

INSTITUTIONALISED TEACHING SYSTEM OF CARNATIC MUSIC

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ABSTRACT

Music plays an important role in the lives of human beings. In our country Music has been intensely associated with the daily activities of people. There are different stories and opinions regarding the origin of music. Some philosophical beliefs associated music with Hindu Gods. The origin of Indian music can be traced to the Vedic period. There is also an opinion that music originated from various sounds of the nature and animals. In the Rikpratishakhya (the grammar of the Rigveda) and musical treatises of India this theory finds support to some extent. Teaching of music has been considered an important aspect in the general education system as it provides a background to improve the moral character and also influences the child's inner mind for the development of overall personality.

This paper traces the background to the teaching of carnatic music from the Guru Kula system to the institutionalized system leading up to the university. This paper also identifies the various aspects of these systems, their merits and demerits and finally attempts to focus on modern trends and the role of computer in music education as well as music therapy.

Key words: Carnatic music, Hindu Gods, Music, Philosophical beliefs

INTRODUCTION

Music plays an important role in the life of human being. In our country Music has been intensely associated with the daily activities of people. In all the events of the life like birth of a child, religious rituals, festivals and even funeral pyre music an essential part. There are different stories and opinions regarding the origin of music. Some philosophical beliefs originated music with Hindu Gods.

It is mentioned in the sangitratnkara that gitam ,vadyam and nrntam all these as together known, as sangita which is two fold, Viz , Marga, desi. That which was discovered by Brahma and (First) practiced by Bharata

and others in the audience of lord siva is known as marga, which definitely bestows prosperity; while the sangita comprising gitam, Vadyam and nrmtam, that entertains people according to their taste in the different regions known as desi. It is mentioned in all the classical texts that the origin of music is from Nada. We have enough proof to state that the origin of music is from the 'Vedas' the origin of Indian music can be traced to the Vedic period. During the performances of the asvametha and rajasuja yagas, the priest and the performer of the yaga, had to sing certain saman chants alternately. The wife of the performer of the yajna had to play on the vina. Dance was performed at the conclusion of the yajna.²

There is also an opinion that music was originated from various sounds of the nature and animals. The great scientist Darwin opined that music was originated from the nature by imitating the various sounds produced by the animals and birds. In the Rikpratishakhya (the grammar of the Rigveda) and musical treatises of India this theory finds support to some extent.³

Back Round

Music has become an important part of our social life. We can find from the history that music had a major role in all the activities of human being. Training of music has been considered as an important aspect in the general education especially from the school level as it provides a background to improve the moral character and also it influences the child's inner mind for the development of overall personality.⁴

Description about the Gurukula system

In ancient India the system of music education enjoyed always a higher position because the king's jamenders and other patrons took much interest to provide all the required facilities for the gurus and aspiring students. During those days music was taught in gurukula system and height place.

After upanayana (age of 7) the student is treated as a member of the family of the Guru. The school was the home of the guru. The purpose of education was to create harmonious development of all the work in the guru's family. The student were known as gurukula wasess' Unlike the institutionalized system the selection of the students was completely depended on the guru decision. There were no compulsions on the

number of students or different categories. The talent and dedication was the only quality the guru looked for.

In the gurukula system optimum standard was sure for a talented and hard working student. As there were no other distractions forwards any other area or discipline the student had no other choice except involving completely in the process of learning the art. This involvement was one of the major aspects of this system, which helped to achieve the complete knowledge. As the student learned under one guru for a long period it provided him / her to become a master of that particular style.

Ancient Indian education in general contained the spiritual aspects of life, self – control and a particular direction for developing the sense of reality and values of life. The aim was to acquire self- fulfillment and not merely the acquisitions of objective and materialistic knowledge. In the ancient education of Indian the individual guru was the center of the system. Guru Kula was the residential school run by a single individual. Guru Kula system was existed from the ancient time for music education also Guru Kula system of music education was there in the ‘Vedic’ period itself. During the Vedic period there was a music education but there is no mention about any sang it Salas or any such Institutions.⁵

Institutionalized set up of music education in carnatic music

Institutionalized system of music education in its present form took a formal shape mainly during the 20th century. As in any other fields the learning of music and other performing arts have also undergone many changes. Though we had the guru Kula system of music education during the earlier centuries the modernized life style of the 20th century paved way for education in performing arts through academies, colleges and universities. Dr. Narayana Menon says” The Guru Kula system served us admirably for a long period. But now the social organization is changing rapidly and with it our ways of living. The system today may see an anachronism we are in the throes of metamorphosing in which a static feudal society is being rapidly transformed in to a lively democratic one.⁶

Establishment of Institutions

During the British rule the western culture paved the way for English education in India. During 1857 universities VIZ, university of Madras, university of Calcutta, and university of Madras were established along the line of the University of London. After wards a number of Universities were established.⁷

Traditional guru was reluctant to teach music persons out of their family. Such students had to undergo lot of struggle to win the heart of the guru and to get a placement among the other students. During the British Rule there was a great influence of the western culture and the education system of the country also undergo went rapid changes. The major change was introduction of music and other art form in schools and other institutions ailing with other subjects. There was a great need for making music easily available for the common masses. It is during this time some maestros came forward with some special efforts for making it freely available from the clutches of the guru Kula system. Some of such personalities were G. N. Balasubramaniam, Muthaya Bhagavadar, Musiri Subramaniya Iyer and Semmangudi Srinivasa Iyer.

Dr. Gowry Kuppaswami and Dr. M. Hariharan opine that before two or three generations there was no school or college for music. Gradually with the changes occurred in the socio economical field, music Teaching was also introduced in schools and colleges. "Modern education brought with it a rediscovery of India's past and a critical appreciation of the cultural contributions of the county. On the one side appeared the expositions of Indian Music by non-Indian music connoisseurs and listeners like Captain C. R. Ray, Fox strange ways and others and on the other arose Indian musicologists like Raja Surendra Mohan Tagore and pandi Bhath kande in the field of Hindustani music and Vidwan Subbrarama Dishitar and Sri. chinnaaswami Mudaliyar in Carnatic Music who collected and published all that was available of the theory and practice of Indian music in the two schools. The stage was now set to organizing music institution and courses of study in music.

It has been found from the newsletter 'Hindu music' published by Gayan Samaj office, Bombay in 1887 that to promote the Hindu music an Institution called Poona Gayan Samaj was established on 3rd October 1874 at Bombay. It has been mentioned, "On the 18th of August 1883 a Branch Association was established at madras. This Association had also the fortune of securing His royal Highness the Duke of Connaught His Excellency general Sri Federica Roberts Theis Highnes the maharajas of mysore Travancore and vizianagaram as it patrons.

It is also mentioned that two schools were established to teach music "Two schools were started during the year One in Triplicane and the other in Town. The strength of the two schools is fifty and gracious instruction on vocal and Instrumental music is imparted from the series of books systematically arranged and published with progressive lessons

on Hindu music by our member and Telugu teacher of pacheappa's school, Mr.Singara charulu.

Before the introduction of music in the Universities many Institutions came up for teaching music many of these non statutory institutions were established only as examining bodies and some conducted teaching as well as examination. In the beginning this system developed only in the North. There was a model devised by Non-statutory institutions, some of which mainly examining bodies, and some combined teaching and examination in almost equal proportions. These Institutions have a history of about 25 to 50 years before the Introductions of music in Universities. 8

The formal system of Institutionalized teaching system of carnatic music started taking in 19th / 20C. In 1919 Maharajah College of music & Dance, Vizianagaram was established. Annamalai University introduced in 1929 in the music college with Diploma course (sangeethe Bhooshanam). Madras University introduced B.A. Music in Queen mary's college, madras in 1930. In 1931 two more institutions came up in madras. Central College of carnatic music and the other teachers training college. Swathitirunal music academy, Trivandrum and kalakshetra were established in the year 1936. Some of the other Institutions established for teaching of performing Arts during this Period were kerala kalamandalam in 1941 and Tyagarajah Govt. College of music and Dance, Hyderabad in 1952. Presently more than one dozen Universities of south India and a few of North are providing facilitation for teaching carnatic music with different types of diploma and degree courses.

University

Universities are the centers of higher education where the training is imparted in every field of like to mould the students as better citizens to meet the challenges of the society and for building the Nation with all scientific and technological developments. Universities also preserve and propagate the cultural heritage of our country. 9

When the music was introduced in the University system it was included just like the other department of the arts faculty. The University offering music as a subject does not provide special facilities needed for the subject. Only a few Universities with separate facilities of performing Arts able to provide some sort of special assistance to the music students. For the students of music facilities like listening room with

sufficient number of recorded of music, recording studio; audio and video library, auditorium etc as the essential parts for learning and Understanding the art in a professional way.

The present institutionalized system has been established principally to give balanced weightage for Lakshya and Lakshana part of the discipline. The system is based on broad based education and a student of music is benefited with the opportunities to understand about the other subjects also. The compositions of carnatic music are mostly in languages like sanskrit, Telegu, and Tamil etc. As the Universities are having different departments for languages the student has the facility to clear the doubts regarding the language aspect.

Aspect of University system

Another good aspect of this system is that the students are trained under many teachers, which gives them the exposure to different styles. Students are provided with the facilities of well equipped libraries. Students are provided with the facilities of and listening rooms with rare collection of audiocassettes and compact discs of great musicians. All the Universities and college are funded by the govt. to establish these modern facilities for the benefit of the students. But there is a need for proper guidance in the learning process of music with these equipments. One should attain High proficiency in music to start learning through cassettes otherwise it will be just an imitation resulting faulty rendering of the compositions and ragas.

Music cannot be compared with other subjects like humanities, literature and science etc. because it takes a continuous, regular and long- term training and it should be started at an early age. Other subjects can be observed within a short duration with intensive study but performing arts need in own time for maturity and technical expertise of the subject.¹⁰

Merits and Demerits of Institutionalized system

The major benefit of the Institutionalized system is that it offers training in music for hundreds of students both boys and girls. There is a balanced syllabus of practical and theory. Though the period of learning is less, the system ensures a minimum quantum of practical and theory. The students also get an academic approach with a balanced and systematic teaching of music with other subjects.

In the Institution a student is exposed to various kinds of opportunities provided by the govt. and U.G.C. like libraries with huge collection of

books, cassette libraries with rare recordings, listening rooms for listening to the choice ragas and compositions, recording studios for recording and learning the techniques exposure to lecture demonstrations, concerts, seminars and financial assistance as scholarships and fellowships etc. In this system a student has the opportunity to learn under different teachers thus benefiting by getting a chance to analyze various styles and to develop the best out of them.

Institutionalized system provides job opportunities the income of musicians was only from the concerts. Some of the musicians were lucky to have the patronage of the royal families and zaminders. But majority of them was financially backward due to unemployment. After the emergence of the institution musicians are appointed as teachers.

Demerits

There are some defects also in this system. Institutions due to various reasons it becomes a compulsion to admit a large number of students in different lively of talent. Because of this some times the highly talented students are deprived of receiving the desired training. Unlike the guru Kula system there is a fixed syllabus to be completed in a particular duration of time. This will lead the teaching process in a hurried manner. Since the portions are to be completed in a given time, basic exercises cannot be taught with sufficient time, which may lead to an immature foundation.¹¹

Modern Trends in Music Education

The societies in changing everyday and so are the needs of the society. It is generally accepted that any person or even subject, should continuously be useful for the changing needs of the society. There are so many new avenues opened in other disciplines such as Open University system, distance, correspondence education etc. there is a need to prove music as a useful subject to the society according to the requirements. Music therapy is such a subject, which has to be promoted as it is directly related to assist for creating a healthy society other subjects like computer music, voice culture and acoustics etc. are also needed special attention.¹²

Computer and Music

Now – a - day's computer has a major role in all the fields and education in no exception. A computer can produce many variations of Sounds without any limitation. If the computer is compared with any other musical Instrument we can see that the musical instrument can produce only of its own particular sound but the computer can produce the sound of so many varieties of musical instruments including human voice.

For music students and researchers computer is a very helpful device for technical references through internet and for data storage. One can also store the notation of all the composition for future reference. Computer can also be used to produce music just like a violin and piano but computer is a machine, which requires a musician to produce music. In one way computer can be considered as a most advanced musical instrument for creating computer music the operator should have basic knowledge of mathematics and computer science for doing the job properly but the programmer should have the knowledge of sound and the idea of sound, which in produced naturally and telephonically. Computer music is very much useful in the field of film and light music.

Music Therapy

There are various beliefs through out the ages about the healing powers of music around the world. There are many famous stories on the power of music associated with great musicians of the past. "Goutama Buddha expounded his great teachings through the mediean of the velna. Tansen and Beiju Bawara during the time of Akbar, the great mugal Emperor excited fire and melted stones by their music. There are other legends equally inrestesting connected with devotional songs of great saints.

It has been scientifically proved that music has wonderful effects to induce a state of tranquility and peace on all living beings. Music creates a smoothing effect to the ears and it infancies the central nervous system and the brain to create a state of tranquility. This helps to induce the same effect in all the organs of the body. Psycho functional disorders like peptic ulcer, high blood pressure headaches etc. are due to the disturbances of brain created by various emotions. When there is an emotional break down the heart and blood vessels are badly affected. The heart begins to beat faster and the person begins to sweat. When these emotions are controlled all these disorders vanish and the person becomes normal.

Music helps a person to concentrate, as it is pleasing to the ears. After a few minutes he completely involves in the enjoyment of music forgetting all other thoughts. This concentration creates a sense of calm and bliss in the mind.

Many western scholars have conducted research in this field max sohoen an American conducted an empirical study of 20000 mood change charts from 200 records and found that music produces a change in the existing state of listener. These changes were classified into 6 categories namely,

1. Dreamy, tranquil, soothing and soft,
2. Sentimental passionate, yearning, pleading and melting,
3. Solemn, spiritual, grave,
4. cheerful, exciting, exhilarating,
5. Martial, majestic,
6. Sensational, thrilling

These conclusions of max sohoen are that music produces a definite effect and the most dominant of the effects is a feeling of the rest, and that vocal music has a great power of producing effects than in instrumental music.

Music is highly helpful in the treatment of diseases like neurological disorders and psycho somatic disorders. Now there are many modern instruments and appliances available for scientific experiments for measuring the variations of the effects of music on human beings.

Dr. S. Srinivasan says "Music therapy has been shown to reduced the incidence of cardiac complication and improves stress related changes in cardiac rate and rhythm. Similar beneficial effects have been found on the blood pressure, digital temperature anxiety scores and soon".¹³ It is certainly proved that music is a subject not only for the entertainment but also in the clinical management. But there is a need for proper studies on the systems of music.

Analysis of curriculum

The Introduction of music as a subject in the Universities and colleges helped the common mass to learn music easily. Many students learn music privately along with their studies in the school and after passing the higher level (A/L) examination join for a degree course with out basic training in music. Since there is a prescribed syllabus to be completed with in a fixed duration, fresh students find it difficult to

complete the portions in a proper way and in such cases even after obtaining a degree the expected standard in the subject is not achieved.¹⁴

Curricula changes

The curricula of the performance oriented courses like B.mus,B.F.A. mus should be framed with more number of compositions and ragas. In some curricula of undergraduate courses, portions of abhyasa gana are completely excluded. The basic exercises lay down the foundation for further learning. Hence basic lesions cannot be neglected.

Capacity of teacher's selection

The University grants commission to select the successful post graduate students as the teachers for Universities and Institute. Music is totally a technical subject and efficiency of a person can be tested only through a direct performance.

Objectives

Curriculum is an action plan for undertaking a detailed course of study. When a curriculum is framed there should be certain objectives enabling the students to enter in to a profession on the lines of the training reclined in the institution. Some students learn music for self satisfaction. But it should be very clear in the mind of teachers.

Regarding the different categories of students at the time of framing the syllabus. It should also be clear in the minds of the candidates that what they are going to get after the completion of the course. Hence the curriculum must be designed as per the requirements of the students for job opportunities and other purposes. Curriculum of music should be intergraded with other discipline for providing specialization like.

- Music Teacher
- Performing Artist
- Music Arranger
- Music Composer
- Music researcher
- Music Critic
- Music Therapist etc.¹⁵

There are plenty of other opportunities also in television programmes movies and many more applied areas.

CONCLUSION

Universities and other Institutions are playing an important role to popularize and preserve the classical music. Early days, music and other performing arts were confined only to the palaces of maharajas and within a few highly places people of the society. But after the introduction of music in Universities many students got the opportunity to learn this art. This created a new history in the system of music education. Now it is the responsibility of the Institutions to Save and impart the knowledge with all its traditional values and principles.

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