ORIGINAL RESEARCH PAPER

Tourism

THE EXTENT TO WHICH RABINDRANATH TAGORE HAS SEEPED IN THE CULTURAL FABRIC OF THE Z GENERATION AS AN IMPETUS TO CULTURAL TOURISM IN SANTINIKETAN

KEY WORDS: Generation Z, Culture, Tourism

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ABSTRACT

As the century takes a turn, there is a new generation emerging whose characteristics are unique and much different from the Millennials and the Gen X. The ever increasing sector of Generation Z is now in focus, which is considered as Post – Millennials. The widespread use of technology comes very naturally to them and their behaviour pattern depicts as if they were born with the smartphone in their hands. Under such a scenario, it is essential to understand how deep rooted is the concept of Rabindranath Tagore in the minds of this generation. How far does Generation Z recognize and accept Rabindranath Tagore's huge contribution to the various facets of culture is a question echoing in many minds – especially the ones whose hearts are deeply devoted to Tagore. In understanding this acceptance a randomized controlled trial was performed involving Gen Z from different age groups and medium of instruction. Through the understanding of the level of connectedness between Tagore and Gen Z, an insight can be gained regarding the acceptance of Santiniketan as a cultural tourism hotspot by this Generation. It was concluded from the study that Rabindranath is losing its importance among the iGENs which is required to be revived to uphold the cultural tourism of West Bengal.

INTRODUCTION

Tourism is a social activity that has been emerging steadily as a global phenomenon. Cultural tourism is defined by Richards as 'the movement of people to cultural attractions way from their normal place of residence, with the intention to gather new information and experiences to satisfy their cultural needs' (Ghosh & Sofique, 2012). According to this definition cultural tourism covers understanding of the cultural products of the past and how it affected the lives of the people. Cultural heritage is an important part of the tourism product and is one of the energetic factors that can develop the competitiveness of a tourism destination.

As we flip the pages of history, we find West Bengal is one of the vital seats of cultural and intellectual activities. Keeping this at the backdrop of the mind, there are several destinations which has been accepted by the tourists as cultural tourism sites such as Santiniketan, Bishnupur, Chandannagar, Hazarduari, Belur Math to name a few. Centuries have passed and the concept of culture and tourism has broadened. With refined mind sets and for better insight, people have adorned certain destination as cultural tourism hotspots. In this scenario we are concerned about the cultural tourism of Santiniketan.

Santiniketan was originally an ashram built by Debendranath Tagore where anyone irrespective of caste and creed could come and spend time meditating to the Supreme God. Rabindranath Tagore, son of Debendranath Tagore was educated at home till he was 17 years old when he was sent to England for receiving formal education. In England he became a student of Prof. Henery Morley whose lecture influenced Rabindranath Tagore to develop interest in English culture, tradition and literature. In England he wrote a poem named "Broken Heart". He returned to India after staying in England for 18 months. Thereafter he started writing poetry in Bengali along with a number of Bengali devotional songs. "Gitanjali" is a well known collection of poems written by Rabindranath Tagore for which he was awarded Nobel Prize in Literature in 1913. Rabindranth Tagore had a great interest in Indian art, culture, music and dance. Rabindranath said "Art is the response of man's creative soul to the call of the real". Tagore's music brought about another dimension of a multifaceted creative art and represented the very essence of his artistic being. Tagore declared that music being the most abstract of all the arts in similar tune to what mathematics is in the region of science, musical expression was the purest and most unimpeded form of creative expression. He himself was a good singer and composed a new form of music called "Rabindra sangeet". According to Rabindranath Tagore "Music fills the infinite between the two souls". He also wrote a number of plays and also a good artist. In one word he was a versatile genius who believed that education is the sure medium to bring about transformation in society. He was also a great social and religious reformer and cultural ambassador. This brief history about Rabindranath Tagore is merely losing its importance due to losing importance of Rabindranath Tagore among the present generation (Rani, 2015).

"Don't limit your child to your own learning for he was born in another time" is a famous quote of Rabindranath Tagore. Generation X i.e. people born in the period of 1960-1970 and Millennials or Generation Y i.e. people born in the period of 1980-1990 are well aware of the cultural aspects of Rabindranath Tagore and his different work like his songs, plays, novels and poems have seeped in their daily cultural fabric. But as the century has taken a turn the new generation i.e. Generation Z are emerging with characteristics different from Generation X. They are constantly connected to their digital and offline friends who value diversity and social justice within a whole new global context. They are aware of the widespread use of technology which focuses on the use of Internet which is very readily available to them in the form of smartphones instead of books. They are aware of the fact how to use or exploit their knowledge with the help of Internet. They are exposed to ideas, opportunities, inspirations and issues through You Tube, Instagram, Twitter debates and more rather than by increasing their knowledge with the aid of books, real life debates, quizzes etc. How far they explore Rabindranath Tagore with the help of smartphone requires a point of survey in context to the point that the level of exposure of Generation Z to cross cultural aspects are more compared to previous ones. Generation Z may achieve the highest education but it should be understood that "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence".

The present objective of the study is to evaluate the fact that whether the cultural aspects of Rabindranath Tagore has seeped in the cultural fabric of Generation Z. This aim has been accomplished by performing a randomized controlled trial testing the impact of Rabindranath Tagore's culture on Generation Z in comparison to Generation X and Y.

METHODS/ DESIGN

STUDY AIMS

The main aim of the study was to test the extent to which cultural aspects of work done by Rabindranath Tagore can influence the present Generation Z by evaluating people from different age groups and medium of instruction. The area of concern will be that inspite of higher level of exposure to technology does Rabindranath Tagore dominate in the heart of Generation Z.

STUDY DESIGN

This study is a cluster, randomized controlled trial where subjects from different age groups and medium of instruction was chosen. Oral and written questionnaire pattern was adopted among the chosen cluster. Two groups from three different generations were

chosen for the study consisting of 60 subjects in each group. 30 subjects in each group had English as the medium of instruction and the rest had Bengali as the medium of instruction in school.

RECRUITMENT OF ELIGIBLE PARTICIPANTS

One hundred and eighty participants (male and female) representing three generations: Generation X, Y and Z were targeted for the first stage of recruitment based on the following selection criteria: having medium of instruction either English or Bengali in school. Recruitment occurred by means of different levels of educational institutions like schools and colleges. Interested candidates were contacted by the surveyor via face to face conversation by providing them with an oral questionnaire. Interested participants were asked to identify their country of origin and language spoken at home (Suresh & Chandrashekara, 2012).

Once eligible index candidates and their families were identified, they were recruited (based on their consent) to different groups according to their age. Uninterested participants were deemed ineligible for the survey.

RANDOMIZATION

Within each group, participants were randomly selected and put into different conditions based on their medium of instruction. A simple randomization table will be created pre-trial using Microsoft Word. Each participant that enters the study will be allocated the next available randomized condition provided on the list.

BASELINE SURVEY

At baseline, all the participants will complete a survey based on their age, country of origin, language spoken at home and medium of instruction in school. This survey will be available in either paper or on-line format that takes no longer than 5 min to complete. There is one baseline form of questionnaire based on which the participants are divided into different groups i.e. whether they belong to Generation X, Y and Z.

GENERAL SURVEY RELATED TO CULTURAL ASPECTS OF PARTICIPANTS

After enquiry regarding the baseline survey of the participants, each participant was arranged for an oral questionnaire to gather information on their cultural knowledge in general. A person or egocentric approach to data collection will be adopted whereby the participants are asked to give information regarding how they are linked to culture in their daily life. The oral questionnaire related to the general survey covered the cultural aspects such as interest in dance, music and drawing, access to smartphones and video games, interest in visiting tourist spots and so on.

ASSESSMENT REGARDING THE SEEPAGE OF CULTURAL FABRIC OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE WITHIN GENERATION Z IN COMPARISON TO GENERATION X AND Y

After fulfilling the general survey the candidates were provided with another written questionnaire. This questionnaire was fully in line with the extent to which the cultural fabric of Rabindranath Tagore has seeped within the Generation Z. In this questionnaire the awareness of the parents of the candidates regarding the cultural aspects of Rabindranath Tagore was also taken into account. This survey questionnaire contained a clear description between the relation of Rabindranath Tagore and Generation Z. It deals with the attitude of the Generation Z towards the masterpiece works of Rabindranath Tagore in relation to novels, poems, drawings and dance. The candidates were randomly chosen from inside and outside Bengal. So the region specific effect was also evaluated. The survey of the candidate was completed with this questionnaire.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

OUTCOME MEASURES

The primary outcome tested was the effect of culture on three generations i.e. Generation X, Y and Z. The secondary outcome was focused on the acceptance of Rabindranath Tagore among the two generations. The primary outcome was evaluated using oral questionnaire while a written questionnaire was adopted to evaluate the effects of secondary outcome. The changes in social influences from Generation X to Generation Y and then to Generation Z after huge upliftment of technology were also evaluated (Glaesmer, etal, 2012; Cuypers, etal, 2012; Guttmacher, etal, 2004; Kreuter & Strecher, 1996; de Heer, etal, 2016, Green, etal, 2003; Hammond & Ornstein, 2014; Veenstra & Patterson, 2012).

SAMPLE SIZE

Power analyses were conducted to estimate the number of candidates needed to evaluate the impact of Rabindranath Tagore on Generation Z. The sample size estimates consider potential clustering of the outcome variable in candidates and is based on a multilevel generalized linear model assessing the effect of Rabindranath Tagore's culture on the present generation. Covariates considered within the fitted model included baseline survey (level 1 variable) and group survey (level 2 variable). Since the intervention component is a level 2 variable, the power calculations optimize the macro level units. Based on a medium effect size, 132 participants are required to achieve a good power. As the time between baseline and final survey is short, we expect retention rates to be relatively high and so an initial sample of 180 candidates was recruited.

STATISTICAL ANALYSES

Primary outcomes

Primary outcome was a comparison of baseline data between 3 generations assessing the effect of Rabindranath Tagore on these generations. The primary data deals with the country of origin, language spoken at home and medium of instruction in school which is represented in Table 1. The data from Table 1 clearly shows that the country of origin to which all the three generations belonged restricted to India only. The language spoken at home in case of all the three generations was either English or Bengali or Hindi. Among Generation X 20% spoke English and Hindi at home and the rest spoke Bengali at home. Among Generation Y 25% spoke English and Hindi at home and the rest spoke Bengali at home. Among Generation Z 30% spoke English and Hindi at home and the rest spoke Bengali. The group was chosen in such a manner that 50% in all the three generations had English as the medium of instruction in school and rest had Bengali as the medium of instruction in school.

Table-I: Baseline survey

Sl. No.	Question	Response of Generation X	Response of Generation Y	Response of Generation Z
1	Number of hours spent on reading daily a.Curriculum books b.Non-Curriculum books	2 hrsa 3 hrsa	2 hrsa 3 hrsa	3 hrsb 1 hrb
2	Do you have access to smartphones? Yes (%) No (%)	0a 100a	20b 80b	82c 18c
3	Are you interested in playing video games? Yes (%) No (%)	0a 100a	0a 100a	72b 28b
4	Are you interested in dance/music/drawing in general? Yes (%) No (%)	72a 28a	70a 30a	71a 30a
5	Do you like to listen to which type of music? a. Classical (%) b. Modern (%)	65a 35a	68a 32a	38b 62b

6	Do you like to visit tourist spot? Yes (%) No (%)	65a 35a	85b 15b	89b 11b
7	Do you like to visit cultural tourist spot? Yes (%) No (%)	82a 18a	80a 20a	66b 44b

Difference in superscript in columns shows difference in values

Secondary outcomes

Building on to the findings of primary outcome, it was explored the extent to which the cultural fabric of Rabindranath Tagore has seeped into the minds of Generation Z in comparison to Generation X and Y. The data is represented in Table 3. The knowledge of the parents of both the Generations regarding Rabindranath Tagore was taken into account and in both the cases the parents have knowledge about Rabindranath Tagore barring a very few of them. It has been found that the books of Rabindranath Tagore are present in the home of majority of cases in both the generations. But in most cases the participants of Generation Z have not read Rabindranath Tagore much beyond their school curriculum. It was also striking to note that there was not much inclusion of Rabindranath Tagore's literary work in the school curriculum of all boards at school level. At school level most of the participants have recited Rabindranath Tagore's poems as was noted from the survey. Another observation was that the Generation Z is well aware of the songs of Rabindranath Tagore but the knowledge regarding his drawings was rather very poor. Both the generations prefer to listen to the original version of Rabindrasangeet than the remix version. In view of both the generations playing Rabindrasangeet in shopping malls can be a good idea. Generation X, Y and Z thinks that Rabindranath Tagore however is globally viable but the viability of Rabindranath in India especially outside West Bengal remains a matter of debate. The new generation is not much interested to go for a research on literary aspects of Rabindranath Tagore in comparison to Generation X and Y. Though an ample amount of participants from Generation Z has visited Santiniketan, but it has been found that the interest regarding the visit was leisure or to enjoy the Poush Mela or Vasant Utsav held in Santiniketan rather than to gain knowledge about Rabindranath Tagore.

Table-III: Survey regarding the seepage of cultural fabric of Rabindranath Tagore within Generation Z in comparison to Generation X and Y

Sl. No.	Question	Response of Generation X	Response of Generation Y	Response of Generation Z
1	Are the parents aware of the work of Rabindranath Tagore Yes (%) No (%)	 95a 5a	 90a 10a	 92a 8a
2	Is there books written by Rabindranath Tagore present at home? Yes (%) No (%)	 80a 20a	 82a 18a	 79a 21a
3	Have you read Rabindranath beyond school Curriculum? Yes (%) No (%)	 78a 22a	 75a 25a	 43b 57b
4	Are you familiar to Rabindranath Tagore's:- a. Songs Yes (%) No (%) b. Drawings Yes (%) No (%)	 85a 15a 75a 25a	 87a 13a 62b 38b	 88a 12a 25c 75c
5	Do you like to listen to rabindra sangeet:- a. Original version b. Remix version	 100a 0a	 99a 1a	 89b 11b
6	Do you think playing Rabindra Sangeet will be acceptable in shopping malls? Yes (%) No (%)	 100a 0a	 95a 5a	 91a 9a
7	Would you prefer to go to a rock show or bangla band show or a rabindra sangeet concert if you are free to choose? Rock show/Bangla Band show Rabindra Sangeet	 5a 95a	 10a 90a	 75b 25b
8	Have you recited Rabindranath Tagore's poems in childhood? Yes (%) No (%)	 90a 10a	 90a 10a	 85a 15a
9	Have you read any translated version of Rabindranath's literary work? Yes (%) No (%)	 40a 60a	 42a 58a	 50a 50a
10	Do you think Rabindranath Tagore is globally viable even today? Yes (%) No (%)	 70a 30a	 69a 29a	 65b 35b
11	Have you visited Shantiniketan? Yes (%) No (%)	 80a 20a	 82a 18a	 68b 32b
12	Given a chance will you go for a research on literary aspects of Rabindranath Tagore? Yes (%) No (%)	 78a 22a	 70a 30a	 48b 52b

CONCLUSION

"Age considers; youth ventures". To examine the effect of acceptance of cultural fabric of Rabindranath Tagore among Generation Z in comparison to Generation X and Y in an appropriately controlled way, it is necessary to apply very strict inclusion criteria. These include the need to have members of both the generations available to participate and potentially collecting data from them. The sample size was determined using power analysis.

The issues related to the research were adequately addressed within the context of the current study design. A baseline study, a generalarized survey regarding cultural aspects across all the three generations and specific survey regarding acceptance of cultural aspects of Rabindranath Tagore was successfully performed and analyzed. The focus of the study was mainly dependent on the acceptance of cultural aspects of Rabindranath Tagore by Generation Z. Data represented that the cultural viability of Generation Z was less in comparison to Generation X and Y though they have the greater advantage of access towards technological boon. In the context of Rabindranath Tagore though the parents of all three generations are well aware of the literary works of Rabindranath and also the presence of his work is seen in the home of all the generations but still the cultural aspects of Rabindranath is losing its importance among the present generation Z. It is mainly restricted to curriculum, where also its presence is very minimal and recitation of Rabindranath Tagore's poems in school. The present generation prefers to listen to rock band or bangle band instead of Rabindrasangeet. The visit to Santiniketan as a place of understanding the literary works of Rabindranath is not generally done instead the new Generation Z visit Santiniketan to explore and enjoy Vasant Utsav or Poush Mela as was depicted in the survey. According to Rabindranath Tagore "The singer alone doesnot make a song, there has to be someone who hears it". As evident from the above quote Rabindranath's great masterpiece works will lose their importance if it is not accepted or seeped into the cultural fabric of Generation Z.

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