



Crisis in education and relevance of Sri Aurobindo's educational thoughts in present times

Parimal Mandal

State Aided College Teacher, Department of Education, Purbasthali College, Purba Bardhaman, W.B. 713513.
Email - parimalmandal51@gmail.com

Abstract: Society is an overall system. This society has many areas like economy, politics, education, culture, religion, health system etc. The education system is at the root of everything. Today's society is becoming more and more complex. Such an education system is failing to integration these different social spheres. The current education system is not able to develop practical skills of people, it is not able to turn people into social beings. There is a crisis of values in the current education system. Ideal qualities like honesty, cooperation, compassion, morality, spirituality etc. are disappearing from people. People are becoming dehumanized today. In this critical situation, Sri Aurobindo's educational philosophy will play an effective role. One hand, Shri Aurobindo's philosophy of education is practical and spiritual on the other hand. Practical education will help people to deal with the real world and spiritual education will make people supreme personalities. He believed in integral education, based on his educational philosophy, making man to the fullest extent by harmonious development of his self –physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual. He transformed his thoughts into a education system through his Pondicherry Ashram School, now named as Auroville. This study focus on the crisis in education and the relevance of Sri Aurobindo's thought of education in the present time. This research paper has been done based on secondary data analysis. As it is a document analysis study.

Keywords: Educational crisis, Shri Aurobindo, Educational thoughts, Educational Philosophy, Relevancy, Present Times.

1. INTRODUCTION:

Education is the backbone of a nation. It is through education the people as well as society develops day by day and in this the society as well as the country moves forward. The development of any country depends on the development of economy, politics, education, culture and human resources of that country. But the current education system is not able to achieve a meaningful balance between the above elements. Economic crisis is increasing day by day, apolitical in the name of politics, use of bad culture in the name of culture. Human values are lost from people. People are becoming very selfish day by day. People are forgetting their social responsibilities and duties. Today's education system cannot turn people into human resources. As a result, the number of educated unemployment is going to increase. Due to unemployment, they are forced to engage in anti-social activities or choose the path of suicide. So let's say that education is in crisis today. And in this crisis-oriented education, Rishi Aurobindo's educational thinking is very relevant. Looking back at the history of education in Bengal as well as India, we find that Sri Aurobindo was a writer, a freedom fighter and a believer in revolutionary ideals and on the other hand, he was equally famous as a true yogi, a great philosopher and an eminent educationist. That is, he established himself as a great being. In the early part of his life, he engaged himself in political activities but soon became a spiritualist. He shows mankind the highest spiritual path. Educational philosophy arose directly from his philosophy of life based on spiritual asceticism, yoga and celibacy. His educational thought combined great qualities like ideal values, ethics, humanity, cooperation, etc. on the one hand, respect for ancient Indian culture, development of indigenous industries, national self-confidence and full independence of India were reflected. According to him, real education will bring out the child's latent strengths or latent potentials and make him a complete human being. That is, through this he wants to talk about education according to the nature of the child. He believed in integrated education. On the one hand, education will be practical, by which the individual will be able to face the challenges of the present society, and will be able to easily meet the needs of the modern complex society. On the other hand, celibacy, yoga practice and spiritual education will purify our body and mind. Although he was influenced by the Western educational system, but we can see that his educational thought is heavily influenced by



Indian education, culture, literature and philosophy. In the context of the society of the time, he focused on almost every aspect of education such as the nature of national education, aims of education, curriculum, teaching-learning method, teacher-student relationship, educational institutions, discipline, teacher's functions, values, religious education, and yoga education etc. He established an ashram in Pondicherry to spread his educational thought, which later became known as an international center of education. Hence this study is based on the title "Crisis in Education and Relevance of Sri Aurobindo's educational Philosophy in Present Times".

2. SPECIAL THINGS ABOUT SRI AUROBINDO'S LIFE:

Sri Aurobindo Ghosh was born on August 15, 1872 in a middle-class family in Konnagar, Kolkata. His father's name is Krishnadhan Ghosh. and Mother Swarnlata Devi. At the age of 7 he came to England for education and spent 14 years. He received his higher education from the University of London and Cambridge. Besides English literature, he mastered Greek, Latin, Spanish, French. In 1890, he passed the Civil Service Examination but missed the horse-riding examination and as a result could not gain entry to the Civil Service Examination. Returned to India in 1893, later gained knowledge about Indian culture, language and literature, Indian philosophy, yoga practice etc. In 1900, he was appointed as Professor of English at Baroda College. Later he was appointed as Principal of Bengal National College under the direction of Indian National Congress. Its current name is Jadavpur University. During the Partition of Bengal, he participated in the Swadeshi and Boycott Movements. After the partition of Bengal he quit his job and became an active freedom fighter. He used to edit the newspaper 'Vandemataram' to guide India's freedom movement in the right direction. Through his writings, he gave the youth community the mantra of supreme sacrifice for the country. He was a member of the National Council of Education from 1906 to 1909. The purpose of the National Education Council was to control the national administration and promote technical and scientific education in a national spirit. In 1908, Aurobindo was arrested in the Alipore bomb case. While in jail he read Vedas, Upanishads and Gita. At that time Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das fought the case on his behalf and made the court understand that patriotism cannot be a crime. He was freed from jail by the efforts of Deshbandhu Chittaranjan Das and moved to Pondicherry in 1910. In 1943, he established an ashram with 20 students, which later became known as an international education center.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

This study has been done to achieve the following objectives;

- 1) To analyze the crisis in education in this present time.
- 2) To investigate the causes of crisis in education.
- 3) To study Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of education.
- 4) To state the teaching principles of Sri Aurobindo.
- 5) To discussion on the relevance of Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of education in present times.

4. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This study is an qualitative and analytical in nature. Also this is an documentary analysis study. Most of the data are collected from the secondary resources like News paper, article, journal, Books, various websites etc. Some data are gather based on personal observation or personal experiences.

5. ANALYSIS:

5.1 CRISIS IN EDUCATION IN THIS PRESENT TIME:

Education is the pillar that keeps the whole country's balanced. No country can progress without education. Going back to the education system in ancient times, we find that education was teacher centered and bounded by strict rules. But current education is child centered education. Presently the education system is conducted with emphasis on the needs, interests, inclinations, abilities and capabilities of the child. This modern child-centered educational psychology has expanded the scope of educational education day by day. The world society has been enlightened in the light of current education. New educational research is ongoing to discover innovations. The present age is the age of science and technology. But think about why people are forced to choose the path of suicide due to unemployment even in this age of science and technology. Today people are failing to earn their living. Today people are not able to be educated in real education, are not able to guide themselves in the right way. Common people are being exploited by unjust oppression,



they are not aware of their rights. In today's society, violence and communalism is increasing among people. Apolitical in the name of politics, injustice instead of justice, rote education instead of meaningful education is on the rise. In today's society, economic crisis, political crisis, crisis of values, crisis of being a real person, crisis of honesty, crisis of humanity have been created. And the root cause of all this is the lack of real education. Currently, education is exam-centric, more emphasis is placed on degree acquisition and not on the quality of education. The quality of education is decreasing day by day. Today's students are not able to use the current education in real life. As a result students get good results in exams but fail to earn their livelihood.

Primary Anganwadi Education Centers and Government Primary Schools are giving more importance to feeding mid-day-meal than to their actual education. Many of these educational institutions have already closed due to lack of skillful teachers. Primary education is the basis of education, on the basis of which the students move forward, but where the primary education is shaky, how can the students be educated in real education later on. In current education we can see that day by day students are turning away from educational institutions. Today students don't want to come to school or college, they don't really want to study. This is why? Is it not because of the education crisis? The current education is not able to awaken the sense of self-discipline in the students, is not able to develop real values, respect, balanced personality, humanity, honesty, morality in the students, it is not able to develop people as real social human beings. Today people have lost their humanity. Ideal qualities like honesty, morality, cooperation, compassion, empathy etc. are disappearing from people. Therefore, in view of the above discussion, it can be said that education is facing a crisis today. The education system is failing to educate people in real education, to build a healthy and normal life for people. But if Sri Aurobindo's educational thought and philosophical thinking can be applied in present day education then we are hopeful that this education crisis can be overcome.

5.2 CAUSES OF CRISIS IN EDUCATION:

The reasons for which education is in crisis today are mentioned below;

- ❖ Lack of proper education plan. Effective programs are not being adopted on how to make education more effective.
- ❖ Lack of qualified teachers in educational institutions. There are many educational institutions where there is no maintain the teacher student ratio.
- ❖ Lack of proper educational infrastructure. Lack of suitable teaching-learning materials in educational institutions.
- ❖ Economic crisis is another reason. Due to lack of money, it is not possible to build proper educational infrastructure.
- ❖ Political complexity is also a cause of crisis in education. Every political ideology is busy opposing each other. Today no political ideology is doing constructive work on education, society, culture, economy.
- ❖ Lack of ideal values like social, humanitarian, moral, spiritual, character etc. is observed among people. This is also one of the reasons for the crisis in education.
- ❖ Administrative apathy is also one of the causes of crisis in education. Allegations that the administrative officers are not performing their duties and responsibilities properly are often seen.
- ❖ People of every strata of society are not aware about education. Although people in urban areas are aware, there is lack of education among the backward people in rural areas. They do not understand the importance of education and thus engage their children in various activities instead of sending them to educational institutions.
- ❖ Various social media such as Facebook, WhatsApp, Instagram etc. are making the minds of students heavy stressful.. Most of the time they are wasting in these mediums. As a result their interest in education is decreasing.
- ❖ Current education is not able to create passion among students. Lack of proper instruction among students is also one of the causes of education crisis.
- ❖ Lack of suitable employment is observed. Current education is not able to create employment for students. Depression, stress, anxiety are increasing among students. They are losing focus. This is also a reason for the crisis in education.
- ❖ Most of the backward students in rural areas are not getting proper guidance and counseling. In the absence of proper guidance and counselling, real education cannot be attained.



- ❖ Nowadays students are addicted to mobile phones. They show no interest in regular studies. Their attention spans are getting shorter. Restlessness is increasing.
- ❖ There is a lack of innovation research in the field of education. Why is the current education failing in productivity, employment? Education today is facing a crisis due to the inability to investigate the reasons why the current education system is not able to develop people as human resources.

5.3 SRI AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY OF EDUCATION:

Although his educational philosophy was a combination of naturalism, pragmatism and pragmatism, he believed in prophetic philosophy. Every human being is born with some latent power or latent potential. The task of education will be to develop these latent potentialities in such a way that the spiritual power is awakened in him. The heavenly or divine being in every human being has to be found, by which he means to realize that God resides in every human being. He believed that the attainment of divine nature was possible through yoga. By yoga practice he meant not only a monk's pursuit of God, but the purification of body and mind. A common man can also do yoga. If a teacher thinks of doing yoga then true teaching is heaven for him. He will not boast of knowledge. To the best of his ability, he will enlighten everyone with the light of true knowledge. If a doctor thinks of doing yoga, he will consider it heaven to give relief to suffering people. He will not do any economic exploitation in the name of treatment. A businessman who thinks to do yoga will find his work heavenly. Never do unethical activities to earn money. He combined Jnana Yoga, Bhakti Yoga, Raja Yoga and Karma Yoga to achieve Purna Yoga. But his philosophical thinking is based on Karma Yoga. We can see the reflection of this through the weekly magazine 'Karmyoga'. There are many personalities who captivate our minds with their physical and intellectual prowess but we respect and follow those whose character is good. Moral and spiritual development is essential in building ideal character. And with this morality and spirituality Sri Aurobindo deeply engaged in yoga and showed people the path to the highest spirituality.

5.4 RISHI AUROBINDO'S EDUCATIONAL PRINCIPLES:

The principles of education based on which Sri Aurobindo's educational thought was reflected are presented below;

- ❖ He emphasized on child centered education i.e. education should be based on the child's needs, interests, inclinations, abilities and capabilities.
- ❖ Education will be based on real life i.e. through this he wants to say where education and real life are interrelated.
- ❖ The child's sixth sense i.e. eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind should be refreshed through education.
- ❖ Primary education of the child will start through mother tongue.
- ❖ Child's latent energy should be developed through education.
- ❖ One of the tasks of education is to purify the body and mind of the student. For this he talked about yoga.
- ❖ Education will help the self development of the student or individual.
- ❖ The moral and spiritual qualities of the student should be developed through education. As a result, the ideal character of the student will be formed. Ideal character formation is not possible without spiritual development.
- ❖ Considered education as a helpful factor in making a real man.
- ❖ Real education is not only for individual but for nation and humanity i.e. education will be a management through which human service can be done.
- ❖ True education will help the individual to relate to his society, mind and soul and life.
- ❖ Education should not be limited to national level only, education should be for international understanding.

5.5 RELEVANCE OF SRI AUROBINDO'S PHILOSOPHY IN PRESENT TIMES:

He strongly opposed the artificial education system introduced by the British at that time because the aim, method and content of education at that time were all foreign, had no connection with the literature and culture of the country. He wanted to spread the native education culture. His educational thoughts are presented below;

- ❖ According to Sri Aurobindo, the goal of education should be the full development of the latent potential of the student. For this he talked about the training of the sixth sense (eyes, ears, nose, tongue, skin and mind). Practicing knowledge of various types of knowledge such as literature and arts, culture, science and politics etc. Development of physical, mental, moral, spiritual, character qualities of the student should be the main goal of



education. Self-development of students will happen through education, ideal values will be awakened in students.

- ❖ The general education curriculum will include Mother Language, English Literature, French Literature, General Science, Sociology, Mathematics, Physiology, Health Education, Indian and Western Philosophy, History of Civilization, Psychology, International Relations and Solidarity etc. On the other hand, vocational education curriculum will include important subjects like drawing, photography, sewing, typing, short-hand, woodwork, mechanical electrical engineering, nursing, Indian and western music, dance etc.
- ❖ Children will learn independence, love, cooperation, through direct experience and hands-on activities. The medium of education will be mother tongue.
- ❖ According to him the school will have facilities for development of silence, cooperation, communication, speaking skills among the students as well as sports, activity, discovery work, full development of body, mind and spirit.
- ❖ The teacher will be the student's friend and guide. He believed that teachers cannot teach students unless students want to learn. By this he meant that the teacher should not force the students to teach anything. For this first create educational environment.
- ❖ There will be children in educational institutions who have faults, vices, superstitions, they have to undergo corrective programs rather than criminalizing them.
- ❖ Aurobindo International Education Center combines Western learning and culture with Eastern learning, culture and philosophy.
- ❖ A unique role can be observed in the field of national education movement. He edited Vandemataram and Karmayoga magazines for the respect of Indian education and culture, development of indigenous industries and full independence of India. He had to go to jail for the freedom struggle movement, through which he showed the youth that everything can be sacrificed for the country.

6. RELEVANCE :

- ❖ There is a question mark on the quality of education at present in all of our minds. That's because today's education system is exam-based, i.e. more emphasis is being placed on obtaining degrees, not on the quality of education. But if the current education had a system of real literary practice, suitable arts, ideal politics, preservation and transformation of culture, education through activities and direct experience, then the picture of society would be a little different.
- ❖ Where Sri Aurobindo gave the youth the mantra of supreme sacrifice for the nation, where is 'Politics' in today's politics? Apolitical, injustice, exploitation and oppression are going on in the name of politics. Serious diseases such as sectarianism and violent conflict among people are being increased through provocative speech.
- ❖ Where Aurobindo talked about the practice of real culture, it can be observed in our society that the use of counterculture in the name of culture is increasing day by day. Currently, our society is advancing a lot in terms of science and technology, that is, we are far ahead in the practice of material culture, but on the other hand, mental culture, i.e. ideal qualities like human values, sincerity, cooperation, empathy, honesty, morality and respect etc. are disappearing from us. Sri Aurobindo laid great importance on the above mentioned human qualities in his educational thought.
- ❖ Current education is the era of child-centered education i.e. education is said to focus on the child's needs, interests, inclinations, abilities and capabilities etc. and is psychologically compatible. Sri Aurobindo placed child-centered education in his educational thought. But we see that there are many families who are trying to overload on the child's immature knowledge. The child is not getting real education they are getting confused, led astray.
- ❖ Sri Aurobindo's teachings talk about developing the power of silence, concentration, conversation, devotion, but people in today's society are so busy that there is no time for this concentration or silence. People do not want to realize that through concentration they can gain deep knowledge about themselves. People in today's society have become very restless. Anxiety is increasing among people. People are deprived of real knowledge. As a result, the progress of the society as well as the country is being hindered.

7. CONCLUSION:



In view of the above discussion it can be said that in the face of education crisis it cannot be denied. Because in the current society economic crisis, political crisis, crisis of human values, social crisis has raised strongly. And at the root of all this is education. Education, society, politics, economy are all interrelated. As a result, the society and the country cannot be strong if the education system is in crisis. With the development of science and technology, unemployment has also increased. Today the number of educated unemployment in the society is much more. Current child-centered education cannot be the key to people's livelihood. Humanity is disappearing from people. People have lost great qualities like cooperation, compassion, tolerance, honesty, morality, character etc. The current education system is failing to make people real human beings. If we throw light on Sri Aurobindo's educational thought, we can see that on the one hand he gave practical education to the student and on the other hand he emphasized on spirituality. His concept of integrative learning is highly relevant today. we may conclude that his educational thoughts are comprehensive, very much relevant, modern, and psychological in nature. His integral education can combine human body, mind, intellect & soul together to meet full purpose of life. Rishi Aurobindo believed that attaining God is possible by maintaining physical and mental purity through the teachings of Yoga. In his thought of education, vocational education, social education, values education, cultural education, spiritual education, moral education etc. have been achieved. Therefore, if the practical application of Rishi Aurobindo's educational thought takes place in the current crisis-oriented education, the researcher is optimistic that the education crisis will be resolved.

REFERENCES

1. Ravi, S.S. (2016). A Comprehensive Study of Education. PHI Learning Private Limited, Delhi.
2. Rani, C. (2017). A Study of Educational Vision of Aurobindo Ghosh. International Journal of Indian Psychology, Vol. 5, (1), DIP: 18.01.125/20170501, DOI: 10.25215/0501.125.
3. Sharma, R. A. (2015). Philosophical and sociological foundation of Education. Vinay Rakheja publications, Meerut.
4. Chaube, S. (1993). Educational philosophy in India, Vikas publication House, New Delhi.
5. Debbarma, S. (2017). A study of educational thoughts of Aurobindo Ghosh with relevance to the present educational context. Tripura: Department of education, India.
6. Sharma, R. N. (2010). Textbook of Educational Philosophy, Kanishka Publishers, Distribution, New Delhi.
7. Chandra, S. S. & Sharma, R. K. (2006). Philosophy of Education, Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, New Delhi.
8. Roy, S. (2013). Shikshatatta o Sikshadarshan, Soma Book Agency, Kolkata.
9. Pal, A. K. (2014). Mahan SikshabidganerKotha, Classic Books, Kolkata.
10. Chanda, B.&Halder, T. (2021). SiksharDarshonik o Somajtatmikporiprekshit, Aaheli Publishers, Kolkata.
11. Banerjee, A.(2015). Shikshadarshan oShikshaniti, B. B. Kundu Grand Sona, Kolkata.
12. Aggarwal, J. C. (2010). Theory and Principles of Education, Vikash Publishing House, New Delhi.
13. Chakroborty, Y. & Sanyal, D. (2016). ShikshatatterGorar kata, K. Chakroborty Publication, Kolkata.
14. Nayak, B. K. (2010). Education in Emerging Indian Society, Axis Publications, New Delhi.
15. Taneja, V. R. (2004). Educational thought and practice, sterling publishers, New Delhi.
16. Aggarwal, J.C. and S. Gupta (2006). Great philosophers and thinkers on Education, Shipra Publication, New Delhi.
17. Seikh, H. A. (2020). Philosophical Thoughts of Aurobindo: It's Impact on Modern Education System, International Journal of Engineering Applied Sciences and Technology, Vol. 5, Issue 8.

Websites

- <https://swayam.gov.in>
- <https://swayamprabha.gov.in>
- <https://en.wikipedia.org>
- <http://nroer.gov.in/welcome>
- <https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in>
- <https://www.academia.edu>
- <https://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in>
- <https://www.researchgate.net>

