

Aurobindo Ghosh Education System and Its application in Current theorization of NCF 2023

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Abstract

As a prolific thinker, spiritual leader and nationalist, Sri Aurobindo noted a vision of Integral Education, in which education is not henceforth limited to an intellectual development but a full blossom of human potential, physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual. It takes into account the inner development of learner, learning by doing, value education and attainment of deeper self and is a philosophy that is also rediscovering its importance in the modern context of educational reforms.

Together with the NEP 2020, NCF 2023 aims at introducing a learner-centred inclusive, competency-based, and culturally rooted system of education. It focuses on the holistic development, mother tribute based multilingual education, socio-emotional learning, creative expression and Indian heritage-based values. The structure also promotes the teacher as a facilitator to experiential learning and promotes an integrated curriculum developing ethical consciousness and life skills, which were many of the central visions of Aurobindo.

This research uses a qualitative approach through the textual study of primary and secondary writing as well as policy papers and interviews with expert opinions, which help to find similarities between the Aurobindo approach to education and the major hypotheses of NCF 2023. Results show quite a high level of convergence: the two models are similar in placing the importance on the holistic development of the learner, promoting experiential and inquiry learning, preserving the aspect of cultural and spiritual values and putting an emphasis on the empowerment of the teacher. In particular, the focus on psychic and spiritual development advocated by Aurobindo can be complemented by the objective of bringing up ethical, self-aware, and responsible citizens, so typical of NCF.

The work draws the conclusion that the vision of education developed by Sri Aurobindo is still extremely topical and can contribute greatly to the enhancement of the philosophy of the NCF 2023 to emerge richer and deeper by providing it with the much-needed philosophical foundation of educational transformation in India of the 21st century.

key words: Integral Education, Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023, Holistic Development, Educational Philosophy

1. Introduction

An influential philosopher, yogi, nationalist and educational thinker, Sri Aurobindo (1872-1950) conceived Integral Education as a way of the all-round and conscious development of man. In his philosophy, all the aspects of the individual were encouraged to develop, namely, spiritual, mental, vital and physical, where education came as a mean of providing access to a higher and more harmonious life, or the Life Divine as he called it (theusajournals.com). The work by Aurobindo is of extreme importance to the educational thinking in India in the early 20th century. He also engaged in establishing educational establishments like Bengal National College which aimed at instilling patriotic feeling, self-sustainability and self-culture in the students.

India released the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023, a document that uses the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 in 2023. NCF is a significant curricular change- one towards competency-based multilingual, holistic and inclusive education model (shodhvarda.in; ncert.nic.in). The intensive focus on the principles of learner-centric pedagogy, moral principles, and cultural-rootedness indicates its increasing reflection of the principles by Aurobindo.

This study will be used to evaluate critically the synergy between the educational philosophy given by Sri Aurobindo and the main recommendations of NCF 2023 and how the aspect of Integral Education can be used to shape and enlarge the process of contemporary curriculum reform in India.

2. Objectives of the Study:

1. Examine the essence of Sri Aurobindo integral education.
2. Determine common themes to NCF 2023.
3. Study the ways through which the model of Aurobindo can further develop the usage of NCF 2023, especially in such areas as multilingualism, ethics, and teacher empowerment.
4. Prescribe avenues of injecting Aurobindo inspired pedagogies into modern-day schooling.

3. Methodology

The research used in this study is a qualitative document-based one that intends to examine whether Sri Aurobindo, the philosophy of Integral Education and the main characteristics of the National Curriculum Framework (NCF) 2023 are consistent. The approach is focused on providing the deep comprehension of the theoretical premises along with the theme of policy evolution by providing the contextual analysis of the textual and thematic nature.

3.1 Approach

Qualitative approach was selected based on interpretive nature of the objectives of the study that aims at exploring values, principles and educational ideals but not measuring the numerical results. The study will be mainly based on document analysis where both primary and secondary sources will be used, including original works of Aurobindo, his speeches, philosophies of his institutions, policy documents in the context of NCF 2023, documents of the government that provide a trace of the research and academic commentary.

3.2 Collection of Data

There were three principal ways in which data was gathered:

- Textual examination of writings, letters, lectures and biographical material of Sri Aurobindo to derive some fundamental teachings of his philosophy of education.
- Content analysis of the official document NCF 2023, in support of the materials of NEP 2020, and NCERT publications to interpret the modern curricular goals and assumptions.

Samples of my interview with experts included an interview with a sample of educators and school leaders who are aware of NCF implementation, just as they are aware of educational institutions that utilize the Aurobindo ideology, including those categorized under the aegis of Sri Aurobindo Ashram Schools.

3.3 Analysis of data

A thematic analysis was applied in the analysis of the collected data. Texts and interview transcripts were then coded and filed according to emergent themes which included:

- Whole person development
- Competency-based pedagogy
- National identity and Indian customs
 - Multilingualism
- Facilitator roles of the teachers

This step enabled the researcher to trace the regions of philosophical agreement and disagreement between the education vision of Aurobindo and NCF 2023.

3.4 Reliability and validity

As a way of guaranteeing validity and reliability, triangulation was imposed--this is to say that the wisdom of two or more sources (readings, policies, and interviews) was triangulated. Also, coding consistency was achieved by re-checking and peer-checking of thematic categories. This rather tough process fortifies the quality of results and upholds the soundness of the explanations made.

4. Analysis and Interpretation:

This section is aimed at discussing the philosophical core of the Sri Aurobindo Integral Education in detail and also analyzing the main postulates of NCF 2023 and the points of philosophical integration. This discourse will highlight why the rich insights of Aurobindo philosophically can be useful to inform the reform of the curricula meaningfully in contemporary times.

4.1 Main ideas of Integral education of Aurobindo

Five-dimensional Integral Development

The idea of Sri Aurobindo model of Integral Education is explicitly aimed towards the development of the whole man covering five dimensions since they cannot be separated viz. physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual. It is the main focus of his educational philosophy that nothing of the personhood can be omitted.

Physical Education does not only mean - general physical fitness, it demands controlled discipline and harmonious orderliness of physical functions. Aurobindo called for systematic physical training, posture, movement and physical health in a systematic way.

Vital Education is concerned with the emotional and energetic part of human life, the world of wants and urges, of desires and passions, of inclinations and impulses. This level of education is set up to develop a sense of control over emotional energies and during the process of converting raw impulses to positive drives.

- Psychic Education has to do with the awakening of the soul or the Psychic Being, which can be defined as the nucleus of evolving life that defines the movement of the personality. Impregnation with psychic growth lures the individual into the interior, harmonizes outer life with the inner values and demands.

Spiritual Education is completed when the higher consciousness goes down into life- itself a supramental descent intent upon realization of the Divine within matter [sri.aurobindo.institute.org+1.en.wikipedia.org+1](http://sri.aurobindo.institute.org/en.wikipedia.org).

All these dimensions make a formula of holistic development that incorporates body, feelings, mind, soul and spirit. The aim is of an embodied evolution--both mental and material--by means of a spiritual cognition.

Self-Guided Learning

Aurobindo emphasized that "nothing can be taught" in the conventional sense. Real education, in his reasoning, is to help the learner to unveil his/her inherent abilities, to be allowed to develop spontaneously. In this paradigm, the teacher does not represent the impartor of knowledge, rather, the guide and mentor to make learners reach their inner potenciales.

Integral principles are:

Teachers who encourage not compel.

- Pacing the learning at the rate of the student.
- Investing into the interventions of immediate environment of a child, his/her interests, and his/her experience.

With this model, autonomy, self-motivation, and lifelong learning are encouraged.

Cultural Contextualization

In the case of Aurobindo, education has to be based on cultural and spiritual inheritance. Based upon the traditions, languages, literature, and moral values of India, Integral Education aims at the development of a deep-rooted identity. Contextualization in culture does not only promote the self-esteem and a sense of belonging but, in addition, it develops ethical maturity and social cognizance.

Yoga and Inside development

Yoga is central to Aurobindo's educational model, employed as both a means of inner transformation and a method to integrate different levels of consciousness. Integral Yoga includes:

- Remedies to balance and harmonies the physical and subtle bodies,
- Conducts to rouse the Psychic Being,
- Ways in which higher consciousness can be descended into the daily life.

It aims at self-change by integrating the exterior and the interior en.

The students gain the correct qualities through yoga; self-detail, emotional balance, concentration and awareness which are complementary to academic and socio-emotional skills.

4.2 Major NCF POSTULATES of NCF 2023

Competency-Based Learning

NCF 2023 has high focus on skills that will be expected in the 21st century which are critical thinking, problem-solving, creativity, collaboration and good communication. It is a radical move to studying by rote-students are urged to use the knowledge gained in ways of real-life applications.

Whole and Cross Curriculum Education

The framework supports the multi-dimensional perspective of learning and combines both strands of physical, emotional, cognitive, aesthetic, and cultural aspects of learning. This is in connection with the Pancakes model, which guarantees healthy development in various spheres.

Multicultural and rooted education

NCF advocates learning the home/mother tongue through early education and then there is successive multilingualism up to proficiency in them. It also focuses at the incorporation of local knowledge systems, traditions and cultural heritage in the development of curriculums.

Facilitator Concept (PEEL Model)

The framework considers the classroom culture by making it a PEEL classroom, which is Play, Experience, Exploration, and Lived values where teachers are facilitators in terms of inquiry, experiential learning, and holistic values and concerns. The teachers are observer-mentors as opposed to monitors.

4.3 Alignment areas

Philosophical similarity between Integral Education and the NCF 2023 is identifiable through main areas of thematic:

Theme Aurobindo and his Advocacy of Integral Education NCF2023 Postulates

Holistic development A philosophy of growth in five-dimensions (physical to spiritual).

Multi-focused curriculum: physical, ethical, aesthetic and coupled with Panchakosha

Experiential Competency-based pedagogy through PEEL Environment based unfolding through inner guidance

Cultural/ linguistic rootedness Importance of values of Indian culture Teaching in home language, regional culture
Role of teacher as facilitator, not too directive Teachers as observers, mentors
Emotional/Ethical Development Whole-person yoga, psychic development Socio-emotional learning spread throughout domains
Such convergences describe profound philosophical unity. Spiritual and psychic depth is what Aurobindo provides to the mostly structural aspects of NCF 2023.

4.4 Interpretation

Philosophical Richness

On the one hand, NCF 2023 sets down building blocks, such as competencies, multilingualism, holistic domains, but does not have a more profound philosophical discourse, to which education is inextricably linked to consciousness. Such a paradigm is provided by Sri Aurobindo education in order to convert rather than inform. His model places learning into the wider orbit of inner evolution, to which his model may add depth to the humanistic intentions of NCF.

Socioemotional Learning Enrichment

NCF's inclusion of socio-emotional competencies becomes expansive when viewed through an Aurobindo lens. EI is not merely the harmony in the classroom, but the essential the mastery (vital education), trained energy that assists in the personal development and in the resilience jetir.org.

Enhancement of the Ethical and Cultural Education

The values education and orientation on Indian ethos of NCF can be fulfilled in the idea of the Psychic Being and the representation of the responsibility in karma by Aurobindo so that it helps to promote the ethical awareness as the spiritualized action which is a direct expression of inner values.

Teacher Development

Describing the facilitator model of NCF is reminiscent of the philosophy of teaching formulated by Aurobindo. Nevertheless, to even go a step further, inner transformation and self-awareness as an element of teacher training, which the Integral Education naturally embraces, can make teachers even stronger in mentoring their students by being more genuine.

Cultural Integration as Multilingualism

While both frameworks support multilingualism, Aurobindo's cultural contextualization extends this to internalizing traditions as living values, not mere content. His schooling enhances hereditary and anchors the identity on the innermost cultural awareness.

Complexities in Integration

Spiritual Content: The frankly spiritual tone in the model of Aurobindo brings forward secular considerations in the state schooling.

- **Practical Complexity:** As to Integration: five-dimensional and yoga practices, much contextualization and teacher preparation are necessary.
- **Measurement Problems:** Develops psychically or spiritually can hardly be gauged according to general competency levels.

The Integral Education introduced by Sri Aurobindo presents a philosophically dense and all-encompassing support of the postulates of NCF 2023. It extends structural instructions towards indicating an education of consciousness in which learning brings together with awakening. Embedding aspects of Aurobindo's approach—such as yoga practices, psychic awareness, and soulful pedagogy—within NCF can strengthen the curriculum's ethical, emotional, and cultural dimensions while remaining consistent with its core vision of student empowerment and holistic development.

5. Limitations

Though this paper provides useful information in the contribution of philosophical synergy between Integral Education of Sri Aurobindo and NCF 2023, some limitations cannot be disregarded.

To begin with, the study mainly depends on printed references, such as the writings of Aurobindo and policy texts of NCF. This restricts the capacity to experience real life classroom actions or the manner in which such schools of thought are being implemented on the ground by instructors and students.

Second, interviews were sampled within educators who have worked in Aurobindo-like institutions. Wider coverage of other educational settings (other than the ones outlined) eg. in the case of the regular schools or other differing educational pedagogies, is lacking that would have diversified the comparative writing.

Third, as NCF 2023 is a new trend, its real implementation in Indian states and schools is unbalanced and changing. Consequently, the extent to which it will have an impact is still too early to judge.

Lastly, the educational philosophy of Aurobindo is strongly influenced by the traditions of the Indian Spiritual and cultural heritage. It could come to difficulties in terms of generalisation as it could be applied equally in India and educational settings hugely diverse in terms of linguistic, regional and socio-economic backgrounds.

Awareness of these limitations opens the potential of additional studies, such as empirical research in the classroom, additional interviews among the educators, etc. and the longitudinal evaluation of newly emerging effects of NCF 2023.

6. Conclusion

The vision of NCF 2023 that is transformational in nature can be complemented and enriched by a philosophical itinerary and profound extension that Sri Aurobindo brought to the fore in his ideas of Integral Education. Both models lay focus on the holistic approach to development, aimed not only at the intellectual progress, but also the emotional, physical, ethical and spiritual health. The common emphasis on exploratory and teacher-guided learning, learning through doing, and a heavy use of words like exploration, underlines the student-centered approach which fosters intrinsic drive, autonomy and innovation.

Aurobindo is truly a roots man, and a soils man on the question of the psychic and spiritual growth of the self, which has much affinity with NCF 2023 about value-based education, socio-emotional competencies. It is possible to suggest that the combination of these principles can reinforces humanistic characteristics of the modern curriculum notably.

This paper highlights the significance of the educational Significances of Aurobindo in the current informative aid and gives the approval that the incorporation of his vision could enhance and enrich the NCF 2023 guideline to produce more conscious, hearted, and complete learners in the upcoming.

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