

E-Content
Department of Education, Patna University.
M.Ed Semester II
Paper-C.C.5

By: -

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Unit V: Indian Philosophies of Education.

Topic: Aurobindo.

Objectives:-

After going through this content, the students will be able to—

- Understand biographical sketch of Aurobindo.
- Explain Educational thought of Aurobindo.

Introduction

As a philosopher Shri Aurobindo tries to give a Scientific way to Indian Philosophy. Some people are impressed by his thoughts. He never differentiates a human on the basis of States, Cast, Religion, money, and Color. He believes in universal brotherhood. The Ashram Built by him where people came across from all around the world, from different cast, religion and different states used to live there. And everyone toiled physical work. Everybody worked according to their capabilities to live, they worked for production and everyone took the practice of Meditation Yoga. They progressed towards spiritual life protecting their physical life. Such kind practices decrease the Physical and Cultural differences and Cast system is vanishing form society.

Biographical Sketch of Shri Aurobindo

Aurobindo was born in an educated middle class family in Calcutta on 15th Aug. 1872. He went to England at the age of 7 and lived there for 14 years. He received his education at Cambridge At the age of 18, he passed the entrance examination of the Indian Civil Service.

Besides English, he mastered Latin and Greek and learnt French, German and Spanish. In 1893, on his return from England, he joined as professor of English at Baroda College in Gujarat. Here, besides devoting himself to cultural and literary

activities, learnt Bengali, Gujarati, Marathi and Sanskrit. He joined the Indian National Congress and became an active freedom fighter. He was a revolutionary and was disappointed with the Moderates of the Indian National Congress. He started the Bengali daily 'Yugantar' and English daily 'Bande Mataram' to promote his revolutionary ideas. He was considered one of the most dangerous leaders by the British government. From a revolutionary freedom fighter, he became a philosopher and seer. In 1908, he was sent to jail for the Alipore Bomb case. During this time, he turned to yoga, meditation and study of religious, philosophical and spiritual literature. This changed him a lot. He went to Pondicherry and spent his remaining 40 years in his Ashram there. He changed himself and involved in several educational and social activities. He proposed theories of education which catered to Indian needs. He set up an International Ashram and International Centre of education and social activities. He also started a new experiment known as 'Auroville' as a city of human unity.

Philosophical Thought of Shri Aurobindo

Shri Aurobindo was a great follower of Bhagawat Geeta. He defines Karma Yoga and Meditation Yoga from the book of Geeta in a scientific way. From his point of view Yoga is combination of Physics and Supreme Energy (God). In other words Yoga is best tool form which even Men can have an experience of Supreme Energy. Shri Aurobindo never advice to engrossed into Brahma by having Yoga sadhana but instead he wants to take all the men's ignorance, darkness, after life knowledge into frightful and a necterful of life. That is why his philosophy often called as a Sarvang Yoga Philosophy. To understand his Yoga we have to know its Metaphysi Knowledge and even Philosophical Nature and its importance, and even its code of conduct.

Metaphysics of Shri Aurobindo's Sarvanga Philosophy.

God is Creator of the entire Universe, he believes. Then there rise a question, how can God Create this Universe. Shri Aurobindo answered this question in terms of evolution. From his point of view there has been two ways: Disembarkation and Embarkation. Further he states that Brahma (Creator) creates or made this Universe by disembarkation. He divided Disembarkation into seven steps: Supreme Truth → Soul → Eternal Happiness → Supreme Psyche → Psyche

→Vital Life → Material. His logic is that through nature of these Materialistic World men embarks to Supreme Truth. There are also seven steps of this thing. Material → Vital Life → Mind → Super Mind → Eternal Happiness → Soul → Supreme Truth. He accepted Brahma as a Supreme truth and God as a combination of Supreme Truth+ Soul+ Eternal Happiness. He accepted Atma as as a Geeta's main form. From the point of view Atama he have had two nature of Supreme Being: one is Eternal Happiness and soul. And this Atma travels through many forms of cunts and it takes from of Man and through its physical medium it steps forward to Truth. Shri Aurobindo takes human being also a developed creature. His thoughts that after taking a birth human actually cleared two steps of development to Truth, Aurobindo adheres that the fi nal destination or goal of human race is Truth+ Soul+Eternal Happiness means to quest of God.

On the process of development of human beings Shri Aurobindo stated that to achieve materialistics progress it is important to have a knowledge of a Materialistics World which should acquired through scenes and for Eternal Happiness inner development one should have Knowledge of Atam (Soul), and which can acquired any actions set of Yoga (yama, Rules, Sets, Pranayama, Pratyahara weaning away from Food, conception, Mediation And Trance). For this reason Strongly recommends Good Education. Points of Shri Aurobindo through education its furthestmost duty of human to acquire knowledge of Materials and Life Force (Prana), and after that trying to get the knowledge of Supreme Being, Happiness, Soul and Truth. And for this reason one should have a healthy physic, pure heart and Austere Life style.

Shri Aurobindo's Sarvanga Yoga, its Philosophical Metaphysics

Shri Aurobindo believes that source of Brahma is the coomen between the Materialistic, Spiritual Nature, and for that reason it is necessary to have the Knowledge of the Indifferences of between these two things can be an only True Knowledge. He divided Knowledge into Two forms in terms of experiment-Physical and Knowledge of Soul. He thinks that Knowledge of Matter is ordinary and the Soul Knowledge is the Highest Knowledge. In his point Physical Knowledge through the senses and Soul Knowledge by Conscience. For Soul Knowledge adheres Yoga and it's Action (Yam, Rules, Sets, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Conception, Meditation is necessary).

Values and Metaphysics of Shri Aurobindo's Yoga Philosophy

Shri Aurobindo declares seven steps for Embarkation → Materiel → Vital Life → Mind → Super Mind, Eternal Happiness → Soul → Truth. His thought from taking birth human being clears the steps of Material Life and Mental. After having birth he has to take the form of Super Animus he has to acquire: Eternal Happiness → Soul → Truth. According him the final goal or the destination of human race is to have eternal Happiness + Soul + Truth. And for that reason he has given two ways from Bhagvat Geeta.: Karma Yoga and Meditation Yoga a form which Yogi never escapes from world. Through Non Detachments he never left his duties by having A Meditation for Truth+ Soul + Eternal + Happiness. It is a necessary to have a healthy Physic, Mind which is not affected by disorder and astute Life style. For this reason he has given Yoga's Activity. (Yam, Rules, Sets, Pranayama, Pratyahara, Conception, Meditation and Trance and its Importance. And, from his point of view this all should be a Demeanor of human being.

Educational Thought of Shri Aurobindo

Shri Aurobindo is well known Philosopher but he wants his philosophy relevant to human life and for that reason he thoughts a different type of education. On the other hand then education was not appropriate for the imprudent of nation. So he forwarded one National Educational Policy. All of his thoughts regarding education were presented in his two works, "National System of Education" and "On Education".

Integral Education

True education, according to Sri Aurobindo, is not only spiritual but also rational, vital and physical. In other words it is integral education. This integral education has been explained by Sri Aurobindo's closest collaborator, the Mother in these words. Education to be complete must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of human being: the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. This education is complete, complimentary to each other and continued till the end of life. Aurobindo's scheme of education is integral in two senses. Firstly, it is integral in the sense inculcating all the five aspects of the individual being. Secondly, it is integral in the sense of being an education not only for the evolution of the individual alone, but also of the nation and finally of the

humanity. The ultimate aim of education is the evolution of total humanity. In this scheme of evolution, the principle of growth is unity in diversity. This unity again, maintains and helps the evolution of diversity.

The Integral School

The ultimate aim of education is man-making. It prepares the educand to work first as a human being and then as a member of a nation and finally as an individual. The circles of moral responsibility and loyalties proceed from wider to narrower and vice-versa. The man has to develop first as a human being then as a citizen and finally as an individual. Most of the present confusion of values is due to an inversion of this order. That education which comes naturally, easily, effectively and without strain is called integral education. Integral education is complete education. Important aspects that constitute integral education are:-

- Strengthening of mental and physical aspects.
- ii. Achievement of five principal aspects – the physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual. All the above five aspects have to be developed together.
- iii. Development of the four aspects of truth namely; love, knowledge, power, and beauty.
- iv. Development of the vehicles of truth namely psychic for love, mind for knowledge, vital for power and physical body for expression of physical beauty.

Shri Aurobindo believes in these ultimate principles of individuality, commonality and essentiality. These, in other words, are the educand, the society and the humanity. Integral education, according to him, must include evolution of all these three elements. These should develop together. This is the purpose of the school. In his lectures at Baroda college, Shri Aurobindo observed that the colleges and universities should educate through their academic as well as social activities. The school cannot be isolated from society. It cannot give total education in isolation. Its teachings have to be practiced in the society outside it. In the integral school four types of rooms are required to carry on various activities:

- Rooms of silence,
- Rooms of collaboration,

- Rooms of consultation,
- Lecture room.

Thus the school will develop different types of activities such as silence, collaboration, consultation and lectures. It will provide play, activity, discovery, innovation and finally development of the powers of the body, mind and spirit of the educand. In brief, the integral school will provide opportunities for integral development. In fact, the aims, curriculum and methods of teaching are in the light of these concepts of integral education.

Aims Of Education According To Integral Education

- i. **Perfection of soul:** The main aim of education is to help the growing soul to draw out that is best and make it perfect for a noble cause
- ii. **Realization of inner self:** Education should enable him to realize his inner self which is a part of the universal consciousness. He has to enter into right relationships not only within himself but also with the people of country and with the universal society to which he belongs
- iii. **Physical development:** Physical development of the child is another important aim of education. It will be misleading to say that those who are physically strong are mentally weak. Without physical development no other development is possible.
- iv. **Development of morality:** Without moral and emotional development mental developmental becomes harmful to human progress. The three essential factors for the moral development of a child are emotions, impressions or habits and nature. So it is necessary that the ideals of a teacher should be so high that the child by mere imitation is able to reach higher stages of development.
- v. **The development of senses:** Education should aim at the training of senses. According to him senses can be trained fully when manas, chitta and nerve are pure.
- vi. **Development of consciousness:** another important aim of education is to develop consciousness. According to him it has four levels. (i) Chitta (ii) Manas (iii) Intelligence (iv) Knowledge. A teacher should develop all these four levels harmoniously. This will promote the development of conscience.

- vii. **Harmony of the individual and collectivity:** Most of the socio-political thinkers have either laid emphasis upon the individual or collectivity. But Aurobindo aims at realization of harmony between individuals and also between nations. His scheme of education therefore is truly international. Explaining this ideal of Sri Aurobindo's scheme The Mother said, For all world organizations, to be real and to be able to live, must be based on mutual respect and understanding between nation and nation as well as between individual and individual. It is only in the collective order and organization, in a collaboration based upon mutual goodwill that lies the possibility of man being lifted of the painful chaos where he is now. It is with this aim and in this spirit that all human problems will be studied at the university centre, and their solution will be given in the light of the supra-mental knowledge which Aurobindo has revealed.
- viii. **Cultivation of values:** The present crisis of man is due to the chaos of values. Old values have been challenged while new values have not firmly taken their place. Character formation very much depends on value. The supreme value in Sri Aurobindo's thought is harmony. Other values are spirituality, divinity, evolution, ascent, transformation etc. the most important value for required for all growth is sincerity. Once that is developed, the rest follows.

Integral Curriculum

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh prescribed a free environment for the children to develop all the latent faculties to the full and suggested all those subjects and activities of child's interest to be included in the principles of curriculum.

- All life is education. So curriculum is not confined to a limited syllabus and a few text books.
- It should include all those subjects which promote mental and spiritual development.
- It is a means towards an end, not an end in itself, the end being the development of integral personality.
- It should provide for leisure pursuits.
- There should be flexibility to meet individual needs.
- Subjects of curriculum should be able to motivate children.

- Curriculum should involve creativity of life and constructive activities
- Curriculum should be interesting .

On the basis of the above principles, Aurobindo has prescribed the following subjects in the curriculum

- For primary stage: Mother Tongue, English, National History, Art, Painting, General Science, Social Studies, and Arithmetic.
- Secondary stage: Mother tongue, English, French, Arithmetic, Art, Chemistry, Physics, Botany, Social Studies, Physiology, Health Education.
- University Stage: Indian and western philosophy, History of Civilization, English, Literature, French, Sociology, Psychology, History of Science, Chemistry, Physics, Botany, International relations and integration.
- Vocational Education: Arts, painting, photography, sewing, sculptural, drawing, type, shorthand, collage industries, carpentry, nursing, mechanical and electrical engineering, Indian and European music, and dramatization.

Methods Of Teaching

The following principles of methods of teaching have been stressed by Sri. Aurobindo.

- Love and sympathy for the child.
- Education through mother tongue.
- Education according to the interests of the child.
- Education through self experience.
- Emphasis on learning by doing.
- Education through co-operation of teacher and students in the education process.
- Education according to the nature of child- considering the divinity in the child and latent gifts of mind and spirit.
- Freedom of child- free environment to gain more knowledge through his own efforts.

Principles Of Teaching And Learning

- i. The first principle is that– nothing can be taught, but everything can be earned. The teacher is a helper and guide, not an instructor or task master. He doesn't impart knowledge but shows him the way to acquire Knowledge which is already within him.
- ii. The second principle is that the mind has to be consulted in its growth. It is wrong to mould the child into the shape desired by the parent or teacher ignoring and destroying the divine in the child. To face the nature of the child to abandon its own dharma is to do permanent harm says Aurobindo.
- iii. The third principle of teaching is to work from near to far, from the known to unknown. Education should be according to the nature of the child. He says man's nature is molded by his souls past, his heredity and his environment. The past is the foundation, the present is the material and the future is the aim and each should find its due place in any national system of education.

Main Principles of Learning

- (i) Concentration is the first principle of learning,
- (ii) 'Abhyasa' or steady natural practice is the second principle of learning.

The Teacher

Sri Aurobindo has assigned a very important place to the teacher. However, he has not made him central as in the ancient Indian scheme. The teacher remains the philosopher and the guide. The Guru does not have absolute authority. He aims at turning the disciple's eye towards the beacon light of his own Godhead. In fact the real teacher is within the educand. He is the God. He is the ultimate guide and yet the teacher plays an important role in arousing the educand towards God within. He has not to impose his opinions or demand passive surrender from the educand. Sri Aurobindo compared the teacher to a gardener. Sri Aurobindo emphasizes an inner relationship the educator and the educand.

Describing as to who is a teacher, The Mother has laid down the following qualifications.

- One must be a saint and a hero to become a good teacher.

- One must be a good yogi to become a good teacher.
- He should be absolutely disciplined and have an integrated personality.
- He should be absolutely disciplined and have an integrated personality.
- One must have the perfect attitude in order to be able to exact a perfect attitude from one's pupils.
- A teacher who does not possess a perfect calm, an unflinching endurance and who are full of self-deceit will reach nowhere.
- He should be able to eliminate his ego, master his mind and develop an insight into human nature.
- The most important thing in a teacher is not knowledge but the attitude.
- The teacher also should grow along with the pupils.
- The Mother says– If a teacher is to be respected, he must be respectable.

National System Of Education.

Aurobindo strongly argued for national system of education because he found the defects in the prevailing system of education i.e. denationalizing, degrading & impoverish the mind, soul and character.

Main Characteristics of the National System of Education: Aurobindo pointed out the following elements:

- Human and spiritual values are complementary and supplementary,
- Education does not become national by tagging the word 'national' to the system,
- Education should pay due attention to modern knowledge and scientific progress,
- Mere knowledge of Science does not make us educated in the true sense. This must be related to powers of the human mind and spirit.
- There should be a balanced understanding of the national and international relationships of universal humanity.

Moral Education: This should be on the following methods:

- Personal examples of the teachers and elders.
- Study of books having lofty examples.
- ‘Satsanga’ i.e., good company.
- Suggesting and not commanding and imposing.

Discipline –

Chitta Shuddhi i.e. purification of the mental and moral habits should be the basis of discipline. This means to discriminate between right and wrong impressions and to absorb right ones in the mind. Sri Aurobindo advises teachers not to be arbitrary, despotic, impatient and ill tempered.

Physical Education: Perfection is the true aim of education and physical development is an integral part of perfection. Moreover without physical development, ‘Dharma’ cannot be performed. Only a healthy body can contain a healthy mind. As the Sanskrit goes, ‘Shariram khalu dharmasadhanam’ (the body is the means of fulfillment of dharma).

Contributions of Sri Aurobindo To Education

The Ashram School: The school was originally started in 1943 for the children of Sri Aurobindo’s disciples. It expanded gradually from a Primary School to a full-fledged High School. There are resident as well as day-students.

The International Centre of Education: The objectives underlying the centre are:

- To evolve a system of education for making it dynamic, ideal for society.
- To organize an environment which may provide inspiration and facilities for the exercise and development of the five aspects of personality-the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual.
- To emphasize the unity of all knowledge.
- To develop the sense of oneness of mankind.

- To discover and prepare for the role India has to play in the formation of the new international harmony.

Shri Aurobindo presented a national system of education which may be adopted for the educational reconstruction in India and at the same time develop the Indians as the world citizens. According to him, the national scheme of education should not only be from the point of view of the needs of the country but also from the standpoint of the needs of humanity.

Check your progress:

- Examine educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

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