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Jul 30 2015 : The Times of India (Chennai)



# TALK BACK - Teaching arts as important as other subjects in schools

Chitravina  
Ravikiran

**In "All is well with Carnatic music" (July 21), Chitravina Ravikiran advocated teaching of music and other arts in schools as part of the syllabus.**

**Noted pianist, Anil Srinivasan (July 22) critiqued the Q&A, and said making an additional subject like arts compulsory will impose another burden on students and teachers**

I commend Anil Srinivasan for his many pertinent views, which have added weight to the discussion because of his track record of having worked inventively to take music to various schools. In fact, many of his points have been factored in some of my earlier discussions with the government or other bodies over the years.

I would like to clarify a few things here. I have never advocated only Carnatic (or Hindustani) music being made compulsory across the board. However, several recent studies have clearly shown the correlation between exposure to classical arts (and other things like chess movement) and enhanced academic

performance and results. Providing for at least a few of them at the macro level as one of the options to students is quite different from thrusting only one thing at them. It is no less stressful to thrust calculus, binomial theorem and laws of Physics on students who may not have the aptitude for it but do have a talent, interest and passion in music, or even chess. At the end of the day, what ends up being overlooked or ignored often is the unfulfilled passion for creative expression of several children every year. Everything must be done to provide fair opportunities to these young minds.

Even in terms of pure economic impact, this would be a successful investment, not to mention the social cultural consequences. The return on investment in teaching the arts has been demonstrated in many nations. To sum it up, we often make presumptions about children's limitations or stress and end up denying them a lot of things that will actually benefit them more holistically, yet thrusting upon them things in the name of `normalising' them!



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