

The Lost Art of Thinking: Bridging Humanities With Science And Technology

Shibin Varghese

MA English Literature,
UGC NET in English Literature
togetshibn@gmail.com

Contents

- Abstract
 - Key Words
 - Review of Literature
 - Objectives
 - Findings
- 1) Literature and Science
 - 1.1 Distinction between Literature and science
 - 2) The Art of Insight: How Literature Illuminates the Scientific Mind
 - 3) There is Also Greatest Scientists Who Contributed to Literature
 - 4) Literary Works that Shared the Scientific Concepts
 - 5) Contribution of Science to Literary Genre
 - 6) Values, Qualities and Skills that are taken away by Technology
 - 7) The Art of Being Human: The Enduring Value of Humanities in the Digital Age.
 - Conclusion

Abstract

In the present world, science and technology have grown and conquered the world. When we look at subject way there is tendency to make Humanities subject as least when we compare with science and technology. Now explicitly we can observe from high secondary school academy onwards, students are forced to take subjects that are related to science and technology and humanities considered as least important. The same situation we can see in college too, many seats are vacant in humanities subject. Students and parents are not willing to promote and take humanities related subjects. One of the major reasons behind it is that there are not many job opportunities in such subjects.

In this paper I would like to share the views that humanities are not least when we compare with science and technology, but it has same importance in the world. When technology and science are grown widely

with deep observation, we can find out that some important human qualities and values are disappearing from us. These qualities and values can some how restored by humanities. While dealing with literature, especially reading and writing, can increase empathy, social perception and interaction. Humanities has the power to force people to have deep critical thinking and great actions against important issues. Science and technology can build a scientific and technical world but only humanities can build only a good human world.

Keywords - Literature, History, Society, Social Changes, Science, Technology.

Review of Literature

This paper aims to capture attention, spark, curiosity and inspire the readers to reevaluate the importance of humanities in today's scientific and technological world. This paper conveys the importance and beauty of humanities through contributions of literature and history and the way social issues are handled by literature and writers. Through this paper try to convey that Humanities are equal with science and technology.

Objectives

- Giving insight that humanities are important as science and technology
- Reflecting the important of humanities in the real life of men
- Expressing how humanities contribute to the society just as science and technology
- The way science and technology are related to humanities

Findings

1) Literature and Science

The subject literature and science most of the people consider its as different thoughts. But when we go deeply, we can understand that there is an underlying relationship between literature and science.

- We believe that the progress of the world depends on science. Through science we come to the knowledge of truth, and we can apply it to life. Now in the world we can't live without science. Knowingly or unknowingly the world is governed by science.
- Literature is the way of experiencing the world which naturally finds its expression in either a kind of prose or more fully ordered rhythm. It is a different habit of mind. It is system to understand the man, world and relationship.
- Human life needs both for its richness and perfection. Both speak of experience science speaks of truth and literature speaks of life.
- Science deals with facts, experiments and truth. Literature deals with emotions, passions and sentiments with the experience of artists.
- Artis is free person when we compare with scientists because artis is not controlled by a system.

- Literature helps science to forming new hypothesis
- The imagery world created by the artists has helped the scientists go ahead with new inventions.
- Many scientists were great writers of literature and worshippers of beauty.
- Scientists like Humphrey Davy, Rower, Hamilton were great writers of verses. Even Ptolmy the great astronomer was himself a true poet. From the history of science and Literature it is quite clear that both branches are complementary to each other. But methods are different, aims of science is to ascertain to put intelligible and ordered relation of the facts of physical world. Literature is governed by visions, imaginations and emotions. A poet can see what scientist may not see. A poet seeks great truth.
- Poets begins were scientist stops. In a way which both literature and science complement each other in an understanding nature in a better way.
 - 1.1 Distinction between Literature and science
- Methods are different
- Science deals with logical analysis of facts and literature is based on feelings, experiences and thoughts.
- In Literature intuition and imagination are important, science needs hypothesis. But it is difficult to find the way in which scientific imagination works in facts findings.
- The man of science seeks the truth as remote, lonely, unknown benefactor. Poets sing a song in which all beings join with him, rejoices in the presence of the truth as our visible friends.
- Words worth said: poetry is that the breath and finger spirit of all knowledge, impassioned expression which is in the countenance of all science.
- In science: we murder to dissect. Example take a Lily, for botanists it is Hexandria or Monogynian. For the poet it is Lady of garden, the plant power of light.

2) The Art of Insight: How Literature Illuminates the Scientific Mind

Albert Einstein was attracted by H. G Wells and Bernard Shaw. At a talk on Jew community at the Savoy hotel in London in 1934, when two authors were there, looking at Bernard Shaw, Eistein called you are “Doctor of the Soul”, on the account of the moral principle contained in his works.

“You, Mr. Shaw, have succeeded in winning the affection and joyous administration of the world while pursuing a path that has led many others to martyr’s crown. You have not merely preached moral sermons to your followers, you have done what only the born artist can do”, said Eistein.

A P J Abdul Kalam speaks on Literature. He mentions three books that greatly inspired him, claims that they challenged him in many areas of life and assisted him in finding emotional balance. Also helped him with clear direction for life and helped him to think critically and creatively to evaluate his mind in the process.

The three books that inspired A P J Abdul Kalam: a) Light from many Lamps by Lillian Eichler Waston. b) Tirukkural by Thiruvalluvar more than 2000 years ago. c) Man, the unknown by Alexis Carrel

Oppenheimer was a well knowledge person about Art and Literature. He has also influenced by many books especially The Bhagavad Gita, he often quoted from it for his works.

3) There is Also Greatest Scientists Who Contributed to Literature

Paleontologist George Gaylord Simpson was a great scientist, he was one of the architects of modern synthesis. His science -fiction Novella: The Dechronization of Sam Magruder was published by her daughter after 10 years of his death.

E.O Wilson was a great American biologist wrote a novel: “Anthill a Novel” published in 2010 which received well. Primo Levi Italian Chemist in his work “If this is a Man”, he shows the horror of the nazi concentration camps and how he managed to survive his life. Eransto Sabato a Spanish physicist who criticized the neutrality of science and dehumanization process of technological societies, through his books: “One and the Universe”

4) Literary Works that Shared the Scientific Concepts

Jonathan Swifts in his work “Gulliver Travels” 1726, speaks about an island Laputa, which held up magnetically in the air, an inhabited by men who are totally dedicated to mathematic and music. Swift presented science as a natural ally to power, used to dominate humans and nature. Voltaire wrote the short story “Micromegas” in 1752 where he narrated space travels used to praise science and to satirize human behaviors.

Johann W Goethe contributed to knowledge of plants and human morphology through his natural philosophy. Jules Gabriel Verne a French Novelist his works including “Journey to Center of the Earth” 1864, Twenty Thousand League Under the Sea 1870, The Mysteries Under Island 1874 which all speaks about the scientific and technological advancement of time. Some have viewed Mary Shelley’s Frankenstein 1818, as being a forerunner of science fiction, in the work scientific development linked to the creation of life.

5) Contribution of Science to Literary Genre

Science fiction is the greatest contribution of science to literature. The first science- fiction story is “A True Story’ or True History written by Syrian artist Lucian, in second century, which speaks about outer space, alien lifeform etc. it has been developed by modern science. Now we can see different science fiction such as Fantasy Fiction (mythological, folklore, elements of magic) supernatural fiction (hidden abilities, witch crafts, psychic abilities) utopian fiction (ideal societies) dystopia fiction (government rules, poverty) space opera (space centered around conflict, romance, adventure) there are novels which deals with above concepts

- a) 20,000 leagues under the sea by Jules Verne
- b) The war of the world by H G Wells
- c) Brave new world by Aldous Huxley
- d) 1984 by George Orwell
- e) Dune by Frank Herbert
- f) The handmaid's tale by Margret Atwood

6) Values, Qualities and Skills that are taken away by Technology

a) Solitude: to think and to be creative we need private time and space. Technology particularly internet has taken away the private space and time. Most of the people spend their time in videos and video games. Albert Einstein said my entire life I spend in studying space especially on moon and stars but forget to look at my life to enjoy its moon and stars.

b) All are living in virtual public space: people like to share their life through status, story in social media, most like to become popular through these platforms. We are losing the naturality and reality of life. All want to appear in public space just as there are in social media. So, their lifestyle is forced by social media which is more expense than their income.

c) Memory and History: there are many things reminded by internet your parent's birthday, phone number, house number, pin code, general knowledge and reading habits.

One of the important Author from Kerala sir Paul Zacharia shared his experience that he met a young who is working in IT field, but he doesn't know about Hitler, and he killed 6 million Jews. He is ignorant about Hitler and his brutal actions. 2002 survey done by Times of India the famous college of India including St. Xavier Mumbai, lady Shri Ram college Delhi, St. Stephen College, Presidency college Kolkata has selected Hitler as their favorite leader. Technology and science always look to the future. "Who controls the past controls the future: who controls the present controls the past" said "George Orwell".

d) Empathy: We lost the quality of listening to others. Technology and social media made the personal world, in that world he is important, his priority and emotions are important not others. The new concept that was brought by technology and social media is that: nobody is interested in your feelings; someone always hurts you and doesn't trust anyone.

e) Losing Yourself: everyone is getting consumed by priorities of social media or technology. We are suppressing our needs, desires and feelings. We form ourselves according to technology. We stop investing in our learning and growth, stop pursuing our dreams and passions.

f) Patience: "two things define you: your patience when you have nothing, your attitude when you have everything" said by A P J Abdul Kalam. The age of technology has taken away the virtue. As technology

gets more efficient and accessible human beings are becoming more impatient. Technology insistently rewards us with contents, items and services which has made everyone more impatient.

g) Personal Insight: “our virtues and failures are inseparable, like force and matter. When they separate man is no more,” said Nikola Tesla. The New age lost observances on their life and their weakness and positive. If we look at the increase in crime, we can conclude that nobody corrects themselves and there are no personal observations.

h) Human Creativity and Innovative Thoughts: technology and online information restrain individual imagination, critical thinking and generation of novel ideas.

i) Losing of Essential Skills: there are certain skills that we should hold in our life, but some necessary skills are disappearing from our life due to technology. 1) Handwriting: now nobody is depending upon pen rather they type every matters. 2) Basic Mathematics: preparing a house hold budget or monthly expense any other plan no one is going to hold pen and paper but they depend on smart phone only.

j) Social Interaction: digital communication is so active but meaningful personal conversation has reduced. There is no emotional attachment to others.

7) The Art of Being Human: The Enduring Value of Humanities in the Digital Age.

a) Solitude: solitude is necessary for each human to think about himself and life. William Words Worth found in solitude the element glory of his youth and the materials for his most enduring poems. Henry David Thoreau an American naturalist and essayist, deliberately went to the pond to live in solitude, for two years, and then spent next ten years for writing his experiment. Buddha and Jesus, we found them in great solitude and after it, they preached great moral lessons. Philosophers like Augustine, Spinoza, Kant, Kierkegaard and Nietzsche were in personal solitude and they share their philosophy.

b) Humanities (Literature and Philosophy): it help us to in real human nature in the world. For example Dostoevsky’s Crime Punishment gives us insight about morality, guilty and redemption which providing a complex portrayal of human nature. Leo Tolstoy’s Anna Karenina speaks about human relationship, morality and consequence of our choices. This also speaks about nature of human experience. A person who reads the works of literature and philosophy will not give his entire human nature to technology and social platform.

c) Importance of History: even if you are the age of 100 you will run after to learn new technology. Today’s generation considered that history is boring subject and irrelevant. When we study about history we will have good understanding about past and their mistakes and it will help us not repeat it in our present and it will help us to build a better society. History is study about the past people and their actions which directly affect our lives today. Without studying history we would not understand our success and failures,

it may leads us to do the same without changing it. Spanish Philosopher George Santayana once said: “Those cannot remember the past are doomed to repeat it”.

d) Empathy: every person is unique and social being. If anyone needs to improve himself first he must understand the other. One person’s abilities to understand the other’s emotional state is a key to maintain healthy relationship. Literature can help us to elicit empathy within us, which deepen our compassion for all fellow humans and board sense humanity. Sarty, the main character in Barn Burning by William Faulkner is example for universal feeling of being torn between family and society. There are some literary works that helps to grow in empathy: The Invisible Boy by Trudy Ludwig, A Sick Day for Amos by Mc Gee by Philip C Stead, Charlotte’s Web by E B White.

e) Finding Oneself: now is world of selfie, showing our smiles, our style and how we live through internet. But in order to portrait that we are we need a more than smart phone, to express our own uniqueness to the world. By studying literature and humanities one can obtain ourselves more clearly more than any slefie. For example if we take life of Salman Rushdie after even major attack on his life and lost one eye and major wounds to his body after six month he made proposal to write book on his tragic experience. So he is good example to everyone to overcome our struggles and to understand our abilities.

f) Patience: it is not easy to complete a literary work, it need to patience to both in writing a book and reading a book. A person who has quality of reading a book surely he has quality of patience in him. Recently malayali writer Sara Joseph published her work called “Kara” which has taken write more than three years for research and studies. A person who is continuously dealing with literature will be gifted with virtue of patience.

g) Personal Insight: many literary works ask many moral questions, ethical dilemmas which help readers to reflect on their values, success, failures and behaviors. Literary offer many role models and scenario that motivate individual to reach their goals and improve their lives.

h) Human Creativity and Innovative Thoughts: after reading literary works everyone has possibility to get inspired from the work and author. After the close observation on works and authors and their writing style and concepts a person can improve his own way of writing and style. Shakespeare was inspired from Virgil, Ovid and Homer. Literature is the love of creativity. No one can separate the two: one is the way to reach the other.

i) Social Interaction: literature will help a person to think on his society and their problems, challenges and it will be help them to act on it. For example Americanah Nagozi Adichie’s Novel helped to questions about the caste, race and identity. Same way The Beloved novel by Toni Morrison speaks about slavery and identity.

j) Relevance: science and technology makes every day new discoveries so in science and technology relevance based on new discoveries and old technologies are irrelevant. We don’t use the technology that

Innovating Across Boundaries: Bridging Science, Technology, and Humanities
September 2024
ISBN Number: 978-93-95305-66-2

was before ten years but literature Shakespeare is relevant today with his thoughts, theme, character and stories.

Conclusion

Innovative ideas and technological advances in science and technology have been reflected by numerous well known and representative literary works. Science and humanities are equally human and have equally influence each other.

Literary works, articles, novels helps the general public and students to scientific ideas and concepts. Through literature many other mentioned in the paper try to convey human side of science, the social, historical contexts in which sciences develops. Literary can help scientists and science to spread knowledge of science and its great achievements. Literature always helps to understand and inspire to builds better future. Literature also helps the people to understand and question on issues that society face today. So when deeply studies on humanities and its related subject we can clearly come to concluded that humanities is not least when we compare to science and technology.

References

- Alfarhan, Equbal.(2024,March,24). The Influence of Literature on Society, International Journals of Social Science and Humanities Research, Vol.12, Issue 7, PP .263 – 270.
- Dr. Gurugath, Badiger.(2021,August,18). Literature and Science(video).You Tube.
- Kunjikanna, T.P.(2024,August,31). Shatrate Veedualuka Rashtrethvm, Mathrubumi,PP. 13- 22.
- Joseph, Sunny.(2024, March,09). Change the Name of God, Mathrubumi, PP. 12-19.
- Ramchandren,(2023, August,19). Oppenheimer and Einstein, Mathrubumi, PP. 14-17.
- Traver, Manel(2024, july,23). Science, Scientists and Literature. Metode. Org.
- Paliyath, Ram Mohan.(2022, July,09). 100 Things We Have Lost to the Internet. Mathrubumi,PP.94-96
- Paul, Pamela.(2021).100 Things We'he Lost to the Internet. Crown.