

Possibilities in Enhanced Music Education for building Careers

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Music as a subject has taken significance with time. The story of music has very interestingly reached to colleges from traditional gurukuls. Since the ancient times in India, music was taught with traditional norms under the tutelage of a guru in a gurukul with strict rules and regulations in a rather conservative setting. Traditional perceptions gained the top most rank for guru as well as his pupils. Under this kind of setting students were bound in a specific way of music and living. It took a lot of discipline and time for a pupil to nourish himself for the age long art to be gained through his guru.

Wayne Parker, senior researcher at Hopkins's Institute for the Academic Advancement of Youth (IAAY) says,

"Today we think in terms of math/science people or verbal/artistic people. There's that division In the past, math, music, and reading held the liberal arts together".-1

Music is not a subject that can be taught as Science or Geography. Being a practical subject vocal music is wrapped up in creativity but still it has a science of sound in it. It is perhaps the combination of almost all the subjects be it science or social sciences; physics or math; therapy or spirituality; psychology or any other aspect of studies.

It is unfortunate that music teaching in schools, colleges and institutes is generally devoid of imparting creative impulses in students, rather in most cases it demands for the completion of the theoretical and practical aspects of the syllabus that acts as a burden in the minds of students. What is required is an insight into the practical, creative, psychological and effective teaching methods in this subject. There's an ardent need to create an environment that could inhibit the creativity of the students.

Even for the higher studies there ought to be an advanced syllabus that could identify with the present creative and professional working environment. Like other streams, music education can also be such that could be job oriented. There are several job options in music; rather one can be

self-employed too. Even in the present times music is taken to be leisure and as yet not attained appropriate place into main subject stream.

The reasons behind are innumerable from social to economical. The chaos in the music picture is mainly due to many reasons out of which few can be pointed as:

- inadequate musical environment in society,
- lack of the proper knowledge of music among general public,
- amateur teachers,
- lack of proper and enough workshops of music for students,
- underlying uncertainty as a profession,
- lack of knowledge of technicalities of music,
- memorizing of raga from the syllabus which has effected the creative improvisations in an individual artist.

All these and many more reasons are responsible for the state of dilemma in teaching and learning of Hindustani Classical music.

It also becomes utterly important for the music students to choose a career of their own understanding and choice in music. Today, though not to a sufficient extent but study in music and a job in music is eventually becoming a matter of respect and security. The coming of employers such as several FM Radio channels and TV and internet has created interesting as well as challenging job opportunities for the youngsters in music.

Music as a comprehensive and complex subject should be developed into a career oriented course in a wider prospective. In present times also there are few dedicated gurukuls that teach and groom students in the format of Guru-shishya parampara. Long years of teaching and through rigorous practice lots of students at first accompany their Gurus for performances and gradually begin to perform themselves. Performing is not just learning, practicing and rendering rather it is a continuous process of evolving with the art form. Explaining about the art of performance Koopman writes that it is

"to carry through in due form with purpose undertaken and itself completed as a central aspect and second, to accomplish entirely, achieve or complete.-2

Acquiring music performances as a carrier is rather an immensely rigorous task in classical music. A student has to devote years and years of dedication towards the art as well as the Guru. The responsibility of a performer lies in his abilities to make the audience receptive as well as acquaint the common audience with our tradition amiably. To achieve appreciation on his/her performances the student has to develop skills and evolve with time.

Music teaching in colleges still does not come up to the expectations of aspiring musicians. It is observed that no student has made a carrier in classical music with college training alone, one requires proper training under the tutelage of a Guru. But it is also observed that because of changing social environment a lot has changed in context of teaching and learning of music. The celebrated music scholar Ratanjankar had observed the lack of adequate techniques in music. According to him,

" In today's socio-economic conditions it is almost impossible to teach or learn music in the ancient system. No student of music can afford the money or the time that would enable him to practice tunes, months after months, year after year under the tutelage of the Ustad."-3

Keeping with the present environment in mind, it is very important for students to get introduced with different kinds of genre of music and also importantly other features about the theory and practice of music. This can only be possible with the efforts of performing individuals and groups, who could demonstrate their music, genres, forms and styles of rhythm etc to the students to enhance their musical knowledge and to set them free from all curiosities, doubts and questions.

Globalization has ushered a lot new directions and areas in music in the form of a wide and growing industry. At present the world is moving fast and people are dependent on technology for each and every work of day-to-day life. Because of such an environment, people face a lot of stress and tend to find ways to rejuvenate them through different other technological instruments and gadgets as Mobile Phone, I-Pod, I-Pad etc. Music occupies a very prominent medium of entertainment. When people listen to music they indirectly connect themselves with people working in entertainment industry. Because of a lot of socio-economic sharing between countries the music and entertainment industry has swollen wide, which

provides good job prospects for the young musicians.

Everything in this world today is connected through Internet. Internet is one giant source of music. It provides immense opportunities for musicians right from e-learning; social networking that includes building PR; gathering knowledge; reading books; ear training by listening to music from all over the world; finding ringtones, karaoke tracks and other music; uploading and promoting own music to connecting and finding appropriate jobs. There are several aspects in modern music education that must be included in the study of music.

Value added services on the Internet have become a prime source of income for the music industry. Today music is not limited to a few careers as teacher, singer, rhythm artist, composer, director, performer, background scorer, but with the expansion of the music business it has expanded and created jobs in a vast technical field in the music industry. There are few reputed institute and colleges that provide technical training in music. Presently there are more options for career in the vast sphere of music like recording, writing, marketing and management, production etc.

Career Options in Music

Music Teacher School/Private Instructor
University Lecturer/Professor
Performer

Music Journalist/Critique/writer
Private band member
DJ (Disc Jokey)
RJ (Radio Jokey)
VJ (Video Jokey)

Instruments manufacturer/shop owner
Music Store manager
Business manager with Record Label
Music Managers

Music Producer
Music Composer (film/jingle/ID)
Assistants to Composer
Music Programmer
Music Arranger
Rhythm Arranger
Audio Engineers / Sound Designer/ Mastering Engineer
App Developer
Broadcast Engineer (Radio Stations)

Pondering in present times, music education syllabus in advance studies must include:

1. Technical Training

Basic technical training related to sound should be compulsory for music students. Operating music software and recording technology must be offered as an optional topic. For a musician or vocalist technical importance in music education is significant because of varied reasons as:

Awareness of the quality of the mike

Awareness about the level of volume of the accompanying artists

Knowing the requirement of the sound level of the stage personal monitors

Knowing the real sound reaching the audience

Knowing about the use of effect processors used technically in mixers by the sound engineer for classical music and any other genre because there is difference in level setting for each kind of genres.

Technology undergoes changes every now and then, this change it so dramatic that updating oneself with it continuously is an ardent requirement. This helps in knowing its assets and using whatever is essential and valuable, accordingly.

2. Music Theory/ Music History/ Music Literature

Along with the traditional syllabus of Indian Classical music a study of updated literature becomes important. An introduction to the specific music from around the world must be included as it may help in today's globalized working environment.

3. Music Listening and Ear Training

The most important part of such a practical subject is listening. Several sessions of listening of various kinds of sounds and music enhances the ability of great perception.

4. Personality development

Personality development must be an essential part of music education. Every subject has its own importance in developing knowledge and skills. Music is a subject that itself influences personality traits in a positive manner. It helps you make active, social, extrovert, open to varied experiences. Personality development course will help students in communicating experiences and possess a distinct manner of expressing culture. Other aspects that it may help in are intellectual stimulation, being

independent, accepting varied ambiances, creating positivity in and around etc.

5. Workshops and Visiting Faculties/ Independent Personalities

Personalities from various fields related to music as in multimedia, performance, education etc. must be invited for a talk, presentation or lecture time to time for the students. This will help build a great sense and understanding of the practical world outside. It will also help to develop a broader vision relating theory and practice.

6. Computer Training and Internet

A basic computer education and Internet training must be compulsory for each student. With the advancement in technology there are various software of music as Wavelab, Sonic Sound Forge, Sonar, Nuendo, logic, pro tools etc. through which the musicians work and create desired music. The training of such software should be added as optional course for music students. There must be visiting experts in the music faculty of colleges hailing from different technical fields related to music.

7. Business management

In the present scenario of music education, there is very little awareness for career oriented courses and business management. If a student of music desires to open a recording studio or an instrument manufacturing unit or event management company or else business related to music, he/she has no choice but to wander and get the information from outer sources rather than his own teacher or expert. There must be a course specifically designed for management skills in this field.

8. Applied Vocal Training/ Performance Skills

Voice culture as a topic is of foremost importance for any student who desires to perform. Student must be trained with every aspect of performance right from the methods of self-grooming to knowing and balancing the sound on the stage before performance. It happens very often that most of the performers give their best but do not get enough response because of the faults in sound balance. Here, technical skills may be of great help. Most of the music students lose confidence in front of the mike. They must also be taught the art of singing in the mike and off mike, speaking specific sounds in the mike and other sounds off the mike. Most of the renowned performers Sonu Nigam, Jagjeet Singh, Kailash Kher, Shubha Mudgal and so many others carry along their own sound engineers.

and equipment for their performance.

AN OVERVIEW

It is a time of awareness about details in music teaching and not just completing the course before examination. In a performance at Bharat Bhawan, Bhopal, someone out of the audience, asked Pt. Bhimsen Joshi to render a particular raga, he replied very humbly that he was in learning process and he is practicing basic raga yaman which he hasn't mastered as yet. When such an established legendary maestro can say such words, it questions the pattern of music education of teaching 15 ragas in one year.

Shubha Mudgal a celebrated classical and popular vocalist speaks that the students must devote more time on brushing and nourishing their training of Indian music. She says that the stalwarts of Indian music and the schools/institutions/colleges of music must communicate in order to provide valuable music education to the students rather than just completing the syllabus. A student of music in any college learns and memorizes 10 to 15 ragas of the syllabus in a year while a student learning music and taking private lessons from a guru learns one or two raga and then practices it for the whole year to learn and discover its nuances and subtleties. -4 In a talk with Dhrupad connoisseurs Gundecha Brothers, they marked very clearly that a student must devote all his time for at least five years to practice and only then he may come out for an initial stage to perform. -5 Contrary to this the syllabus of music grants degree of bachelor just in three years leaving the students with inadequate tools to drive further in their careers.

This is a vast difference in private coaching and college education. Most of the stalwarts worry for the upcoming generation because the pattern of music education in colleges is unable to produce performers. One of the most worrying issues is the process of admission in music. Most of the colleges accept students for Bachelors courses coming from biology/math/commerce stream. Especially those students who have not learnt music in their elementary education and just opted for the subject out of peripheral interest or accidentally, land nowhere. This decreases the standard of the subject along with its practical utility and result.

The field of music is a field of creativity and it offers careers at varied places as Radio, Television, Film, Animation, Albums, Ad world etc. Musicians are also employed in companies that manufacture music instruments. They require composers and musicians who can create music samples and sounds. The computer gaming industry has another flourishing market that requires composers to provide special effects and music sounds for video games.

Though there are specific technical courses in music provided by film and television colleges and institutes mostly in metro cities, in today's scenario such courses become very essential and beneficial in music colleges and institutes in India that train students in Indian Classical music. If technical courses are provided in classical music colleges including computer and internet education, personality development, technical training in music software, handling music gadgets, sound technology, physics of sound etc, it would help the student to:

- Update oneself
- Be more aware of the music world around
- Grooming personality
- Being more confident
- Being independent
- Think better career options
- Be a better performer in both academic and social context.

There are specific policies for art education in every country and it is culture specific in each of the countries. Talking of India, our culture moves along with music and vice versa. Music is very deeply related with culture in many ways, especially in carrying along the ideas and native beliefs. Culture influences music as much as music influences culture. It has a deep relation with technology too. Basically the pattern and the methods of education in music differ in developing and developed nations. Where music is taught with the same old pattern and syllabus in developing countries, the developed nations include new media and new technologies into music curriculum, which enhances the quality of music education. There must be a robust connectivity of the schools and colleges with external music communities, organizations, groups, and performers for a better future in enhancing the quality of music education.

Education that provides a degree must not leave any student clueless about the next step to be taken in life but rather must provide and open gates of opportunities. It is an ardent need of present times, indeed for the DIY generation that the syllabus and courses in music ought to be more productive and practically valuable.

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