



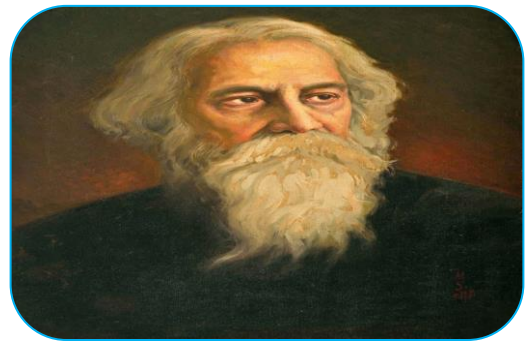
AN ETHICAL CONSIDERATION OF RABINDRANATH TAGORE'S SAHAJ PATH FROM THE PERSPECTIVE OF ENVIRONMENTAL ETHICS

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ABSTRACT:

Rabindranath Tagore's Sahaj Path (Part- I and Part-II), though mainly considered as a Bengali language textbook for premature learners, and finely embodies a deep ethical awareness toward Mother Nature. This paper find out Sahaj Path through the lens of environmental ethics, enlightening how Tagore's pedagogical visualization encourages ecological awareness and moral deep feeling in the young mind. By hand over nature as a near and living presence rather than an entity of usefulness, Tagore encourages a non-anthropocentric worldview bring into line with deep ecology and eco-humanism. The simplicity of language, cultural orientations to seasonal cycles, and a symphonic representation of human-nature relationships reproduce a form of early environmental education that relics critically relevant in the anthropogenic epoch. This study argues that Sahaj Path work for not only as a linguistic tool but also as an ethical director for cultivating ecological realization from childhood.



KEYWORDS: Sahaj Path; Environmental Ethics; Eco-Pedagogy; Deep Ecology; Eco-humanism; Anthropogenic; Cultural Ecology.

1. INTRODUCTION

Environmental ethics, as a philosophical and moral discourse, explores the connection between humans and the natural world, challenging the long-standing anthropocentric worldview that has powered ecological humiliation. According to Wikipedia an environmental philosophy, environmental ethics is an established field of practical philosophy "which reconstructs the essential types of argumentation that can be made for protecting natural entities and the sustainable use of natural resources (Ott, Konrad, 2020). An era obvious by climate calamity, environmental deterioration, and spiritual disaffection from nature, reconsidering the works of cultural thinkers and educators becomes critical for reimagining ethical and supportable futures. Rabindranath Tagore, a soaring figure in modern Indian literature and philosophy, made major contributions to environmental understood—not only through his poetry and essays but also through his educational visualization.

Among his pedagogical influences, *Sahaj Path* stands out as a distinctive work. Conceived as a Bengali textbook for children, it introduces undeveloped learners to the Bengali characters and vocabulary through simple sentences, images, and rhythms drawn openly from Mother Nature and

everyday rural life. However, *Sahaj Path* is more than just a textbook—it is a mirror image of Tagore's deep ecological awareness and his vision of education as a moral and appealing empathy with the world.

This paper suggests that *Sahaj Path*, when look at through the framework of environmental ethics, make known an embedded ecological pedagogy. Tagore's educational system—rooted in simplicity, sensual awareness, and the harmony of culture and nature—nurtures an early ethical attitude toward the environment. It anticipates many of the key concerns of contemporary western and Indian environmental thinkers such as Arne Naess, Aldo Leopold, and Vandana Shiva, who advocate for deep ecological consciousness, bio centric equality, and a return to ethnic, holistic ways of knowing the World.

By understanding *Sahaj Path* as an ethical text, this study places Tagore's pedagogy within the broader discourse of eco-education and moral improvement. It aims to make evident how Tagore's literary and philosophical mastermind offers a timeless resource for nurturing environmental awareness in children—one that expresses urgently to the environmental challenges of the 21st century.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The prime aim of this research is to search *Sahaj Path* by Rabindranath Tagore as a text with embedded environmental ethics and pedagogical implication. In detail, the objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To explore the ethical values connected to nature set in in *Sahaj Path*.
2. To understand Tagore's educational philosophy in *Sahaj Path* from the viewpoint of environmental ethics, on the whole deep ecology and eco-humanism.
3. To categorize the ways in which *Sahaj Path* encourages an early green consciousness and emotive connection to the natural world in beginning learners.
4. To discover how cultural, seasonal, and linguistic fundamentals in *Sahaj Path* substitute a combined human-nature relationship.
5. To assess the significance of Tagore's ecological pedagogy in addressing contemporary environmental emergencies and sustainability education.
6. To contribute to the address of eco-pedagogy by emphasizing Tagore's model as an early and culturally grounded example of environmental moral education.

3. LITERATURE REVIEW

The ethical and environmental visualization of Rabindranath Tagore has been the matter of increasing scholarly consideration, particularly in relation to his educational research at Santiniketan and his poetic commitment with nature. However, *Sahaj Path*, as a foundational text, remains relatively under-examined from the lens of environmental ethics. The aims of literature review to establish the hypothetical and contextual background for understanding *Sahaj Path* as an environmentally ethical and pedagogically meaningful work.

3.1. Tagore's Ecological Philosophy and Education

Rabindranath Tagore's engagement with nature is profoundly rooted in his planetary worldview, influenced by the Upanishads and the rural landscape of Bengal. Tagore observed nature not as a means to be exploited but as a living attendance fundamental to human expansion and aesthetic experience. In *The Religion of Man*, he writes, "The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence" (Tagore, 1931). His vision of education search for to dissolve the non-natural boundaries between humans and nature—a attitude actively employed at Santiniketan, where learning took place under the open sky and in the rhythm of natural cycles (Sarkar, 2004).

Scholars such as Bhattacharya (2013) and Dasgupta (2009) have discussed how Tagore's pedagogy aimed at cultivation the "whole child," integrating the aesthetic, moral, and ecological dimensions of development. Bhattacharya highlights that Tagore's educational ideals were rooted in an "ecological spirituality," wherein human beings are seen as morally responsible contributors in the network of life.

3.2. Environmental Ethics: Theoretical Frameworks

Environmental ethics as a formal self-control emerged in the 1970s, with key contributions from thinkers like Aldo Leopold (1949), Arne Naess (1973), and Holmes Rolston III (1988). Leopold's *Land Ethic* highlighted the moral extension of human accountability to the biotic community, stating, "A thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability, and beauty of the biotic community." (Leopold, 1949) Similarly, Arne Naess's concept of deep ecology argues for an eco-centric worldview, where nature has intrinsic value irrespective of human utility (Naes, 1973).

These ideas resonate with Tagore's non-anthropocentric worldview, although he indoors at them through poetic and spiritual intuition rather than formal ecological theory. Scholars such as Shiva (1997) and Guha (2000) have highlighted the significance of integrating home-grown and cultural wisdom into environmental ethics—an area where Tagore's works, including *Sahaj Path*, become particularly significant.

3.3. Sahaj Path as Ethical and Ecological Text

Although *Sahaj Path* is mainly viewed as a textbook for Bengali language learning, its content is rich in environmental metaphors and rural cultural orientations. Children are familiarized to birds, rivers, trees, clouds, and festivals that have a good time seasonal changes. Choudhury (2016) suggests that *Sahaj Path* slightly initiates children into an ethical mode of eagle-eyed, where nature is respected aesthetically and emotionally rather than consumed instrumentally. The selection of words and images in *Sahaj Path* constructs a world of harmony between humans and the environment, strengthening what Naess would call an "ecological self."

Furthermore, present-day eco-pedagogues like David Orr (2004) argue that all education is environmental education, whether intended or not. In this light, *Sahaj Path* stands as an early instance of what can now be termed eco-pedagogy—one that is ashore in indigenous cultural forms and native language, fostering what Shiva (1997) calls "living knowledge systems."

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study works a qualitative, interpretive methodology ashore in textual investigation and philosophical inquiry, with the independent of examining *Sahaj Path* through the lens of environmental ethics. Given the nature of the enquiry question, which try to find to explore embedded ethical and environmental scopes within a literary-educational text, the methodology syndicates hermeneutic analysis, thematic interpretation, and contextual-philosophical reflection.

4.1. Research Approach

This study works a qualitative content analysis approach to comprehend how environmental ethics are implanted within *Sahaj Path*. It does not rely on empirical or statistical data, but rather on a precarious and reflective analysis of texts, concepts, and themes. This makes it well-suited for exploring ethical meanings and values expressed through literature and educational philosophy.

4.2. Method of Data Collection

Primary Source: The essential text scrutinized is *Sahaj Path* (Part I & II) by Rabindranath Tagore. Both parts are studied for their linguistic construction, imagery, and demonstration of nature and ethical values.

Secondary Sources: To contextualize the outcomes, the exploration refers to a wide collection of secondary literature including: Tagore's philosophical works (e.g., *The Religion of Man*); Scholarly articles on Tagore's education and ecological thought; Foundational texts in environmental ethics (e.g., works by Arne Naess, Aldo Leopold, Holmes Rolston III, Vandana Shiva) And Studies in eco-pedagogy and cultural ecology.

4.3. Methodological Steps

The study proceeds through the following methodological stages:

1. Textual Interpretation: An adjacent reading of *Sahaj Path* to recognize references, images, and jargons that convey a association between the learner and environment.
2. Thematic Coding: Cataloging of the text's contented under key ecological and ethical melodies, such as non-anthropocentrism, aesthetic affection, cultural ecology, and the ethical thoughts of the child.
3. Comparative Analysis: Put together Tagore's embedded ecological values with key concepts from modern environmental ethics, particularly deep ecology and eco-humanism.
4. Contextualization: Placing *Sahaj Path* within the antique and cultural context of Tagore's larger educational philosophy, as well as his writings on Santiniketan and *The Religion of Man*.

4.4. Philosophical and Ethical Lens

The study is deep-rooted in applied ethics, which allows for the assessment of cultural texts in terms of their dimensions to shape moral consciousness. *Sahaj Path* is treated as both pedagogical and ethical document, one that conveys environmental values through its aesthetic, linguistic, and cultural expressions. This lens also distinguishes the value of ethnic and poetic forms of ecological knowledge, authenticating the moral dimensions of Tagore's child-centric education.

4.5. Scope and Delimitations

- **Scope:** The investigation emphases specifically on the ethical in addition ecological messages within *Sahaj Path*, not on its etymological pedagogy alone. It places of interest how this early educational text endorses an emotional, ethical, and philosophical connection with environment.
- **Delimitations:** The research does not include experiential classroom-based investigation or child psychology. It is inadequate to textual-philosophical analysis and informative critique. The findings are therefore theoretical and normative, rather than experimental.

5. THEMATIC ANALYSIS AND MAIN ARGUMENT

To see the sights *Sahaj Path* through the lens of environmental ethics, this unit presents a thematic analysis that categorizes the core ethical and ecological ideas entrenched in the text. Tagore's unique coming together of pedagogy, aesthetics, and wildlife reveals a child-centric environmental vision that can be empty out through the following interconnected themes:

5.1. Nature as the First Teacher: The Eco-Pedagogical Foundation

In *Sahaj Path*, the flora and fauna of learning initiates not with abstract concepts but with concrete, sensory involvements—trees, birds, rivers, rain, and the paces of village life. This pedagogical alignment aligns with the idea of Mother Nature as the first teacher, an original educational concept that sees Mother Nature as an ethical guide.

Tagore's deliberate simplicity—"Pakhi ure jaye" (The bird flies away), "Gachhe phool phuteche" (The tree has bloomed)—invitations the learner to observe and enthusiastically connect with the natural world. Such premature introduction cultivates an affective and moral relationship with Mother Nature, reflecting what environmental philosopher David Orr (2004) calls "ecological literacy"—a way of knowing that is experiential, ethical, and grounded in place (Orr, 2004).

5.2. Non-Anthropocentrism: The Moral Status of Nature

An important feature of environmental ethics is the evaluation of anthropocentrism—the belief that human welfares are inherently higher to those of non-human beings. In *Sahaj Path*, Tagore offers an alternative. He familiarizes natural elements not as wealth or objects, but as co-inhabitants of the biosphere. By lacing birds, animals, and trees into the sentence structure of early understanding, Tagore delicately encourages children to take in the world relationally, not hierarchically. This aligns with Arne Naess's (1973) concept of deep ecology, which advocates for the inherent value of all living beings and the extension of moral concern beyond the human sphere (Naes, 1973).

5.3. Aesthetic Affection and Green Sensibility

Aesthetic thanks play a central role in *Sahaj Path*. The language is poetic, melodious, and visually evocative; suggestive of that beauty itself is ethical. This aligns with the idea of eco-aesthetics, which give emphasis to that emotional and artistic commitment with environment is foundational to environmental ethics (Brady, 2003). Tagore does not argue for preservation or environmental protection in direct terms. Instead, he nurtures beautiful affection—a love and joy in the manifestation of birdsong, rainfall, flowers, and seasons. Such friendliness fosters care, which philosopher Aldo Leopold (1949) argued is the root of all ecological ethics: “We can be ethical only in relation to something we can see, feel, understand, love, or otherwise have faith in” (Leopold, 1949).

5.4. Integration of Culture and Nature: A Native Ecological Ethics

Tagore's ecological vision is not immaterial or comprehensive—it is culturally embedded. *Sahaj Path* associates learning with Bengali festivals (e.g., *Nabanna*, the harvest celebration), agricultural cycles, and seasonal indicators (e.g., “Borsha elo”—the rains have come). This cultural-natural integration replicates what Vandana Shiva (1997) calls an “indigenous ecological ethic,” where Mother Nature is understood through local language, ritual, and worldview. By rooting environmental responsiveness in culture and everyday life, *Sahaj Path* models a pedagogy that respects biodiversity not only in nature but in knowledge systems.

5.5. The Ethical Imagination of the Child

Possibly the most deep aspect of Tagore's pedagogical method is his respect for the ethical mind's eye of the child. He does not carry out moral lessons but generates a space where nature can be practiced as alive, lovable, and interconnected. This pedagogical humility recognizes that moral development begins in empathy and wonder, not punishment or utility. Environmental philosopher Holmes Rolston III (1988) stresses the importance of nurturing a sense of the sacred in nature from early childhood. *Sahaj Path* does exactly this—by aligning learning with living, it cultivates not only literacy but ecological character (Rolston III, 1988).

5.6. Main Argument

The dominant argument of this investigation is that Rabindranath Tagore's *Sahaj Path* is an initial, culturally grounded model of environmental ethics set in pedagogical practice. While it is widely familiar as a language textbook, a bottomless reading make known that it subtly nurtures ecological awareness, aesthetic sensibility, and moral imagination in children. In doing so, Tagore do in advance many of the principles now championed by modern environmental ethicists and educators. His work becomes particularly relevant in the context of the anthropocentric, where the reconfiguration of human values toward natural surroundings is an ethical imperative. *Sahaj Path* offers a poetic yet powerful pathway to this reconfiguration, rooted in the moral emergent of the child.

6. CONCLUSION

Rabindranath Tagore's *Sahaj Path*, while usually understood as a textbook for Bengali language achievement, emerges under ethical scrutiny as a reflective text of environmental realization. Through its poetic simplicity, cultural embeddedness, and sensory-rich descriptions, *Sahaj Path* invites early learners into a close and respectful relationship with the expected world. This early educational involvement fosters a moral orientation that aligns with key principles in contemporary environmental ethics—particularly non-anthropocentrism, aesthetic gratefulness of nature, and the interdependence of culture and ecology.

Tagore's pedagogy does not carry out environmental accountability through abstract lessons. Instead, it gently nurtures ecological sensibility through lived involvement, emotional connection, and linguistic awareness with nature. This mode of eco-education resounds deeply with the ideas of deep ecology (Naess), ecological literacy (Orr), and indigenous knowledge systems (Shiva), offering an early 20th-century model of what we now call eco-pedagogy.

In the age of the Anthropocentric, when environmental degradation and ethical cutting off from Mother Nature are urgent global anxieties, come back to *Sahaj Path* be responsible for both encouragement and guidance. It run by again us that environmental ethics bring into being not with laws or policies, but with the ways we give grounding in children to see, name, and feel the flora and fauna around them. Tagore's work thus viewpoints not only as a linguistic paragon, but also as an ethical drawing for cultivating future age group who live in harmony with Mother Nature.

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