

General And Educational Philosophy Of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

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Abstract

The present paper is an attempt to know the general and educational philosophy of great philosopher Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. In this study Philosophical and Historical method was used. Books written by Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, speeches of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, articles, newspapers, internet sources, etc. are the main source of data. Aurobindo proposed that education is nothing but bringing out and nurturing the latent potentialities; integrate oneself with self, harmonious living of individual with society, country and humanity to make oneself a complete being or integral human being. He believed that purpose of education is not merely cramming of facts or information because this will lead to temporal achievement of goals in life but education is making of character, personality and values. He placed high importance to the indigenous education, language as it will help the child to understand his /her past and connect with the present so that he /she can progress in the future. He was not against any western education but he believed that we should learn from western education about their advancement in knowledge. He believed that chief aim of education is awakening of divinity in the individual. This can be done through yoga, meditation. He had given five secondary aims of education- physical, spiritual, moral, mental and psyche development which he later called it as Integral Education. According to him, process of education is the development of one's physical, vital, spiritual, mental and psychic aspects of human. He was of the opinion that role of teacher is very minimal in the teaching-learning process as teaching will corrupt the mind of the child. So he believed that let the child explore the world around us and blossom on the basis of his/her innate abilities. He firmly believed that each country has a set of own values, culture and history and it is the responsibility of teachers to make students aware of it and develop them in line with the values, ideals and traditions.

Key words: Education, philosophy, divine, yoga, spiritual teacher, student, harmony

Introduction

Education entails the harmonious development of the body, mind, and spirit, as well as general character, behavior, and demeanor training. The concept of education has always evolved with the passage of time. A society's economic, social, and political structure has also changed. Every

educator, whether a teacher, a supervisor, or an administrator, is led by a philosophy that he has developed through a range of educational and social experiences in his own life. This might be a good or bad ideology. The scope of Indian philosophy is quite broad; it may embrace parts of the physical, spiritual, and mental worlds that are not visible to the naked eye. Objects that can't be seen with the eyes can be perceived with intuition, and "intellectual eyes" are utilized to see abstract things. The Bible speaks of "spiritual vision" or "divine eyes," which are capable of perceiving even the most abstract objects, and this capacity is attained via years of systematic instruction and the mercy of God. Perception of both real and abstract objects is thus regarded important in Indian philosophy.

Justification of the Study

Since independence, our government has formed several commissions and committees to investigate the educational system. Almost all commissions and initiatives emphasized future citizens' value-oriented education. Because Sri Aurobindo Ghosh has made significant contributions to educational thought and practice, the investigator hopes that studying his educational philosophy will illuminate the path and broaden the scope for full thinking along new lines, as this thinker has made significant contributions to the meaning and content of Indian educational philosophy. His innovative ideas will have a significant impact on our current understanding of the educational process's goals and purpose. All of this leads to the current research.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the life of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh
- To study the educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

Methodology

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was self-illuminated philosopher who has delivered his ideas in different form to create new vision in the listeners. His valuable thoughts have been compiled in the shape of books, research papers, essays and other web sources. The present study is concerned to the educational thoughts of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. In this study Philosophical and Historical method was used. Content analysis was also used to know about the life of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh.

About Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

Aurobindo Ghosh was born to Krishnadhan Ghosh (father) and Swarnalata Devi (mother) on 15 August 1872 in Calcutta in the Bengal province of India. His father Dr. Ghosh wanted to mold him in the colors of western civilization. Therefore, he was sent to the Irish Christian School in Darjeeling for his primary education. At the age of 7 he went to study in England. He completed his education under the patronage of the priest couple there.

Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is based on the belief that the intellectual development of man has reached its climax. There should be inner and spiritual development ahead of it. If man does not progress in this direction, then not only will his alternative sequence be blocked but he will also move towards his downfall. Sri Aurobindo did not consider sense experience as the highest knowledge, but considered it to be a lower order of knowledge. According to him there are many degrees of knowledge and the highest order is the spiritual experience which we can attain in this world.

Aurobindo considered one-sided development of man to be harmful. He laid emphasis on the all-round development of human beings to build a healthy society. For this he emphasized on the integration of oriental and western cultures. There is neither a sense of escape from ancient Indian culture nor blind imitation of western culture in his philosophy. Only an integrated form of both can develop a better education system.

In 1907, Sri Aurobindo wrote an essay titled 'A System of National Education'. In this, he explained the concept of his education and said, "In every human being there is some God-given divine power, something that is his own, which can be moved towards perfection. The task of education is to identify, develop and use it. The main goal of education should be to fully develop the inherent power of the developing soul and prepare it for the best work." In another famous article in 1910, Sri Aurobindo wrote a sentence that became the motto of education. He wrote, "The first principle of proper education is that nothing can be taught."

It is thus clear that in the view of Sri Aurobindo, knowledge is inherent in the soul of every person. He considered the conscience as the means of revealing the right education. According to Sri Aurobindo, there are four levels of the inner being - the mind, the mind, the intellect and the inner vision. Chitta is actually a past mental condition. When a person remembers something, it is filtered and stored in the mind. Because of this, working memory sometimes selects some things according to the need and capacity. Appropriate education and training is required for making

the right choice. The second plane of the mind can be called the brain. It receives facts from the senses and gives them the form of thought. Apart from the senses, the brain itself also receives facts or concepts.

Therefore, training of the senses and the brain is beneficial. The role of 'intellect', the third part of the conscience, is more important in education. The function of the intellect is to organize the knowledge acquired by the brain, analyze and synthesize them and reach the conclusion. The fourth aspect of the inner being is the power of 'introspective perception'. This leads to a direct vision of knowledge and human beings can also know about the future. But the human conscience has not yet been able to awaken this power. It is in the stage of development and in future human can get this inherent power through good education.

AIM OF EDUCATION

All-round development of the child

According to Sri Aurobindo, the aim of education is the all-round development of body, mind and soul. So that they can use them as tools in realizing the Divine Truth inherent in themselves. Education helps the students to develop themselves as a whole. They emphasize on the coordinated development of various aspects of the child's body, life, mind, intellect, soul etc. Sri Aurobindo writes in Essays on the Gita, "The education of a child should be the expression of what is best, most powerful, most intimate and life-fulfilling in his nature. The mold in which the action and development of the mind should be molded is the mold of their intrinsic qualities and power. He must acquire new things, but he will receive them in the best and most vital form on the basis of his own development, type and inner strength."

Education of Atma-Tattva

Sri Aurovindo does not consider the purpose of education to be gathering of information. According to him the aim of education is to impart self-education or self-education. So that the human soul can unite with the divine.

Social development of the student

Sri Aurovindo considered the development of social aspect in children as an important goal of education. They imagine a divine society and a divine human being. According to him the aim of education is to develop such a complete human being, who develops not only as an individual but also as a member of the society.

Education of Nationalism

Sri Aurobindo firmly believed that like human beings, every nation also has a soul, which is the link between the human-soul and the universal-soul. Sri Aurobindo led the national education movement going on in the first decade of the twentieth century. Therefore, he wanted to develop such a national education system which is in line with Indian culture and traditions. He said that "the education we are in search of is an education appropriate to the Indian soul and need and nature and culture, not merely an education which has faith in the past also, but towards the developing soul of India." , has faith in his future needs, in the greatness of his self-creation and in his eternal soul.

Teaching of Harmony

Sri Aurobindo saw the possibility of a broader harmony among the elements that seemed to be outwardly opposed. In his thoughts we can easily see the harmony of knowledge, devotion, action, harmony of Nirguna and Saguna, amalgamation of duality and non-duality. Sri Aurobindo wanted to take the process of harmony and coordination further for the welfare of mankind through education. In this way, Shri Aurobindo emphasized on the all-round and coordinated development of personality through education. He wanted to base education on beauty so that truth could be realized. Thus the aim of his education was to attain the amalgamated form of Satya, Shiva and Sundar.

Syllabus

There are three basic principles of Sri Aurobindo in the context of curriculum development:-

1. The child himself learns, the teacher helps him to understand the dormant forces.
2. Curriculum should be designed keeping in mind the specialties of the child. This is necessary to achieve the great objective of self-realization.
3. The principle of present to future and near to far should be adopted in curriculum formulation.

Education should be based on 'Swadeshi' principles. Aurobindo used to emphasize on the coordination of knowledge of East and West - but he believed that Western knowledge should be taught first by strengthening the foundation of Vidyatri in indigenous knowledge. He says, "The aim and principle of true national education is certainly not to disregard modern truth and knowledge, but to lay our foundations on our own faith, our own mind, our own spirit."

Sri Aurobindo presented a comprehensive five-faced plan of education according to his holistic ideology. These five aspects are physical, vital, mental, inner and spiritual. These five aspects are stages of progressive development. Also, after the beginning, the development of each side continues for life.

Physical Education

The body is the medium of all human actions. In the yoga philosophy of Sri Aurobindo, great importance has been given to a healthy body. There are three aspects of physical education - (a) controlling physical activities (b) coordinated development of all parts and activities of the body (c) eliminating physical defects. For physical development, there is proper arrangement for yoga, exercise and various types of sports in Sri Aurobindo Ashram.

Meditative Education:

Under meditative education, the practice of strengthening the will-power is made. And the emphasis is on character building. Both these objectives cannot be achieved by teachings or lectures. Teachers have to model behavior so that students can imbibe their good qualities. Along with this, ideals of great men have to be present. The student also acquires these qualities through self-study and restraint.

Mental Education:

The mind is very fickle, so it is difficult to control it. This work cannot be done by bookish knowledge or collection of facts. Mental education is essential for building a healthy culture and for better social relations. According to Shri Mataji, there are five parts of the education of the mind-

1. To awaken the ability of concentration.
2. To make the mind broad, wide and rich.
3. Setting the highest goal and organizing all the thoughts with it.
4. Keep restraint on thoughts and give up wrong thoughts.
5. To develop mental stability, complete peace and the ability to receive the inspirations coming from the Supreme Being in the right form.

It is necessary to adopt yoga for mental development. Yama, Niyama, Asana and Pranayama are helpful in increasing the concentration of the student.

Intrinsic education:

Under inner education, efforts are made to get answers to those eternal philosophical questions which have been churning in the human mind since the beginning like what is the goal of life? What is the reason for the existence of man on earth? What is the relation between man and eternal being? etc. The complete development of human being cannot be imagined without the development of the soul. It is only by the development of the soul that man can achieve the goal of life. Yoga-sadhana is necessary for the development of the soul.

Spiritual Education:

Spiritual education is the highest peak of the education process. Through this, the educationist establishes a close relationship with the universal authority. According to Shri Mataji, on attaining spiritual education, "Suddenly an inner door will open and you will all enter into such a light which will give you assurance of immortality and give a clear feeling that you have always lived and will live forever." Destruction is of external forms, and with regard to your real being you will also find that these forms are like clothes, which are thrown away when they become old.

Method of instruction

Sri Aurobindo believed that a student could not be taught anything that was not already contained in him. The student should have the freedom to learn. It is the duty of the teacher to create suitable conditions. In the teaching-learning process, the desire and interest of the child is of utmost importance. The subject in which the student is interested in education should be taught. Also, the method of teaching should be selected according to the interest of the student. The teacher should do the teaching work in such a way that the student takes interest in the lesson and subject being taught.

Sri Aurovindo emphasized the importance of adopting such a method of teaching so that the student does not consider education as a mere collection of information. He should not insist on memorization, but develop the skills necessary to acquire knowledge, considering them important. Powers like understanding, memory, judgment, imagination, reasoning, and thinking should be developed in students.

Teacher in the Eyes of Sri Aurovindo

A teacher is not just an 'instructor'. His most important function is to help the student to "understand himself". He is not the one to serve the information to the students, but a guide. The teacher helps in the development of the creative and creative powers of the students. According to Maharishi Sri Aurovindo, the teacher should act as the gardener of the national culture. His

duty is to fertilize the roots of the culture. And by irrigating the roots and making Vidyatri a great human being.

Student Concept

Sri Aurobindo considers Vidyatri in a disguised form as 'Almighty Chaitanya'. They do not see Vidyatri only as a body. Along with the body, life, mind, intellect, soul etc. give equal importance to different aspects. They want coordinated development of all this. Maharishi Sri Aurovindo considers conscience important in education. As we have already seen, there are many levels of conscience. The first level of the inner being is called "Chitta". It is a place for the storage of memories. The second level is called "Mind". It takes information and experiences from the senses and converts them into concepts and ideas. The third level of the inner being is "intellect". which is of utmost importance in the education process. It organizes information and knowledge materials, draws conclusions and makes generalisations. This is how the theory of intelligence is formulated. The highest level of conscience is "realization". Sri Aurobindo is of the clear opinion that "the mind cannot be taught anything which is not already present in the child in the form of dormant knowledge". It is also not charged.

Educational Institutions

After retiring from politics, Sri Aurobindo came to Pondicherry in 1910. He meditated here. Gradually, the number of seekers and followers of Sri Aurovindo increased. Sri Aurovindo Ashram was established here in 1926. From 1940, seekers were allowed to keep children in the ashram. Seeing the needs of the children, Sri Aurobindo established the Ashram School in 1943.

On January 6, 1952, Shri Maa established the "Sri Aurobindo International University Center"- which later came to be known as the "Sri Aurobindo International Center of Education". It is an inseparable part of the Yogashram of Pondicherry because the purpose of yoga and education is the same-the union of the Atmantattva with the Eternal Universal Being by attaining perfection. In this way, there is a system of education and research from elementary education to high level.

Since the aim of education is the awakening and development of the self, no artificial distinction is made in the center of the education of boys and girls. Therefore, in the center of Sri Aurovindo International Education, there is the same educational program for girls as for boys. Even in physical education, there is no difference. Despite this, the choices are many, but the basis of selection is not gender or traditional prohibition but internal taste. In 1968, Shri Mata established Auroville. It is a wonderful use of collective residence and education of the entire city, rising

above caste, religion, language, race. It is an expression of faith in the future of man. Auroville is an attempt to develop a 'New Style' of living which is based on Sri Aurobindo's concept of 'New Humanity'.

Conclusion

Aurobindo is naturalist and nationalist philosopher whose ideas about education are obtained from national education proposed in the year 1907 which is the outcome of his educational philosophy. He proposed that education is nothing but bringing out and nurturing the latent potentialities; integrate oneself with self, harmonious living of individual with society, country and humanity to make oneself a complete being or integral human being. He believed that purpose of education is not merely cramming of facts or information because this will lead to temporal achievement of goals in life but education is making of character, personality and values. He placed high importance to the indigenous education, language as it will help the child to understand his /her past and connect with the present so that he /she can progress in the future. He was not against any western education but he believed that we should learn from western education about their advancement in knowledge. He believed that chief aim of education is awakening of divinity in the individual. This can be done through yoga, meditation. He had given five secondary aims of education- physical, spiritual, moral, mental and psyche development which he later called it as Integral Education. According to him, process of education is the development of one's physical, vital, spiritual, mental and psychic aspects of human. He was of the opinion that role of teacher is very minimal in the teaching-learning process as teaching will corrupt the mind of the child. So he believed that let the child explore the world around us and blossom on the basis of his/her innate abilities. He firmly believed that each country has a set of own values, culture and history and it is the responsibility of teachers to make students aware of it and develop them in line with the values, ideals and traditions. He called it as Swadhrma. He criticized the modern education as it is inadequate to prepare the children for wholesome personality. He believed that only education which awakens the consciousness of individuals will transform the nation socially, economically and politically. That's why his thrust on integral education is for developing futuristic citizens-a balance individual having both traditional and modern.

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Important Works of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh

- Essays on the Gita
- The Life Divine
- The Secret of the Veda
- The Synthesis of Yoga
- The Human Cycle
- The Ideal of Human Unity
- The Foundations of Indian Culture
- The Future Poetry