we deprive truth of its appearance, it loses the best part of reality. For appearance is a personal relationship, further the dream persists, it is real.”

In the current society’s perception of women as inferior, Tagore believes that man and woman are interconnected as complementary parts of a unified whole. In his *Persona*, Tagore discusses the issue of women. When we examine the two elements of existence, relaxation and activity or existence and transformation, the woman’s natural inclination leans towards existence. Woman owns our domestic life and everything personal and human. The domestic realm is where we discover our personal value, which is not determined by market value, but by the love that God has placed on every creature in His mercy.

Conclusion:

Tagore attempted to communicate his educational philosophy to the current generation and ensure its relevance for future generations. He, as a social and educational reformer, took the first step to create institutions such as Vishwa Bharati and Shantiniketan as successful examples of a new education system. He emphasized the importance of providing mandatory free education to all children in India, regardless of their caste, creed, or socio-economic background. Tagore’s educational vision has influenced the overall education policies and practices in India. In today’s materialistic society, Tagore’s longing for obtaining aesthetic and intuitive knowledge remains highly pertinent. His impact on our educational system is unparalleled and memorable.

References:

- Aggarwal, N.&Choudhuri,M(2015).A study of educational thoughts of Rabindranath Tagore in Present era,International Journal of Education and Science Research Vol.2,Issue – 2,April .PP.64- 67.
- Awal, A. (2019) Tagore’s Philosophy of Education,A New Vista of Epistemology, International Journal of Academic Multidisciplinary Research (IJAMR),Vol.3,Issue 8,pp 8-11
- Bhattacharya, B (1364 BE) Rabindra Siksha Darshan, retrived from <http://grantagara.com> .
- Das S.K.(1996), A The English writings of Rabindranath Tagore Miscellany,Volume-3,Sahitya Akademi, Rabindra Bhavan,35,Ferozeshan Road,new Delhi.
- Ghosh,A.(2017).Shikhachinta Rabindranath Tagore,Karigar, Volume – 1, Kolkata, ISBN – 978-93- 81640-83-8.
- Jana,M.(1974)Educational Philosophy of tagore and its Relevance to current Educational Thought, Unpublished Doctoral thesis, University of Calcutta, Calcutta, India.

Sarkar, K.(2021) Educational Thought of Rabindranath Tagore,International Journal of Trend in Scientific Research and Development (IJTSRD),vol.5,Issue 2021,PP.866-867,

Tagore, R.(1917)Prsonality, lectures delivers in America with Illustrations, Macmillan And Colimited, St.Martin street, London.

Tagore,R.(1931) The religion of Man, Being the Hibbert Lectures for 1930, London, George Allen & Unwin LTD, Museum Stree

Citation: Henry. P., (2024) “Philosophical View of Gurudev Rabindranath Tagore: An Overview”, *Bharati International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research & Development (BIJMRD)*, Vol-2, Issue-7, August-2024.