“The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet”

-Aristotle
Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION
1.0 Introduction

The world today is a digital one with technological advances occurring regularly at a rapid pace, with the arrival of computer, broadband connectivity, networks, tele-conferencing and dynamic new software, the world today is shrinking swiftly and becoming well-connected. Staying in tune with the technological developments, vast changes have occurred in the world of education. Yet advancement has its pitfalls: environmental degradation, climatic change and international terrorism have emerged as major concerns for education. In the face of the technological onslaught modern society has witnessed less harmony between the individual and the society. In this milieu of uncertainty, it is imperative to look back at the two major pioneer educationists of the two continents of the world- Rabindranath Tagore from Asia (India) and Maria Montessori from Europe (Italy). Both of them were leading spokespersons for compassionate humanism and culture in India and the world. In the challenging backdrop of modern times, this study seeks to look into the educational thoughts and legacies of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori and explore the relevance of their philosophies today in the modern world.

Rabindranath Tagore (1861–1941) was a pioneer endowed with international vision. He stands tall among the modern educators of India. Yet he was a versatile genius: a poet, artist, musician, dramatist, philosopher, Nobel Prize winner for literature in 1913, and an extraordinary educator. His unique vision of life and education, based on his unique and dynamic philosophy is never more relevant than a world that is ecologically threatened.

Tagore’s philosophy of education was based on his altruistic vision of life—a life of harmony with nature and self-actualization. In Tagore’s educational vision, therefore, harmony was intended to promote fullness or an all-encompassing development of human personality. Fullness is possible when the individual embraces the social and the universal dimensions. One of the important insights of Tagore’s educational vision was his stress on human relationships and universality. The aim of Tagore’s educational vision was not only to ensure individual spiritual awakening, but to
advocate the cause of internationalism based on the principle of love, compassion and humanity. Tagore believed that the best form of implementation of this vision into reality was through educational institutions. To achieve this, he developed a philosophy of education and founded a school that eventually became a university with a global village consciousness. Santiniketan, which means ‘The Abode of Peace’, was the first School that Tagore founded. The origin of the school also had a social and universal dimension. Tagore remarked that his school was a temple built for the service to humanity. Education for him was for complete living and it involved knowledge, enjoyment of life, creative work, and service to one another. Tagore’s concept of education for social development, however, was best expressed in another school he founded which was called Sriniketan, which means ‘The Abode of Prosperity’. At the apex of Tagore’s educational endeavor came Visva-Bharati University, where his vision of education for fullness, harmony, and international understanding became a reality.

Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was an Italian physician and pedagogue. She studied medicine at a time when women were supposed to be a homemaker. She did an extensive research work on how to teach children who were differently abled and mentally challenged. She started a school for normal children called ‘Casa dei Bambini’ or ‘Children’s House’ in a new housing complex in San Lorenzo, Rome. Dr. Maria Montessori applied the concepts which she developed in her research and work with mentally handicapped children. This is essentially how the Montessori Method developed.

The Montessori Method spread around the globe. Many of her ideas took root in England, in the United States, in different parts of Europe and Asia. Montessori societies were established in many countries of the world. Dr. Maria Montessori dedicated the rest of her life developing a child-centered approach to education. She lectured worldwide, wrote articles and books and developed a program to prepare teachers in the Montessori Method. Her method was adopted world-wide through her efforts and work of her followers. Later in her life while living through war and political upheaval, she became an advocate of peace education. In 1940 she came to
India when hostilities between Italy and Great Britain broke out. She was forced to live in exile for the remainder of the war. She took the opportunity to train teachers in India in her method. She returned to Europe after the war. She was nominated three times for the Nobel Peace Prize for her work in the field of Peace Education.

Rabindranath Tagore played an important role in the Indian Renaissance movement. Maria Montessori was born in a country which sowed the seed of Renaissance in the world. To have a greater understanding of the role played by the two great educators in the world we need to understand the implications of the Renaissance movement in the field of education.

1.1 Background of the Study:

The Renaissance began in Italy in the 14th century. It gradually spread to northern European countries in the 15th and 16th centuries, was a revolt against the narrowness of the middle ages. The changed attitudes toward the goals and the content of education were reflected in a few innovative schools and by the change in attitude towards the educational methods. Education was no more believed to be forced upon the students' but education was to be made exciting, pleasant, and fun for the students. The humanist ideal did not affect the lower classes, which remained as ignorant as they had been in the middle ages. The majority of the schools remained in a state of stagnation. By and large, the teachers were incompetent and the discipline was cruel. The learning methods were drilling and stressed on memorization of words, sentences, and facts which the children did not understand. The lower classes generally did not get schooling, and what some did manage to get was at the hands of teachers who often were themselves barely educated. Although the general state of education was retrogressive, there were some advanced educators and philosophers. In the 17th century philosophers, too, were beginning to develop theories of learning that reflected the new scientific reliance on first hand observation.

One of the educational pioneers of great stature was John (Johann) Amos Comenius (1592-1670). Comenius, as an eminent real educator, contributed greatly to the growth of modern methods of teaching. He wrote a book on his new method of teaching
which he styled as the ‘Method of Nature’. To Comenius, the method of teaching must be natural. Presentations must be direct so that the child can apply what he learns in his daily life. He believed that the labour of learning can be lessened if desire to learn is aroused in the child. He emphasized on making education realistic to the child. He initiated the first pedagogical revolution when he proposed to teach the name of the things with the help of pictures. His well-known ‘OrbisPicta’ is described as the first ever pictorial textbook in the history of education.

One of the men whose theories had the greatest impact on education was the English philosopher John Locke (1632-1704). According to Locke the mind at birth is a blank slate (Tabula rasa). He did not originate the idea but gave impetus to it. That is, the mind has no innate, God-given knowledge. But it does have a number of powers or faculties, such as discriminating, comparing, perceiving, thinking, and recalling. According to Locke knowledge comes when raw material of sense impressions received from objects in the external world is exercised upon these faculties. The faculties starts working once the mind has passively received sense impressions. The mind starts discriminating among and comparing the impressions, sifting and sorting them until they take shape of "knowledge." Locke's theory that the mind is made up of "faculties"--was analyzed to mean that the function of education was to "train" the mental faculties. For example, Latin and mathematics, were thought to be especially good for strengthening reason and memory. This idea led the educational practice till the 20th century; this "faculty" psychology proved wrong later. The major aspect of Locke’s theory, in terms of educational reform, was the emphasis upon first-hand experience instead of book learning which was stressed in the Middle Ages. It also led to the introduction of pictures, models, field trips, and other manifestations of education's increased respect for firsthand observation. However the materials and the methods of traditional book learning were not revised.

In the 18th century the Frenchman to strike a significant blow for the rights of individual in education was the rebellious Jean- Jacques Rousseau (1712-1778). Rousseau’s philosophy was a reaction against the contemporary social and political set up which was dominated by formalism and hypocrisy. He pointed his educational
doctrines in his famous book ‘Emile’. Rousseau’s philosophy of education is naturalistic, he wanted education to be imparted according to nature. Rousseau believed that child must be the key factor in the educational domain. The child, as Rousseau saw him, develops--intellectually, physically, and emotionally--much like a plant.

He believed, that the child was innately good, but that all social institutions, including schools, were evil, distorting the child into their own image. He was skeptical, therefore, doubted the role of formal schools in society. Irrespective of the presence of formal schools, he asserted that the aim of education should be the natural development of the learner.

Rousseau's educational thought was a complete reversal of the educational theories and practices of the 1700s "Everything, " he said, "is good as it comes from the hands of the author of nature: but everything degenerates in the hands of man."(Rousseau 1762) From age 2 to 12, therefore, Rousseau envisioned the cultivation of the body and the senses, not the intellect. He insisted that physical activity and health were of prime importance. He believed that the youngster should learn directly from experience rather than books.

Since Rousseau believed that the child is innately good and that the aim of education should be his natural development, there was little for the teacher to do except stand aside and watch. Rousseau pleaded for ‘Negative Education’. By negative education, he meant that training should precede instruction. ‘I call a negative education, one that tends to perfect the organs that are the instruments of knowledge before giving this knowledge directly and that endeavors to prepare the way for reason by the proper exercise of the senses.’(Rousseau 1762)

Rousseau’s stress on the necessity of understanding one’s pupils led to the “psychological movement” taken up by the school of reformers like Pestalozzi, Herbert Spencer and Froebel. The psychological movement flourished in the first half of the nineteenth century.
Pestalozzi (1746-1827) is the representative of the psychological tendency in education. The psychological tendency tried to reconcile between the ‘old education of effort’ and the ‘new education of interest’. Pestalozzi believed that education is the harmonious development of the individual. He for the first time emphasized experimentation in educational work instead of tradition.

Pestalozzi declared that he wanted ‘to psychologize education’. Pestalozzi started a school at Neuof in 1774. He tried to educate the impoverished and neglected children. He taught them not only the usual three R’s, but also such practical occupations as spinning, weaving, housekeeping and farming. He wrote a number of books, notably Leonard and Gertrude (1781) and ‘How Gertrude Teaches her children’ (1801) in which he expounded his educational views.

Education to Pestalozzi was ‘the natural progressive and harmonious development’ of all the child’s ‘powers and faculties’. By this he meant that consideration must be given to the hand and heart as well as the head. Pestalozzi stressed that in the end education must make way of social progress. His method was built on the belief that the senses are the reservoir of our knowledge. Pestalozzi refined Rousseau’s ideas and created an approach called ‘object lesson’. An object lesson begins with the exhibition of an object and invitation to students to describe it. The object lesson usually ended with a moral.

John Friedrich Herbart (1776-1841) too built on Rousseau’s ideas about the senses and their critical function in education. He described the mind’s function in terms of presentations and something called as ‘apperceptive mass’. It was collection of previous experiences that could be called into play to understand a new precept or idea.

Herbart was the earliest advocate of scientific methods in education. He believed that teaching methods should be designed to match the way minds work. Teachers must prepare students for new material by bringing to consciousness relevant experiences that the students have stored in apperceptive mass. The teachers and students can go on to shape the new material so that it is deposited and is accessible for future use.
Herbart’s method is highly cognitive and emphasized the activity of the teacher more than the students. To Herbart any new knowledge is acquired through the alternation of two mental processes. Ideas are assimilated in the mind through absorption and reflection. Absorption stands for clearness and association. Reflection implies system and method. Herbart suggested four steps in the educative process. They are Clearness, Association, System and Method. Herbart’s disciple Ziller divided the step Clearness into two steps- Preparation and Presentation. The other three steps of Herbart were renamed. The well-known five steps that came into being were: Preparation, Presentation, Comparison, Generalization and Application.

Herbartian method is known as the genetic method. It is the greatest contribution of Herbart in the field of educational practice. His influence on the technique of instruction may be summarized in the following way: ‘Instruction will form the circle of thought and education the character. The last is nothing without the first. Here in is contained the whole sum of my pedagogy.’ (Herbart 1858)

Friedrich Wilhelm August Froebel (1783-1852) was an idealist philosopher. He interpreted education and the development of an individual from the idealist point of view. To him life is an evolutionary process and opportunity is offered to man to reach the highest perfection through this never-ending evolutionary process. Education is the active means in that process. Every individual should be given opportunity to develop freely and fully without interference by others. Full development is essential and it should be brought by spontaneous activity. By development he meant a unified one that is intellectual, physical and moral. He considered mind, body and soul as one.

Froebel advocated a unique educational enterprise- the Kindergarten. Froebel’s Kindergarten is a small state for children. Self-activity, creativeness and social cooperation find complete application and concrete expression in the kindergarten teaching method. It consists of three interrelated activities of self-expression –song, movement and construction. Froebel devised gifts and occupations to stimulate activity. The gifts were used as tools to awaken and develop a child’s recognition of
the common, God-given elements found in nature. Occupations furnish materials for practice in certain skills, the occupation lead to invention and give the child power.

Froebel for the first time took into account the creative instincts of children for education. Kindergarten has been recognized and accepted as the best and most effective method of child development. He laid great emphasis on the creative role of environment on education. Like Rousseau, he also emphasized physical training of children. All the best tendencies of modern thought in education have been reflected in Froebel’s educational thought. He has shown the right road for further advance.

The old aristocratic Absolutism gradually weakened and came to an end in the late 18th century and the 19th century. The European expansion to new worlds, overseas led to the commercial rivalry among the European countries. With the rise in trade with the Asian and the Arabic countries and increased national wealth, colonial dominions increased. There was a social and economic transformation, along with technological advances produced industrialization, urbanization and beginning of mass labour. At the same time intellectuals and philosophers were assaulting economic abuses, misgovernment and intolerance. They emphasized on the worth of individuals. They inspired political revolutions. There was a widespread psychological change and people developed confidence in their power. This confidence gave rise to nationalism and inspired people to struggle for freedom to direct and be in charge of their own affairs. One of the significant effects of all these trends upon education was the gradual acceptance of the view that education ought to be the responsibility of the state. The new social and economic changes broadened the aims and curricula in schools. Schools tried to promote literacy, mental discipline, and good moral character, at the same time prepare children for citizenship, for jobs, and for individual development and success.

So the late 18th and 19th centuries were a period of great activity in reforming educational principles, and there was a splurge of new ideas, which led to transformation in school and classroom. Progressive education movement was a manifestation of a broader social and political reform called the Progressive
Movement, which dated to the last decades of the 19th century and the early decades of the 20th century. In the Western world spread of primary education did away with illiteracy and raised the level of social understanding. Dissatisfaction with existing schools and academic system led several educational reformers (who wished to put their ideas into practice) to establish experimental schools during the last decade of the 19th century and in the early 20th century. Proponents of the child-centered approach to education typically argued that the school should be fitted to the needs of the child and not the reverse way. Different approaches to child-centered education arose as a result of the research and special care of the physically and mentally handicapped. Teachers tried their own methods to meet the needs of such children, because the ordinary schools did not supply them. When these methods proved successful with handicapped children, there arose the question of whether they might not yield even better results with non-handicapped children.

The Italian physician Maria Montessori (1870-1952) was one of the first to become interested in educating the mentally challenged who were then referred to as "idiot children," The techniques and materials she devised for educating the mentally challenged children were so effective that many learned to read and write almost as well as normal children. Later Maria Montessori successfully applied her educational inventions in schools for ordinary boys and girls. Montessori believed in the value of self-activity, sense training, prepared environment, auto education and the importance of the child's growth as an individual. Montessori, stressed on cognitive development rather than emotional. In her school room, self-activity manifested itself mostly in introspective self-absorption.

The Indian Renaissance began in the first half of the 19th century. The Indian Renaissance was a broad movement. It included almost all spheres of life, such as political, religious, economic, social, educational, etc. The colonial rule of the English in India began during the 18th century. There was a rush of European traders in Asia after Vasco Da Gama’s discovery of the sea route to India in the 16th century. The English became the main European nation trading in India.
Renaissance in India was not an outcome of a single cause, but many factors like political, social, religious, economic, etc. Decline of the Mughal Empire led to the political disintegration of the country. India was ruled by many independent provincial rulers. Culturally the entire society became stagnant. Religious dogmatism reigned supreme. Casteism along with traditional conservatism was deeply rooted in the soil. There was chaos and confusion almost in every aspect of life. Economically the feudal system led to exploitation of the poor people. The English gradually took over the Indian subcontinent, especially with the expansion of Missionary activities. The impact of western education, knowledge and culture were indeed far reaching. As Bengal was the citadel of British Imperialism, naturally the western thought found its first explosion in Bengal.

There were different aspects of the Renaissance. Renewed interest in the study of classical literature led to the publication of journals in mother tongue. It also led to the search or revision/re-evaluation of our ancient cultural values. It recognized human worth and developed humanistic outlook. This led to the removal of evil customs like Sati and child marriage. Individual liberty was recognized as National consciousness and democratic principles surged. It marked the end of blind faith and initiated the realm of reason, fostering a spirit of scientific outlook and critical spirit.

Raja Rammohan Roy (1772-1833) was the pioneer in the Indian Renaissance Movement. He is regarded as the first modern man of the Indian subcontinent. He had a deep faith in Upanishadik Idealism and Monotheism. He had a vast knowledge of Hinduism, Islam, Christianity, Buddhism and Jainism. He first set up the Brahma or Atmya Sabha (1815). This was converted into Brahmo Samaj in 1828. He was a great social reformer who permanently launched a crusade against all forms of social evils plaguing the society. He played an active role in abolishing ‘Sati’ (1829) and other evil social customs like polygamy and child marriage. Fighting for the property rights for women, he upheld social reform on the one hand and religious reform on the other. Through the initiation of these reforms modernism gradually evolved in India. It really doesn’t come as a surprise that he is rightly called the ‘Father of Modern India’.
In the field of education his contribution is remarkable. He believed in the cultural synthesis of East and the West. He tried to synthesize the Western Rationalism with the Eastern Idealism. Rammohan Roy was greatly in favor of the Western education through the medium of English. He advocated western learning for the regeneration of India. The Macaulay Minute of 1835 and Bentinck Award 1835 introduced the western education in India. Rammohan Roy established the Anglo Hindu School in 1822. He patronized the college of western knowledge, that is Hindu college on the one hand, on the other hand, he established the Vedantic College which espoused the cause of oriental learning.

Ram Mohan Roy upheld the cause of Bengali language and at the same time embraced scientific knowledge and culture. He wrote a Bengali grammar known as ‘Gaudio Byakaran’ in 1832. He edited two journals one in Bengali (Sambad Kaumudi) in 1821 and the other in Persian (Miratul Akbar) in 1822. Raja Ram Mohan Roy will forever be remembered for his dominating role in bringing social and religious reforms.

Dwarkanath Tagore (1794-1846) was one of the first to support Rammohan Roy’s efforts of social change. He was the first Asian to enter into partnership with a British farm. He became the first Indian director in 1828 and founder of Calcutta’s Union Bank thereafter. Dwarkanath Tagore as a founder of the Landholder’s Society was one of the first to organize ‘loyal Opposition’.

Dwarkanath Tagore influenced the educational system of his day as a founder of the Hindu College and the Calcutta Medical College. He was also instrumental in the development of the liberal Indian Press, thereby being one of the first to break the taboo of crossing the dark waters. Though not in complete agreement with Rammohan’s religious convictions, Dwarkanath Tagore wholly supported Rammohan’s desire to reform the Hindu society from a medieval pattern into one more in keeping with the modern world. Both belonged to the liberal group of thinkers.

Raja Radhakanta Deb (1794-1867) opposed the views of Raja Rammohan Roy. He, along with Gourikanta Bhattacharya, Mritunjoy Vidyalankar, Ramkamal Sen and
Bhabanicharan Banerjee represented the Conservative views. They wanted to reform, keeping the old tradition without changing the basic foundations of the ancient religion and culture. They were in favor of accepting western ideas within the traditional framework of the Indian society. He was for maintaining the two social customs of ‘sati’ and ‘polygamy’. He set up a progressive school for girls in his own house. It was under his inspiration Sanskrit encyclopedia known as ‘Sabdo Kalpadrum’ was written. He helped the Calcutta School Book Society in the printing and publication of school books in vernacular. Besides this he also helped in the development of medical education. He was a remarkable combination of both the traditions of an ancient culture of India and modern western science and knowledge.

The radical group of the Renaissance was represented by the Young Derozians also known as the Young Bengal. It was led by Henry Louis Vivian Derozio (1809-1831). He was a critical thinker and a great scholar in western learning. He was against the old obsolete social customs and prejudices of the Hindu Society. He fought against the idol worship, polygamy, child marriage, caste system and the system of ‘Purdah’.

Large numbers of talented youths of Bengal were inspired by him. Most of them were his students who became his blind follower and were referred to as Derozians. They supported widow remarriage and its registration. They stood for the complete rejection of tradition and superstition. The Derozians were for acceptance of western education. Some of them also embraced Christianity and practiced a way of life that was considered improper by the traditional Indian society. Derozio was the soul of the Young Bengal movement. Voltaire, Locke, Hume and Thomas Paine were read and debated under his instruction. The discussion led to revolt against Hindu society and religion. The Young Bengal group began to shock the orthodox Hindu community by their activities. Derozio was dismissed from Hindu College in 1831. He died the following year, but his influence continued through his students.

The moderate group of Renaissance was represented by Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar (1820-1891) and Rabindranath Tagore was the last and most powerful representative of this group. Iswar Chandra Vidyasagar was a rational and intellectual humanist. He
advocated individual liberty and liberty of the press. Vidyasagar chose to work from within the framework of the state to enrich the Bengali vernacular and to produce social change within the Hindu community. He skillfully used Sanskrit passages to support Hindu widow remarriage.

He studied at Sanskrit College and joined the Bengali Department at Fort William College in 1841. Later he became the Principal of the Sanskrit College. He transformed the way Sanskrit and Bengali were taught by setting up a printing press, writing new grammars, making translations and developing new teaching methods.

In 1854 Vidyasagar was appointed Assistant Inspector of Schools, South Bengal. He set up vernacular model schools and teacher training center. The vernacular medium curriculum that Vidyasagar recommended was far from traditional. It included literature, history and culture of different countries of the world, arithmetic, astronomy, philosophy and physiology. Vidyasagar also supported female education. He established forty vernacular girls’ schools between 1857-58.

Vidyasagar’s personality in itself was a fine blend of western and eastern culture. He was a classical scholar and educated himself in the English language. He invented simple techniques of learning Sanskrit. He translated many English and Sanskrit books into Bengali. He not only embraced western education and science, but also opened the Sanskrit College for Non Brahmin students. As a practical reformer, he also introduced English in Sanskrit College. Under his guidance, teaching Bengali language became simple, lucid lively and dynamic. His *Varnaparichay* is even today of household use. There can be no doubt that he was the true representative of the Renaissance spirit.

Of the Renaissance thinkers Debendranath Tagore (1817-1906) belonged to the moderate group of reformers. He reorganized the *Brahmo Sabha* and started social reform movement on a new basis. His strategy was to enlighten the public through education, and thereby the creation of public opinion through newspapers and journals. He merged the *Brahmo Sabha* with *Tattwabodhini Sabha* in 1842. The *Tattwabodhini Patrika* founded by Debendranath in 1843, played an important role in
the development and standardization of modern Bengali prose besides disseminating ideas. Akshay Dutta was the editor of the paper for more than a decade. Debendranath initiated a vernacular school called *Tattwabodhini Pathshala* for teaching theology and science.

The Renaissance was not limited to Bengal only, it spread to other parts of India particularly Maharashtra and Punjab. The *Brahmo* Samaj movement spread in Maharashtra. Debendranath Tagore had played an important role in conjunction with Keshab Chandra Sen in creating links with reform and educational groups. Keshab Sen formed the *Prathana Samaj* in 1867. This was followed by the Poona *Prathana Samaj* of which Mahadev Gobinda Ranade was a prominent member. He was one of the founders of the Widow Marriage Association in 1861. It strongly pleaded for widow remarriage and worked for the improvement of women of the depressed section. It sponsored educational endeavors such as night classes for lower-caste workers in Bombay.

The founder of the Arya Samaj was Swami Dayananda Saraswati in Punjab in 1875. He was a great Sanskrit scholar, who espoused the mantra of ‘*Go back to Vedas*’. He was against the orthodox Hindu customs, especially caste system and child marriage. He not only preached monotheism, but to counter the caste system advocated inter-caste marriage.

Involvement of the Theosophists with India began when Colonel Olcott learned about Swami Dayanand and wrote to him from New York in 1878. This resulted in the connection between the Theosophical Society of New York and Arya Samaj in India. In 1879 Colonel Olcott and Madam Blavatsky joined Dayanand in Benaras. The groups, however, separated and the Theosophical Society was restructured. They began opening schools in Madras area that emphasized education based on ancient Indian ideals and the need for Sanskrit study.

Annie Besant (1847-1933) met Helena Blavatsky in the year 1890 and got interested in Theosophy. She became a member of the Theosophical Society. During her theosophical work she took a trip to India. In 1898 she established the Central Hindu
College in Benaras. It was a combination of Hindu monastery and English public school aimed at producing ‘pious Aryan gentlemen’. The ultimate purpose of education was to make the individual a good citizen of a free and the spiritual Commonwealth of Humanity. Annie Besant’s influence upon educational activities extended beyond Benaras as she lectured throughout India on various aspects of her school and her general theories concerning literacy and vernacular instruction.

During the last phase of the Renaissance, there arose a great figure in the personality of Sri Ramakrishna Paramahamsa who laid emphasis on the recovery of the old spiritual knowledge and experience in all its splendor, depth and fullness as the first and the most essential work of the religious and the social reform. His great disciple, Swami Vivekananda, added a new dimension by interpreting Vedanta scientifically and uplifting the masses by channelizing their thought in the political and philosophical realms. A disciple who figured prominently in the development of Vivekananda’s educational ideas was Irish educator Margaret Noble who became later Sister Nivedita. She came to India in 1896 and opened schools for girls. She disseminated knowledge of western educational theory and she became an active participant in the movement to promote national education.

In the pronouncements of Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo, we see the final stage of the Indian Renaissance. Their contribution through literature helped Indian Renaissance to become fuller and more self-conscious, and nationalism purer and nobler. The tradition, both in Indian Renaissance and political thinking of Modern India found its high watermark in Tilak, Lajapat Rai and Bipin Chandra Pal. Mahatma Gandhi contributed immensely towards giving a new direction and form to the Renaissance Movement. He brought forth into active life some of the old and characteristic features of ancient Indian culture. He was mainly responsible for turning the national struggle for independence into new channels and thereby made a rich contribution to social, religious and political ideas.

Towards the end of the nineteenth century the National education movement began taking shape in Bengal and gradually spread to other parts of India, it inspired Indian
enterprise in the field of education. Raising the standard of education at all levels. It broadened the mental horizons of the people. This awakening among the people in India led to the National Education Movement that is education under national control and based on national ideas and tradition of India. This particular development provides the perfect background for the present study.

1.2 Need of the study

The idea of social-reconstructionist education was based on a 19th-century belief in the power of education to change society. The idea that schooling could influence either society or the individual was widely held and education of disadvantaged people, in both industrialized and developing countries was given more importance. Education was seen as a primary instrument in recognizing and providing equality for those suffering disadvantage because of sex, race, ethnic origin, age, or physical disability. This required revisions of textbooks, new consciousness about language, and change in the criteria for admission to higher levels. It led to more demanding definitions of equality involving, for example, equality of outcome rather than of opportunity.

Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori are the two great educationists of the two continents of the world. Both of them were leading persons for compassionate humanism and culture in India and the world. Both of them greatly appreciated the benefits of science. Today we need such a philosophy and education which may foster unity and pave the way for brotherhood in the entire world. It is a deep conviction of this study, that the knowledge and implementation of the ideals and practices of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori will pave the way for fructification of a better and a more humane and altruistic human society.

The educational philosophy of both these educators will not only be valuable for India, but for the entire world. Besides, the educational thoughts of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori will be helpful in revising the educational system of our country.
This present study will reveal how the ideas and practices of both these educators are relevant in the present educational scenario of India and the world today. Thus, this analysis is valuable and important in order to establish and execute the educational thoughts into reality.

1.3 Operational Definitions of Terms

**Educational Ideas and Practices**- The word ‘Educational’ is an adjective pertaining to education. The word ‘Idea’ implies a thought or conception that is the product of mental activity. Educational ideas refer to the specific type or vision of education, which examines the definition, goals and meaning of education. The word ‘practices’ refer to the actual application or use of an idea, belief, or method, or theories relating to it. The aim, curriculum and method of education form the part of the educational practices. The researcher will try to find out how the educational ideas of Rabindranath Tagore were implemented in Santiniketan, Visva-Bharati and Sriniketan. The implementation of Maria Montessori’s educational ideas in her ‘The Children House’ will also be explored by the researcher.

**Rabindranath Tagore**- Rabindranath Tagore represented a synthetic view of life and culture. He was the last and the most powerful of the moderates. Rabindranath Tagore devoted his life to establish an alternate form of education. His education aimed at promoting social and environmental harmony in conjunction with the unfolding of the creative personality. This study explores the educational philosophy of Tagore. The educational aims, curriculum and methods of education as advocated by Tagore will be examined in this study. His contribution in the field of education with special reference to India will also be studied in the present study.

**Maria Montessori**- Maria Montessori was an Italian physician and educator. She is best known for the philosophy of education that bears her name and writing on scientific pedagogy. Montessori implemented a number of practices that became hallmarks of her educational philosophy and method. The present study will analyze her educational philosophy. The study seeks to inquire her educational aim,
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curriculum and method of education. Her contribution in the field of education with special reference to India will be explored in this present study.

**Comparative analysis**- Comparative analysis refers to an educational study in its comparative perspective. The analytical study of the various factors of historical perspective and the comparison of attempted solution of resultant problems are the main purpose of comparative education. Exponents of comparative education agree that before going into a comparative analysis, it would be more feasible to conduct an area study. So the educational philosophies of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori will be explored in this study first. Later a comparative analysis will be conducted of the educational ideas and practices of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori.

1.4 Research Questions

a. What is the educational philosophy of Rabindranath Tagore?

b. What is the educational philosophy of Maria Montessori?

c. What are the similarities and differences in the educational philosophies of Tagore and Montessori?

d. What are the aims, curriculum and methods of education propounded by Rabindranath Tagore?

e. What are the aims, curriculum and methods of education propounded by Maria Montessori?

f. How far are the educational ideas and practices of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori similar to each other?

g. What are the dissimilarities between Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori’s educational ideas and practices?

h. How far the ideas of Tagore and Maria Montessori are relevant in present day education?
1.5 Objectives of the Study:

i. To analyze the similarities and differences in the educational philosophies of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori.

ii. To study the aims, curriculum and methods of education as propounded by Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori.

iii. To find out the relevance of the educational doctrines of Maria Montessori and Rabindranath Tagore in the present day education system.

1.6 Statement of the Problem

Educational Ideas and Practices of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori – A Comparative Analysis

1.7 Conclusion:

The chapter introduced the subject of the study. The Progressive Education Movement in the west and the National education Movement in India provides the background of the present study. The study focuses on the comparative analysis of educational ideas and practices of Rabindranath Tagore and Maria Montessori. Both these educators have contributed greatly towards the advancement of modern educational ideas and practices. The comparative study of the two educators will help to understand how their educational visions complemented each other and paved the way for a more integrated and a better balanced society. The statement of the problem and the operational definition of the terms were stated in the chapter. The research questions and the objectives of the study were also framed in this chapter.
Chapter References


