

The study of individuality in the works of Rajneesh; A critical study

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Abstract

Presently, common people as well as intellectuals in the society have been glorifying the material aspects of life alone without giving importance to the 'core values' of life. Hence, people are developing aggressiveness, lethargy and listless life. Therefore, they are losing their ground and finally are becoming victims to the circumstances. Unless, there is 'right vision' towards life, it will be difficult to be free from bondage, exploitation and so on. It is high time that the Academia and the Industry acknowledged the importance of ancient Indian approach in the practice of individuality to develop self-awareness leading to manage oneself and others properly to nurture non-violent communication, interpersonal relationships, decision-making, stress-management, problem-solving, creative and critical thinking. Hence, it is essential to combine the essence of teachings in a scientific and realistic manner, as propounded by Rajneesh in order to improve relations, enhance healthy environment to live a quality life. Hence, it is necessary to enhance individuality in the education system-UG level- to balance Academics and life for health and happiness.

With this background, the paper focuses and looks upon the relevance of Rajneesh works to enhance the quality of life among students. The author, here, shares his professional experience in the academia.

Key words: Individuality, core values, right vision, non-violent communication, and self-awareness.

This study proposes to examine the study of individuality in Rajneesh.³ He lived and showed scientific and mystical approach towards life. He took to new ways to arrive at individual awareness. He attempted to prepare the modern mind to understand the new practical approaches

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³ 'Rajneesh' Chandra Mohan Jain (1931 – 1990) also known as Acharya Rajneesh, Bhagwan Shree Rajneesh and as Osho was an Indian mystic, guru and spiritual teacher who has an international following. His works extended over 600 books, several thousand audio and video discourses.

towards wisdom. He was not discussing metaphysical⁴ thoughts. His writings reveal an intense vision of human life. His works will examine and infer the writings and bring to the light of its profound vision. The main focus of the research is to critically study the ‘individuality’ in the works of the author mentioned above. Kushwant Singh (1970) says, “Rajneesh was perhaps the first of the great teachers who had carefully examined tenets of other faiths....” Kushwant Singh says that Rajneesh had studied them from original sources. Rajneesh has developed his own methods suitable for the modern generation. Aubrey Menon(1974) writes that he had listened to great orators like Adolf Hitler, Kennedy, Nehru, but he was never influenced by anyone. When he heard Rajneesh, he heard a totally different kind of being. He was spontaneous and his talks were absolutely unprepared. Menon says that he could not believe that fifty thousand people were sitting so silently as if there was no one – pin drop silence. He says, “I understood the meaning of the phrase for the first time.”

As per dictionaries, individuality means, “A total character peculiar to and distinguishing an individual from others; a personality”. Rajneesh (1976) says, “The word is good it simply means one who cannot be divided it means indivisible. Individuality is a fragrance of a really centered being. One who knows who he is”. Everyone is unique. It’s good that everyone cannot become engineers, doctors, and scientists; one must find one’s way. Friedrich Nietzsche (1987) says, “This is my way; where is yours? Thus I answered those who asked me ‘the way.’ For the way-that does not exist”. Persons who contributed immensely to the humanity have one thing in common and that is individuality.

Rajneesh (2006) says, “Each person is born with a unique individuality, and each person has a destiny of his or her own. Imitation is crime, it is criminal. If you try to become a Buddha, you may look like Buddha, you may walk like him, you may talk like him, but you will miss the essential. You will miss all that life was ready to deliver to you. Buddha happens only once. It is not in the nature of things to repeat. Existence is so creative that it never repeats anything. You cannot find another human being in the present, in the past, or in the future who is going to resemble you exactly. It has never happened. The human being is not a mechanism like Ford cars on an assembly line. Never imitate anybody...” Hence, it is pertinent to help a child to become

⁴ Based on speculative or abstract reasoning

an authentic individual. If the mind is dominated by continuous thoughts of struggling, conflicting etc., it cannot produce a new, fresh and clear mind. Hence, only a free mind can be creative and independent. If there is freedom from authority, there will be originality.

Need and justification

Rajneesh (1982) says, “You can be creative only if you are an individual, you cannot create as a part of the mob psychology”. An individual, who is not influenced by a mob psychology values life immensely and does not get discouraged by adverse circumstances, as an individual, s/he is not easily prone to violence, bitterness and egocentrism. Rajneesh (1987) says, “It is always the individual who has the capacity to rise on the winds, just like an eagle flying alone across the sun, to greater and greater freedom.” Hence, an individual, who is not accustomed by others influences, and depends on himself for his own growth can immensely promote well-being of others around him.

Rajneesh (1987) says, “With the crowd there is a certain security, certain coziness - just watch a crowd of sheep, how they move. They don't even leave spaces. Touching each other's' bodies, they move as if they have one consciousness. And they are happy in their non-individuality”. In this world, whosoever has contributed to the welfare of everyone, they have created their own paths. But, people either torture them when they are alive or worship them after their death. In this regard, j. Krishnamurti(1954) says, “The system has become important, men you and I have lost significance; and the controllers of the system, whether religious or social, whether left or of right, assume authority, assume power, and therefore sacrifice you, the individual.” He says a system cannot transform man; man always transforms the system.

Rajneesh (1985) says, “Society has exploited the individual in so many ways that it is almost impossible to believe.” He says that society teaches everybody comparison and hence the child is bound to learn it. As the child is small, he is bound to listen to everyone. Rajneesh says , “He is just a tabula rasa⁵ , a blank paper without any writing; so whatsoever the parents, the teachers, the priests write on him, he starts believing that is his destiny, it is his fate”. Loving surroundings will help the children to get rid of fear, stress and aggressiveness.

⁵ Absence of preconceived ideas

For this reason, proper environment must be created. If there is a constant enmity and hatred in the space, there will be a disturbance. Branding a child in the institutes, badly affects his mind. The constant negative affirmations will affect strongly. For example, a tethered elephant cannot move anywhere. Correspondingly, a child too needs proper quality time to grow. Children can be raised in a stress-free environment. Rabindranath Tagore (1941) says, “Where the mind is without fear and the head is held high.” Hence, it is pertinent to help a child to become an authentic individual. Children, who are nourished in a proper environment have shown tremendous outcome and have reached heights like a bamboo tree. If they are neglected, criticized, condemned and abused, they take it for granted and they fail to project individuality and do not do anything on their own and they become like a bonsai tree. Similarly a positive space can be built by some methods.⁶

Rajneesh (1987) on being an individual says that Abraham Lincoln became president of the US and an aristocrat who was angry and arrogant stood up and said that Lincoln should remember that he was a son of a shoe maker. The whole senate clapped and laughed. Lincoln said that he was grateful to him that he reminded him of his father. He said that he can never be as great a president as he is a shoe maker. Rajneesh (1987) says, “The whole senate was shocked, but they recognized that this is not kind of a man whom you can humiliate.”

The nature of an individual is happiness. What is stopping people to remain in happiness? People carry heavy stuff in their mind. Fear of criticism, wounds of past remarks or acts constantly trouble. But, before leaving one’s body the condition of mind can either be in a state of gratitude or misery. Hence, it is pertinent that one must strive to remove the miseries to face the reality of life. In order to escape from miseries people choose many things to get engaged in external stimulations. Some of them may bring temporary ease but they are harmful to one’s growth. The pursuit for knowledge without personal experience is also not fruitful.

A human being is different from all other living beings. Rajneesh (1985) says, “Man comes into existence with all the doors open, all directions available; all the dimensions are for him to choose. But before he can choose, before he can be, before he can even feel his being, he is spoiled. And spoiled by those who think they love him - crushed, crippled, conditioned with all

⁶ Powerful affirmations and meditations

the good intentions in the world.” Hence, individuality building programs⁷ will help students to get rid of fear, stress and aggressiveness. Hence, it is the need of the hour to focus on overall development of the learner by focusing on his/her individuality.

⁷ Yoga, Meditations, Visualization, Taichi, Martial arts, Zen etc.

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