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The Importance of Morning Riaz for the learning of Music for Kids

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Keywords: Morning Riaz, Children Music Education, Importance of morning Riaz for Kids, Vocal Development, Alankar Practice.

Abstract:

Music education has become a necessary component of the whole child development. This paper elaborates about the relevance, process, and advantages of morning riaz and alankars practices in nurturing the vocal development in children. Following the principles of Hindustani classical music, regular riaz in the new environment of the morning improves the breath regulation of a child, its tonality, swara shuddhi, and voice range. On the other hand, the practices with different patterns (Alankars) including single notes and two- or three- or four-note groups as well as zigzag or skippers make a voice of a child more flexible in addition to enhancing memory, concentration, and imagination. The article will start by outlining the general importance of music education to children with a particular focus on its contribution to cognitive, emotional, social, physical development. It describes the advantages of morning Riaz explaining the chronological sequence of warm-ups, such as omkar, humming, Sa practicing, breathing exercises, and sargam practice. The alankars section contains elaborate methodologies which can be taught to the children in a very entertaining, playful and involving way. Studies and folklore show that a straight 10-20 minutes practice session engages many parts of the brain of a child and this will enhance language ability, mathematical ability and emotional control.

Introduction

Hindusthani Classical Music cannot be done without Riaz or practice. Generally, it should be done in the Brahmanuhurta (4:00 AM to 7:00 AM) when the mind is relaxed, the atmosphere is quiet and the voice is naturally supple.¹ To amateurs and children, morning riaz does not only develop vocal strength, tonal purity, and breath control, but also develops mental concentration, patience, and creativity. This analysis discusses the need of morning riaz in terms of traditional wisdom. It emphasizes 20-45 minutes of foundation practice (including Kharaj, Alankars etc) to beginners, and 20-30 minutes of playful and stress-free routine of children.² The results show that Riaz in the morning is a very effective method of long-term vocal growth, cognitive and mental development. It is not only the basic education of music but also the preparation of the way of life. The word Riaz in classical music is not only means practice, but also it helps to bulid up discipline. Riaz involves the regularity, repetitive and deep practice that incorporates the swaras, alankars, taans, meends, gamaks and grammatical structure of Ragas. This is the sadhana in the ancient Guru-Shishya Parampara tradition.³ Morning riaz is specially is the way to be the best of all practices. Behind the Riaz, just about one and a half hours before the rising of the sun is more traditional motives, at this time the mind is calm, the surroundings is quiet and the voice is naturally lubricated. Contemporary musicians have also given it credit as the main building block of success.⁴ In the morning, mental concentration is increased and the vocal cords are fresh and rested. Morning riaz is also essential to beginners because they can be able for developing their habits and promote

the basic vocal purity. This practice or riaz must be even more careful in the case of children or kids. Kids have very sensitive voices and less attention spans; hence, short, fun and playful practice sessions assist in maintaining their interest and in developing their minds. Within the framework of contemporary living, a significant number of people would fail to take morning riaz into consideration. As a result, the vocal stamina is reduced and instability occurs in the pitch. This Morning riaz will help to feel the need, advantages, prerequisite tools, habits, and possible obstacles of morning riyaz among beginners and children through the method of analysis. This work tries to offer practical advice through reconciliation between tradition, scientific principles and real-world experience.

Methodology:

1. During the preparation of this paper an Analytical study has applied.
2. Comparative study has been also implemented here.
3. Data was carried out from some hard copies of book, internet archive.org, you tube etc etc.

Literature Review :

1. "IMPORTANCE OF RIAZ IN INDIAN CLASSICAL MUSIC"

by Dr. Esita Chakraborty, in this book at the chapter 3 (p. 24), the basic principles and purpose of riaz are beautifully elaborated. The Importance of Environment (Chapter 8, p. 78) contains a remarkable section asserting that effective of riaz, and thenecessitates, both an internal state and conducive external surroundings. The line, "It requires extended periods of extreme concentration," particularly inspired me.

2. THE PSYCHOLOGY OF THE CHILD"

This book is a classic and a masterpiece of developmental psychology. It was first published in French in 1966 (as *La Psychologie de l'Enfant*) and subsequently translated into English in 1969 (by Helen Weaver). It was written by two authors- Jean Piaget (the world's most influential child psychologist) and Bärbel Inhelder. The book is a concise synthesis spanning merely 192 pages incorporating the essence of Piaget's theory. It is not a dense theoretical text; rather, it is written with simplicity and clarity. The essence and strength of the book is that Piaget demonstrates how a child's mind actively constructs knowledge, rather than merely passively absorbing information. The book discusses in detail the four stages of a child's psychological development and presented chapter-wise. It also illustrates how thought, language, play, and morality develop in a child according to their age. This theory help me out to put the psychological aspect which is needed for this paper.

3. SANGITSHASTRA, 1st volume,

By Indubhusan Ray, the author has written in simple Bengali—with clarity and in a manner specifically for the

needs of students. It encompasses not only theoretical concepts but also practical applications—such as the practical guidelines for performing Bandishes (compositions), Alap-Vistar, Tans, and similar elements. This is not a book for just reading, but rather a work designed to lay the fundamental groundwork for musical education. Indubhusan Roy has demonstrated that classical music is not merely the act of singing; it is, in fact, a synthesis of Shastra and Sadhana. This work is written to impart the fundamental foundations of classical music. The first volume primarily covers Swaras (musical notes), Saptaks, the introduction to Ragas and Raginis, Tala and Laya and notation systems, and the historical and theoretical aspects of Hindustani music. This book is a special reference for making this article.

In fact specially from this three books this paper get a lot of experimental way to express itself.

Traditional way of Morning Riaz.

Hindusthani Classical Music has termed riaz as Nad Sadhana.⁵ Older texts, music defines as a way to self-realization, which can be achieved by listening to music and practicing. This time of the day is considered the most favorable of all since in Yoga and Ayurveda the Sattva Guna (the quality of purity and harmony) is predominant during this time of the day and night, the Brahma Muhurta (the pre-dawn period). Exercising early in the day can be of use in calming the mind and increasing focus.⁶ The peace of the morning hours helps the artist to get a deep feeling of unity with the manual tanpura. Kharaj is a very promising practice especially in the morning when the voice by nature will deeper and richer at that time.

Physiological and Scientific Views.

When one gets up in the morning the muscles of the vocal apparatus are in a more relaxed state. Long musical notes when being practiced are used to strengthen the vocal folds, as well as the diaphragm.⁷ Circadian rhythms suggest that the learning ability of the brain is maximum in the morning. It has been shown that practicing music frequently changes the brain structure and improves memory and concentration. Breath control is also like Pranayama- it enhances oxygenation and minimizes stress. It enlarges the lung capacity and decreases mental stress in children, in particular.⁸

The Necessity of Morning Riaz to kids and a practical routine

The morning riyaz (vocal practice) is not just a habit at the beginner stage but it is a scientific procedure of establishing the very foundation of a voice. This is due to the fact that the vocal muscles are naturally supple and fresh after a night rest hence the ability to maintain long tones and create tonal stability. The levels of cortisol are balanced in the morning and the concentration of the brain is at its highest level. The blood circulation to the vocal

cords becomes enhanced thus improving the vocal resonance and stamina. It has shown that morning warm-up helps the voice to avoid damage and in the long run, it increases the vocal range. Morning riaz in comparison with irregular or evening practice sessions creates neural pathways much faster and Swara Shuddhi (tonal purity) is achieved much easier.⁹

Material and Preparation: The material and preparation which are necessary in the case of beginners are the following.

1. An atmosphere of silence;
2. A Manual Tanpura
3. After Sleep (7-8 hours)
4. Take of lukewarm water;
5. Light Pranayama (breathing activities).
6. Try to tune the Tanpura by own
7. Play the tanpura by own
8. Omkar
9. Humming
10. Sa.....
11. Mandra saptak riaz
12. Murchhana riaz
13. Alankars in mandra saptak etc etc .
14. Some form of recorder to capture the singing and have the ability of playing it back and being aware of where it should be better.
15. The first option is to first seek advice of a Guru (teacher) or in online classes since some of the incorrect ways of doing things that one might learn at an early age are extremely difficult to reverse in old age.

The Music Education for Children:

There are several advantages to Music Education

Cognitive Development:

Music improves memorization, concentration, and problem-solving capacity of a child. The children who learn music, maybe they can perform better in mathematics and academics that how to find patterns in melody and rhythm will enhance the skills in language and mathematics.

Emotional, Psychological Development:

The music is used to show the feelings of children. It relaxes the mind, reduces stress and build up self-confidence. By singing or playing a musical instrument, a child learns to know their feelings even better and to be able to control them.

Social Development:

Group singing and practicing is an ensemble teaches children the concept of teamwork, collaboration, and working relationships. This is a way that promotes socialization and develops empathy.

Physical Development:

Listening music and playing a musical instrument improves the motor skills of a child (hand eye and body coordination). It promotes communication of the body and the brain.¹⁰

Educational Advancement:

Musical learning enhances the performances of children in other school subjects. The children that have been trained in music may be have better results in standardized tests also.

Vocal Development:

In Hindustani classical music, Riaz is known as Swar Sadhana (the school of musical notes); this trains the vocal cords of the children, increases the control of breath, and swar Shuddhi (precision of pitch). When it comes to children, morning riaz is not only implies singing, but also slowly training their voices to the point where in the future they will be able to move up and down without using their vocal cords to their best. It is an important part of their comprehensive musical upbringing.

Riaz in the morning has some effets, like:

- 1.The clean fresh air makes the breathing system refreshed and it improves the voice strength.
- 2.The mind starts the day alert and attentive hence it is easier to pick musical notes.
- 3.Morning Riaz develops voice culture, in particular, it develops the vocal sweetness, resonance, and projection.
- 4.In the case of children, the practice builds up the vocal cords gradually thus avoiding the vocal strain or soreness in old age when singing.
- 5.The studies and experience show that regular morning riaz increases the range of a child, enhances pitch control and self-confidence.
- 6.The advantages of Morning Riaz to Vocal Development.¹¹

Preparation fo Riaz in general :

1. Take some water as soon as you get up in the morning.
2. It should be held in a clean and quiet place.
3. Accompany with a harmonium or tanpura (plain applications or recordings may as well be used with children).
4. Omkar
5. Deep Breathing, Omkar
6. Humming
7. Beginning with Sa progressing slowly up and down the octaves. In the case of children, a basic Sa-Pa-Sa would work.

Alankars (Vocal Exercises):

- 1.The easiest exercises like Sa Re Ga Ma Pa, then the reverse order. Starting slowly and progressively with speed.
2. Meend

Moving on another musical note so smoothly.

Schedule by Age Group:

1. 4-7 Years: 10minutes -Humming and simple nursery rhymes only.
2. Ages 8-12: 15-20 minutes Sa-Re-Ga-Ma and simple vocal ornamentation (Alankars).
3. Ages 13 and above: 20-30 minutes -Detailed and challenging practice (Riaz).

Part to be played by the Teacher or the Guardian:

To make the child motivated, to correct the mistakes as and when they happen and to avoid forcing the child to practice unwillingly.

Alankar Practice:

The ornamentation of musical notes is called Alankar . These are also known as Palta. Practice of Alankars that help to involve time arrangement of different musical notes (Swaras – Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni) in certain orders; they are also used to render the voice flexible, powerful and controlled. As a practice among children, Alankar practice is an important component of their morning Riaz (vocal practice routine). It improves the pitch accuracy, memory, concentration and range of the voice on a child. When the children do the practice of Alankars, several parts of their brain become active hence helping in their holistic development. The practice should be started slowly, at a slow pace and the speed slowly increased. Training with the assistance of a harmonium or Tanpura is also useful to note the pitch accuracy.

Importance of Alankars practice to the children:

1. Development of the voice: Strengthens the voice cords and learns to control the breath.
2. Pitch Accuracy: Development of an idea of the exact intervals between the notes (Sa-Re-Ga-Ma-Pa-Dha-Ni-Sa).
3. Creativity: Prepares the path to the future singing of Raga Alap, Taans and songs.
4. Mental Releasing: Develops patience, education and focus.
5. Among children, Alankars must be learnt in a light and playful way- perhaps in hand-clapping or dancing with the singing.

Simple Principles of Alankar Practice.

1. Saptak Starting with the Madhya Saptak (middle octave). Add the Mandra Saptak (lower octave) and Taar Saptak (upper octave) as required.
2. Taal: Practice in free rhythm (without a given beat); practice in a given rhythmic cycle (e.g. Ektal or Tintal).
3. Pace: begin slowly, then to the middle, then slowly but gradually increase its pace.
4. Technique: Having practiced the Aaroh (ascending) first and then the Avroh (descending). During the practice, hold the note of the harmonium or Tanpura Sa.

4. In the case of Children: Do not exceed 5-15 minutes in practice. In case of errors, rectify them in a patient and tender manner. Give much encouragement and applause.

Some Alankars with Detailed Examples

Presented below are several common *alankars* (*m a = M, Pa = P, Dha = D, Ni = N, Sà = Š (High Sa).elodic exercises) suitable for children. Notation Key: Sa = S, Re = R, Ga = G, M*

1. Simple Sargam Alankar (Basic Straight Sargam)

Ascent (Aaroh): Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni Sà

Descent (Avaroh): Sà Ni Dha Pa Ma Ga Re Sa

Singing Instructions: Sing the notes slowly, one at a time.

Example: Sa... Re... Ga... Ma... Pa... Dha... Ni... Sà... (Then descend).

Benefit: Teaches smooth transitions between notes.

2. Double Note Alankar

Ascent: Sa Sa, Re Re, Ga Ga, Ma Ma, Pa Pa, Dha Dha, Ni Ni, Sà Sà

Descent: Sa' Sa', Ni Ni, Dha Dha, Pa Pa, Ma Ma, Ga Ga, Re Re, Sa Sa

Example: Sa-Sa, Re-Re... (Each note sung twice).

Benefit: Practice in sustaining notes.

3. Three-Note Alankar (Three-Note Groups)

Ascent: Sa Re Ga, Sa Re Ga, Sa Re Ga Ma, Pa Dha Ni Sà

Descent: Sà Ni Dha, Sà Ni Dha, Sà Ni Dha Pa, Ma Ga Re Sa

Example: Sa-Re-Ga | Sa-Re-Ga | ...

Benefit: Teaches how to recognize notes in small groups.

4. Four-Note Alankar (Highly Popular)

Ascent (Aroh): Sa Re Ga Ma, Re Ga Ma Pa, Ga Ma Pa Dha, Ma Pa Dha Ni, Pa Dha Ni Sà

Descent (Avaroh): Sà Ni Dha Pa, Ni Dha Pa Ma, Dha Pa Ma Ga, Pa Ma Ga Re, Ma Ga Re Sa

Singing Steps (Example):

First Group: Sa Re Ga Ma

Second Group: Re Ga Ma Pa

Third Group: Ga Ma Pa Dha

... Continue in this manner.

Benefits: Teaches the step-by-step ascent and descent of notes; expands vocal range.

5. Vakra Alankar

Ascent (Aroh): Sa Re Sa, Re Ga Re, Ga Ma Ga, Ma Pa Ma...

Descent (Avaroh): Sà Ni Sà, Ni Dha Ni, Dha Pa Dha...

Example: Sa-Re-Sa | Re-Ga-Re | ...

Benefits: Practices rapid note transitions; serves as preparation for Taans.

6. Skip Alankar (Alternate Notes)

Example: Sa Ga, Re Ma, Ga Pa, Ma Dha, Pa Ni, Dha Sà

Descent (Avaroh): Sà Dha, Ni Pa, Dha Ma...

Benefits: Develops an understanding of the intervals between notes.

Conclusion:

The education of music is an important part of the holistic approach of all-round development of a child. In this purpose, morning riaz and the practices of alankars (vocal ornamentation) are special significant as they help to perfect, and beautify the voice of a child. Practicing or riaz in the morning helps to take the fresh air they strengthens the breath, increases the tonal accuracy, and increases the vocal range. On the other hand, alankars (or palta) is a routine that exercises the brain of the child with the different melodic patterns, which enhances the memory, concentration, and creativity of the child. This music education and vocal training has a great impact on the cognitive development of the children. In a particular manner it improves the executive processes such as the working memory, cognitive flexibility etc. Another benefit of riaz is the emotional growth of a kid that helps to enhance self-confidence, removes anxiety, learn how to be social. Alankars do not only make a kid into a trained singer but also help to develop in the child's important values in life like patience, discipline, and concentration. Even a short practice session in a day is enough for a slow pace of practice and a gradual increase in the speed. If possible to use instruments such as the harmonium or tanpura, or even just mobile applications during this practice.

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