



COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF SRI AUROBINDOS EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY AND CONTEMPORARY EDUCATIONAL PRACTICES

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Abstract

Education is a continuous process of human development that aims not only at the acquisition of knowledge but also at the complete growth of an individual's personality. Sri Aurobindo, one of the most influential Indian philosophers and educational thinkers, introduced the concept of Integral Education, which emphasizes the harmonious development of physical, mental, emotional, moral, spiritual and psychological aspects of human beings. His educational philosophy focuses on self-realization, inner growth, creativity and the discovery of individual potential. Contemporary educational practices, on the other hand, are shaped by globalization, technological advancement, skill-based learning, inclusive education and learner-centred approaches. This research paper attempts to analyze Sri Aurobindos educational philosophy in comparison with modern educational practices. It examines the relevance of his ideas in present educational systems and highlights how his vision can contribute to holistic and value-based education in the modern era.

Keywords: Sri Aurobindo, Integral Education, Holistic Development, Contemporary Education, Spiritual Education, Learner-Centred Approach

1. Introduction

Education is the important instruments for the development of human beings and society. It is a lifelong process that contributes to the intellectual, physical, emotional, moral and spiritual growth of individuals. The purpose of education is not only to provide information or prepare individuals for employment but also to develop their personality, character and ability to contribute positively to society. A meaningful education system help's human beings understand themselves, develop their abilities and participate effectively in social progress. Education has always remained a major area of philosophical discussion and reform.



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Different educational thinkers and philosophers have presented various ideas regarding the aims, methods and values of educations. These thinkers attempted to define education according to the needs of individuals and society, among Indian philosophers. Sri Aurobindo holds a highly significant position because he presented a comprehensive and unique vision of education. His philosophy was not limited to academic learning but focused on the complete transformation of human personalities. Aurobindo considered education as a process through which the hidden potential within every individual could be discover and developed.

Aurobindo was a great philosopher, nationalist, yogi and educational thinker whose ideas were influenced by both Indian spiritual traditions and modern concepts of human development. His educational philosophy was based on the belief that every human being possesses unlimited possibilities. According to him, education should not simply fill the mind of a child with information but should help the learner discover knowledge from within. He believed that the real aim of educations is to bring out the inner quality and capacities that already exist in individuals. This approach makes his educational philosophy learner-centred and development-oriented.

The foundation of Aurobindos educational thoughts is the concept of Integral Education. Integral Education means the complete and balanced development of all dimensions of personality of humans. According to Aurobindo, human beings are not only intellectual beings but also possess emotional, physical, psychological & spiritual aspects. An ideal education system should focus on all these areas rather than emphasizing only intellectual achievements. He identified five major components of human development; physical education, vital education, mental education, psychic education and spiritual education.

Physical education, according to Aurobindos, is necessary because the body is the foundation for all human activities. A healthy and disciplined body support's mental and spiritual growth. Vital education focuses on emotions, desires and attitudes & personality development. It teaches individuals to control their emotions and develop positive qualities. Mental education aims at developing intelligence, creativity, reasoning ability and independent thinking. Psychic education deals with the discovery of the inner self



and moral consciousness, while spiritual education focuses on achieving higher awareness' and self-realisation.

Aurobindo strongly opposed mechanical and examination-oriented education system. He believed that education should not be based on memorisation and forced learning. According to him and every child has individual interests, abilities and learning capacities. Education should respect individual differences and provide freedom for natural developments. The teacher should not act as a strict authority but as a guide and facilitator who helps student's discover their own abilities. This idea is closely connected with modern learner-centred educational approaches.

In the contemporary world, education has undergone major transformations due to globalization and technological advancement and changing social requirements. Modern educational systems are moving away from traditional methods of teaching and are focusing on creativity, innovation, critical thinking and practical knowledge, the purpose of contemporary education is to prepare learners to face the challenges of a rapidly changing world. Modern society requires individuals who are not only knowledgeable but also creative, adaptable and capable of solving complex problems.

Technologies has become an important element of contemporary educational practices. Digital classrooms and online learning platform's, artificial intelligence-based learning system's and virtual educational resources have changed, the way knowledge is delivered and received, Students today have access to vast sources of information and opportunities for interactive learning. Modern educational approaches emphasize active participation rather than passive reception of knowledge.

Contemporary educations also gives importance to experiential learning, where students learn through observation, practice and real-life experiences, This approach helps learners develop problem-solving abilities and practical understanding and competency-based education focuses on the development of skills and abilities rather than only theoretical knowledge, Inclusive education is another important aspect of modern educational practices. Equal opportunities for learners from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds.



Many principles of contemporary education show similarities with the ideas presented by Aurobindo, The modern emphasis on holistic developments, creativity, self-learning and individual differences reflects his educational vision and His belief that education should develop the complete personality of a learners is also visible in present educational reforms. Example for modern educational policies increasingly emphasize multidisciplinary learning, skill development, ethical values and emotional intelligence.

The National Education Policy, NEP 2020 of India also highlights several concepts that are closely related to Aurobindos philosophy. The policy emphasizes holistic development, flexibility in learning. Creativity, critical thinking and value-based education. These ideas represent the continuing relevance of Aurobindos educational philosophy in the present context. His thoughts provide valuable guidance for developing an education system that balances knowledge, skills and human values.

There are also certain differences between Aurobindos philosophy and contemporary educational practices. Modern education often focuses on professional success. Technological skills and economic productivity, whereas Aurobindo emphasized inner growth, self-realization and spiritual development. The current education system still faces challenges such as excessive competition, examination pressure and lack of attention towards moral developments. Aurobindos educational ideas can help overcome these limitations by promoting a more balanced approach.

A comparative examine of Aurobindos educational philosophy and contemporary educational practices is important because it helps in understanding how traditional Indian educational ideas can contribute to solving modern educational problems. His concept of Integral Education provides a broader understanding of learning by combining intellectual development with emotional, ethical and spiritual growth.

Sri Aurobindos Educational Philosophy

Sri Aurobindo considered education as a mean's for the complete transformation of human life. According Aurobindo true education should focus on the development of the whole personality rather than only intellectual growth. Aurobindo philosophy is based on the belief that human beings have unlimited possibilities that can be developed through



proper education, The major concept of his educational thought is Integral Education. It includes five important aspects:

Physical Education: Aurobindo emphasised the importance of physical development because a healthy body provides the foundation for intellectual and spiritual progress. Physical education helps in developing discipline, strength and balance.

Vital Education: Vital education is concerned with emotions, character, desires and social behavior. It aims to develop self-control, emotional stability and positive personality traits.

Mental Education: Mental education focuses on the development of intelligence, reasoning ability, imagination and creativity. Aurobindo believe that students should learn through observation, exploration and independent thinking.

Psychic Education: Psychic education refers to the development of inner consciousness. It helps individuals understand their true nature and purpose of life.

Spiritual Education: Spiritual education aims at self-realisation and the development of higher consciousness. Aurobindo viewed spirituality as an essential part of human growth rather than a religious concept, important principle of his philosophy was child-centred education. Aurobindo believed that teachers should act as guides and facilitators instead of forcing knowledge upon students. Education should respect individual differences and natural interests of learners.

5. Contemporary Educational Practices

Contemporary education focuses on preparing learners for the demands of the modern world. The traditional teacher-centred system is gradually shifting towards student-centred and interactive learning methods.

Modern educational practices emphasize critical thinking, creativity, communication and problem-solving skills. Technology has become an important component of education through digital classrooms, online learning platforms and artificial intelligence-based learning systems.

Experiential learning encourages students to gain knowledge through practical experiences rather than memorization. Inclusive education promotes equal opportunities for students from different social, cultural and economic backgrounds.



Current educational reforms also focus on holistic development. The National Education Policy (NEP-2020) India's highlights multidisciplinary learning, creativity, ethics, values and overall personality development, which are closely related to Aurobindos vision of education.

6. Comparative Analysis of Sri Aurobindos Philosophy and Contemporary Practices

Aurobindos philosophy and contemporary educational practices share several common principles. Both approaches recognize that education should develop the complete personality of learners, Aurobindo emphasized holistic development through physical, mental and spiritual growth. The modern education promotes overall development through academics, sports, creativity and life skills.

His concept of child-centred education is reflected in present learner-centred teaching methods where students actively participate in the learning process. Modern methods such as activity-based learning, project-based learning and experiential learning follow similar principles.

Aurobindo believed that teacher's should guide students rather than dominate them. Contemporary education also considers teachers as facilitators who support students in developing knowledge and skills.

Certain differences exist between both approaches. Sri Aurobindo gave greater importance to spiritual and inner development, while contemporary education is largely focused on professional skills, technology and economic requirements. Modern systems sometimes prioritize analysis and career achievements, whereas Aurobindo focused on self-discovery and personal transformation.

7. Relevance of Aurobindos Educational Philosophy in Modern Time's

Aurobindos educational ideas remain highly relevant in the 21st century. The increasing pressure of competition and materialistic development has created the need for an education system that balances knowledge with emotional and moral development.

His concept of Integral Education can help overcome limitations of examination-oriented systems by encouraging creativity, independent thinking and personal growth. The focus on values, ethics and self-awareness can contribute to responsible citizenship.



Modern education policies that promote multidisciplinary learning, skill development and holistic growth reflect many aspects of Aurobindo's educational visions. Integrating his philosophy with contemporary practices can create a balanced system that prepares individuals not only for employment but also for meaningful life.

2. Review of Literature

Aurobindo, 1956. "The Synthesis of Yoga", Sri Aurobindo explained the relationship between human development, consciousness and education. He emphasized that the true purpose of human life is the development of higher consciousness and self-realization. According to him, education should not only focus on intellectual achievement but also on the physical, emotional, psychological and spiritual transformation of individuals. His concept of integral growth provides the foundation for a holistic approach to education.

Aurobindo, 1972. "The Human Cycle: The Ideal of Human Unity", Sri Aurobindo discussed the evolution of human society and the role of education in social transformation. He argued that education should prepare individuals for personal development as well as collective progress. His ideas highlighted the importance of inner development, creativity and moral values in creating a progressive society. The study provides philosophical support for understanding education as a tool for human evolution.

Aurobindo, 1990. "On Education", Sri Aurobindo presented the concept of Integral Education and described education as a process of discovering the hidden potential within every learner. He emphasized five dimensions of education: physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual development. He believed that teachers should act as guides rather than controllers and that education should encourage freedom, creativity and self-learning.

Heehs, 2008. "The Lives of Sri Aurobindo", Heehs examined the life, philosophy and intellectual contributions of Sri Aurobindo. The study highlighted how Aurobindo's experiences influenced his educational ideas and his vision of human development. The author explained that Aurobindo's philosophy combines spiritual understanding with practical approaches for individual and social progress.



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Aggarwal, 2010., “Theory and Principles of Education”, Aggarwal analyzed different educational theories and philosophical foundations of education. The study emphasized that modern education requires a balance between knowledge, skills and values. The author highlighted the importance of learner-centred approaches and personality development, which are closely connected with Sri Aurobindos concept of Integral Education.

Nanda, 2008. “Education and Philosophy”, Nanda discussed various Indian and Western educational philosophies and their impact on educational practices. The study explained that Sri Aurobindos philosophy provides a comprehensive model of education by combining intellectual, moral and spiritual aspects. The author considered Integral Education as an effective approach for developing complete human personality.

Sharma, 2012. “Textbook of Educational Philosophy”, Sharma explored the contributions of major educational philosophers, including Sri Aurobindo. The author explained that Aurobindos educational philosophy emphasizes self-development, creativity and spiritual awareness. The study also highlighted the relevance of his thoughts in modern education systems that focus on holistic development.

Chaube, 2009. “Philosophical and Sociological Foundations of Education”, Chaube examined the relationship between education, society and philosophy. The study highlighted that education should contribute to both individual growth and social welfare. The author explained that Aurobindos ideas of complete development and value-based learning remain significant for contemporary educational reforms.

Delors, 1996. “Learning: The Treasure Within”, Delors emphasized four pillars of education: learning to know, learning to do, learning to live together and learning to be. The study focused on lifelong learning and holistic development. These principles reflect similarities with Aurobindos educational philosophy, especially the idea that education should develop the complete personality of learners.

Government of India, 2020. “National Education Policy 2020”, The National Education Policy 2020 focused on transforming Indian education through multidisciplinary learning, creativity, critical thinking and holistic development. The policy emphasized value-based education and flexible learning approaches. Many

principles of NEP 2020 show similarities with Sri Aurobindos concept of Integral Education, particularly the development of intellectual, emotional and ethical qualities of students.

2. Objectives of the Study

1. To Analysis the major characteristics of contemporary educational practices.
2. To Analysis the relevance of Sri Aurobindos ideas in the present education system.
3. To compare Sri Aurobindos concept of Integral Education with modern educational approaches’.
4. To examine the fundamental principles of Aurobindos educational philosophy.
5. To examine the contribution of value-based and holistic education in modern society.

3. Need of the Study

Education is one of the most powerful means for the development of individuals and society. In the modern period, education systems throughout the world are continuously changing due to technological advancement, globalization and social transformation. Contemporary education mainly focuses on academic achievement, professional skills, scientific knowledge and economic development. However, there is a growing need to create a balanced education system that also emphasizes moral values, emotional stability, creativity and complete personality development.

Aurobindos educational philosophy provides an important approach to fulfill this need through the concept of Integral Education. He believed that the purpose of education is not only the development of intelligence but also the growth of the physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual aspects of human beings. His philosophy focuses on bringing out the hidden potential of every learner and developing a complete human personality.

The need for the present study arises because contemporary educational practices, despite many advancements, often face challenges such as excessive competition, examination pressure, lack of moral values and limited attention to emotional and spiritual development. Modern education provides knowledge and skills, but there is also a



requirement to understand how education can contribute to inner growth and self-realization.

A comparative study of Aurobindos educational philosophy and contemporary educational practices is necessary to identify the similarities and differences between traditional Indian educational thought and present educational approaches. Sri Aurobindos ideas related to child-centred learning, freedom in education, creativity and holistic development have strong connections with modern concepts such as experiential learning, learner-centred education and skill-based education.

This study is also needed because current educational reforms emphasize holistic and multidisciplinary learning. Sri Aurobindos philosophy offers valuable guidance for developing an education system that combines knowledge, skills, ethics and human values. Therefore, analyzing his educational thoughts in the context of modern practices can provide useful insights for improving the quality and effectiveness of education.

The study attempts to explore how Sri Aurobindos vision of Integral Education can contribute to contemporary educational systems and help create individuals who are intellectually capable, emotionally balanced, morally responsible and socially productive.

4. Importance of the Research

1. The present study on “Comparative Analysis of Sri Aurobindos Educational Philosophy and Contemporary Educational Practices” is significant because it highlights the relevance of traditional Indian educational philosophy in the modern educational environment.
2. This study helps in understanding the deeper meaning and purpose of education. Sri Aurobindo viewed education as a process of complete human development rather than only the transfer of information. His philosophy provides a broader perspective that can strengthen modern educational theories and practices.
3. The study is important because it establishes a relationship between Integral Education and contemporary educational approaches. Present educational systems increasingly focus on creativity, critical thinking, innovation and learner-centred methods. These principles are closely connected with Sri Aurobindo’s ideas of natural learning and individual development.



4. The study contributes to the development of value-based education. In the present world, where social and ethical challenges are increasing, education must focus on developing responsible and morally aware individuals. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy emphasizes self-discipline, character building and spiritual awareness, which can help improve modern education.
5. This study is beneficial for teachers and educational institutions because it explains the changing role of teachers. According to Aurobindo, teachers should not only provide information but should act as guides who encourage students to discover their abilities. This idea supports modern teaching practices where teachers act as facilitators of learning.
6. The research is significant for policymakers and curriculum developers because it provides ideas for creating a balanced curriculum. The integration of Sri Aurobindo's educational principles with contemporary methods can promote physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical development among learners.
7. This research highlights that modern education and Sri Aurobindo's philosophy are not contradictory but complementary to each other. While contemporary education provides scientific knowledge, technology and practical skills, Sri Aurobindo's educational vision provides moral, psychological and spiritual dimensions. The combination of both approaches can help in building a more effective, meaningful and human-centred education system.

3. Research Methodology

The present study is based on a qualitative and analytical research approach. Secondary sources of information have been used for collecting data. Books, research papers, journals, educational reports and philosophical writings related to Sri Aurobindo and contemporary education have been reviewed. The study follows a comparative method to analyze similarities and differences between Sri Aurobindo's educational philosophy and current educational practices.

8. Findings of the Study



The study reveals that Aurobindos educational philosophy provides a comprehensive model for human development. His ideas of holistic growth, freedom in learning, creativity and teacher as a facilitator have strong connections with modern educational theories.

Contemporary education has successfully adopted learner-centred and skill-based approaches, but greater attention is required towards moral, emotional and spiritual development. A combination of Aurobindos principles and modern innovations can strengthen the quality of education.

9. Conclusion

Aurobindos educational philosophy represents a comprehensive and meaningful vision of education that extends beyond the boundaries of traditional academic learning. He considered education not merely as a process of acquiring information or preparing individuals for professional success but as a means for the complete development and transformation of human personality. According to Aurobindo, true education should help individuals discover their inner potential and develop all dimensions of life, including physical, intellectual, emotional, moral and spiritual aspects. His educational ideas remain highly relevant because they address the fundamental purpose of education, which is the development of a complete human being.

The concept of Integral Education is the foundation of Aurobindos educational philosophy. It emphasizes the balanced growth of the body, mind and inner consciousness. He believed that every individual possesses unique qualities and abilities, and education should provide opportunities for their natural development. Instead of forcing knowledge upon learners, education should encourage curiosity, creativity and independent thinking. His philosophy highlights that learning becomes more meaningful when students actively participate in the process of discovering knowledge.

Contemporary educational practices have undergone significant changes due to modernization, globalization and technological development. Present education systems increasingly focus on learner-centred approaches, digital learning, skill development, innovation and experiential learning. Modern methods encourage students to develop problem-solving abilities, creativity and practical knowledge. These approaches show



several similarities with Sri Aurobindo's ideas, especially his emphasis on self-learning, individual differences and holistic development.

The comparison between Aurobindo's educational philosophy and contemporary educational practices reveals that many modern educational concepts were reflected in his thoughts long ago. Ideas such as student-centred learning, the teacher as a facilitator, creativity-based education and overall personality development are common elements in both approaches. His belief that education should support the natural growth of learners is closely related to present educational reforms that focus on flexible and inclusive learning environments.

However, contemporary education still faces several challenges such as excessive examination pressure, competition, stress and limited focus on moral and emotional development. While modern education successfully provides technological skills and professional knowledge, it sometimes fails to address the deeper aspects of human growth, Aurobindo's philosophy can help overcome these limitations by integrating values, ethics, self-awareness and emotional balance into the educational process.

The relevance of Sri Aurobindo's educational philosophy can also be observed in modern educational policies that emphasize holistic development and multidisciplinary learning. His vision supports the idea that education should prepare individuals not only for employment but also for responsible citizenship and meaningful life. The combination of traditional wisdom and modern educational innovations can create a more balanced system that fulfills both personal and social needs.

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