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## SRI AUROBINDO'S EDUCATION POLICY IN PRE AND POST COLONIAL INDIA

ПОЛІТИКА ШРІ АУРОБІНДО У ГАЛУЗІ ОСВІТИ У ДО- ТА ПОСТКОЛОНІАЛЬНІЙ ІНДІЇ

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**Urgency of the research.** Education must aim at the integral development of personality and that we need to have complete education for the complete human being. An educational system which did not help to inculcate nationalism is useless. A real educational system should be able to inject a sense of pride in the nation's history, culture and its ancestors. The colonialism had an internal psychological construct and paid less attention to the externally superimposed domination of the foreign power. It is essential to review the educational policies under the British rule to understand the present and visualize the future.

**Target setting.** Development of education system during the British period was determined by the needs of the colonial powers. If we analyze the development during British period, we will find that the colonial interests have always shaped the then educational policies of India. Sri Aurobindo says, patriotism is the pure love and devotion for the motherland. He dreamed of a nationalism which moved towards universal humanism. He believed that the educational system should be capable of infusing nationalism among the new generation.

**Актуальність дослідження.** Освіта повинна бути спрямована на цілісний розвиток особистості і на те, що нам необхідно отримати повну освіту, якщо хочемо бути повноцінними особистостями. Система освіти, яка не сприяла впровадженню націоналізму, не має ніякої користі. Реальна освітня система повинна вміти наповнити почуттям поваги до власної історії, культури своєї країни та предків. Колоніалізм мав внутрішню психологічну концепцію і приділяв небагато уваги пануванню іноземної влади, що впливала зовні. Дуже важливо проаналізувати політику в галузі освіти, заснованої під час британського панування, щоб зрозуміти сьогодення і уявити майбутнє.

**Постановка проблеми.** Розвиток системи освіти протягом періоду британської колонізації визначався потребами колоніальних держав. Якщо проаналізувати розвиток протягом цієї доби, ми побачимо, що колоніальні інтереси завжди формували тодішню політику Індії в галузі освіти. Шрі Ауробіндо каже, що патріотизм - це чиста любов і відданість батьківщині. Він мріяв про націоналізм, який рухався у напрямку загального гуманізму. Він вважав, що освітня система має бути здатна зароджувати почуття націоналізму у нового

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**Actual scientific researches and issues analysis.** Macaulayan system of education of pre-colonial period grew, and it has become so hardened that in spite of great efforts at the recovery of Indian pedagogy, we find it extremely difficult to develop and establish in India the real soul of the Indian pedagogy and its new progressive forms in post-colonial era. Sri Aurobindo, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, K. M. Munshi and other nationalist upheld the concept that the national education should be part of the struggle for freedom.

**The research objective.** The main objective is to find the possible answers to the above mention problem and its impact. The greatness of the Indian system of education and the aim of national education is to imparted educational curricula rooted in national values in all over the country.

**The statement of basic material.** The greatest educationalist, those who played important roles in designing education systems have, in their quest to develop ideal processes and structure of education. The new pedagogy of national education impels a further realization of the potentialities of the child and its soul, a realisation that was explicitly stated in the writings of the nationalist leaders who inspired and led the movement of national education in India. In this paper I have tried to revisit the philosophy of education of Sri Aurobindo who tried to provide solution to the

покоління.

**Аналіз актуальних наукових досліджень і питань.**

Система освіти доколоніального періоду, яка була введена Маколеєм, зросла і настільки зміцніла, що для нас виявилось вкрай важко, незважаючи на великі зусилля з відновлення індійської педагогіки, розвивати і впроваджувати в Індії справжню душу індійської педагогіки та її нові прогресивні форми у пост-колоніальну епоху. Шрі Ауробіндо, Махатма Ганді, Рабіндранат Тагор, Канайялал Манеклал Мунші та інші націоналісти підтримали концепцію про те, що національна освіта повинна бути частиною боротьби за свободу.

**Постановка завдання.** Основна мета полягає в тому, щоб знайти можливі рішення вищезазначеної проблеми та її впливу. Велич індійської системи освіти і мета національної освіти полягає в тому, щоб по всій країні національні цінності стали основою впроваджених освітніх програм.

**Виклад основного матеріалу.** Найбільшого діяча освіти маємо серед тих, хто відігравав важливу роль у розробці освітніх систем, саме у їхньому прагненні розвивати ідеальні методики та структуру освіти. Нова педагогіка національної освіти спонукає до подальшого втілення потенційних можливостей дитини та її душі, втілення, що недвозначно було викладено в працях націоналістичних лідерів, які надихали і керували рухом національної освіти в Індії. У цій роботі я спробував переглянути філософію освіти Шрі Ауробіндо, який намагався вирішити

*problem generated by Macaulayan education system in India during pre and post-colonial period.*

**Conclusion.** Contemporary education system serves to popularize the culture of consumerism. This leads the society unavoidably to a situation of cut-throat competition. The reason for the present societal restlessness can be traced to this philosophy of 'the survival of the fittest'. Sri Aurobindo agrees to this observation and states that, "Our goal is not mechanical. It is spiritual and based on the concept of 'dharma' (righteousness).

**Keywords.** Pre- and post-colonial India, British rule, Macaulayan education system, education crisis, Clerk making machine, Swaraj, Indian pedagogy, Indigenous education (Swadeshi), National education, Integral education, holistic education pattern.

проблему, створену системою освіти Маколея протягом до- і постколоніального періоду в Індії.

**Висновок.** Сучасна система освіти служить для популяризації культури споживацтва. Це неминуче веде суспільство до стану запеклої конкурентної боротьби. Причину нинішнього суспільного неспокою можна простежити до філософії "виживання найсильніших". Шрі Ауробіндо погоджується з цим спостереженням і стверджує, що "Наша мета не технічного характеру. Вона духовна і ґрунтується на концепції "дхарми" (справедливості).

**Ключові слова.** До- і постколоніальна Індія, британське панування, система освіти Маколея, криза освіти, машина з виробництва службовців, Сварадж, індійська педагогіка, освіта корінного населення (Свадеші), національна освіта, інтегральна освіта, структура комплексної освіти.

**Urgency of the research.** Education must aim at the integral development of personality and that we need to have complete education for the complete human being. The concept of the integral development of personality demands for the harmonization of the rational, ethical, aesthetic and spiritual development of an individual. An educational system which did not help to inculcate nationalism is useless. A real educational system should be able to inject a sense of pride in the nation's history, culture and its ancestors. It is from this sense of pride that true nationalism begins to flourish. Even though we had a glorious past, still we could not impart this true sense of history to our new generation. The reason for this is that till date, we could not be able to Indianise the educational system. Nationalism is not just the love for a geographical entity rather it is the love for the millions residing in that nation. It is the love for the traditions of that nation.

Indian elite actually wants an 'English India'. It feels natural to them; the so called Ultra modern feels more at home in English than in their mother tongue because of their education is in English medium. They feel superior to the masses, who don't speak this so called 'world language'. Without being spelt out, the fact is that those fluent in English with the right accent form the topmost class in Indian society. This fact does not prevent many of them from castigating the upper class as those who unfairly 'oppress' others who does not speak English language. However, at present a churning takes place that shakes this privileged position. There is certain revival of an Indian identity, and tradition and language are major aspects of it.

The colonialism had an internal psychological construct and paid less attention to the externally superimposed domination of the foreign power. This domination will collapse once the people aroused from the chains of the slavery of colonials. Indian wisdom is a weapon to fight with colonial power which is deep rooted after the 200 years of rule on India. To understand the educational thoughts on the postcolonial perspective, one has to understand the complex nature of Indian cultural history from the ancient times till the advent of the British rule in India.

India is a country which has a rich history and tradition in education. Due to a continuous series of invasions, the nation lost its political unity and through this it's ancient educational system and cultural tradition. India is a country of saints which perceived knowledge as the almighty and the effort to acquire knowledge as a spiritual. The traditional system of universal education prevalent in the country was destroyed by the invaders and Indian thinkers considered reinstating this system as a mandatory prerequisite to the attainment of political freedom. They proposed a system of education which was both value based and rooted in ancient Indian traditions. They stood for an indigenous system of education which was aimed at imbibing love for the country and ensuring national integration. Due to the collapse of traditional Indian education system the Indian wisdom in the field of intellectual, economical and social fields was partially lost due to the 1000 years of imperialism. The British colonial rule of 200 years led to a weakening of the traditional national unity by introducing colonial education system to serve the colonial masters. The British implemented an educational system which virtually destroyed the cultural unity of India by this they succeeded in destroying the self-confidence.

The education System should be child centre which will put the child in the centre of the classroom but also in the centre of the society itself. This paper tries to focus on the challenges present in front of India in the area of education system in pre and post Colonial period because right from the beginning of their relationship with India, the British, who had come as traders and had become rulers and administrators, had influenced the economic, political and educational systems of the country. It is essential to review the educational policies under the British rule to understand the present and visualize the future. In the light of the very backdrop of the history of the development of free and compulsory education in India need to analyse pre- independence and post-independence policy of the education for the harmonization of education for making a complete human being rather than a clerk earning salary.

Actually the educational system implemented in India was devised by Macaulay and was meant to create a class of people who would serve the colonial masters. The British East India Company functioned as an agency for trade between Britain and India. The company started educational work in India aimed at implementing its imperialistic designs. The legislation passed in the British parliament in 1813, made it easy for the company to directly implement the educational policy of its choice in India. The policy of direct government funding of educational institutions was implemented following the 1813 legislation. It was with this legislation that English education was imposed all over the country with government funding. The aim of this policy was the destruction of local indigenous educational institutions. With the implementation of the mandatory condition that knowledge of English was necessary for getting jobs in the government sector; the need for indigenous educational centers became unnecessary.

The letter written by Macaulay to his father reveals the true purpose of the educational system which he planned to impose on the Indian population. It reveals that the purpose of this education was to destroy Indian values and beliefs and through this the culture of the nation. "Our English schools are increasing by leaps and bounds and now the condition has reached to a position that it has become difficult to accommodate the students. Hindus are much influenced with education. There is no Hindu, who may keep faith in his religion after studying English. I have full confidence that, if our educational policy succeeds, then no idolater will be left in Bengal. All this will be done naturally

without any religious preaching and interference" [1]. Western historian has given the impression that education and educational institutions in this country were first started in this country by the Westerners which were totally wrong impression.

Gandhiji says, "without fear of my figures being challenged successfully, that India is today more illiterate than it was fifty or a hundred years ago, and so is Burma because the British administrators, when they came to India, instead of taking hold of things as they were, began to root them out. They scorched the soil and began to look at the root, and left the root like that and the beautiful tree perished" [2]. Gandhiji had repeatedly asserted in 'Young India' that the education system of India had declined because of the British rule.

**Actual scientific researches and issues analysis.** Macaulayan system of education of pre Colonial period grew, and it has become so hardened that in spite of great efforts at the recovery of Indian pedagogy, we find it extremely difficult to develop and establish in India the real soul of the Indian pedagogy and its new and progressive forms in post colonial era. In fact the problem is very serious, and a good deal of research is required before we can find the right direction and the right remedies to the problem of present system of education.

The eminent nationalist thinker's including social reformers like Lokmanya Tilak, Gopal Krishna Gokhale, Keshavchandra Sen, Lala Lajpatrai, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore, K. M. Munshi, Madan Mohan Malviya and other nationalist upheld the concept that the national education should be part of the struggle for freedom along with spiritual luminaries like Dayananda Saraswathi, Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo. They put the effort to establish a number of institutions, which imparted educational curricula rooted in national values all over the country.

They proposed an alternative national education system as a pre-requisite to political independence. This paper tries to analyze the problem of Macaulayan education system and its impact on pre and post colonial period in India and decolonization of present education system and minds of Indian people with the indigenous education system.

When the nationalists realized that the educational system imposed by the colonialists was meant to strengthen the colonial rule and enslave the people rather than to enlighten them, they rejected the colonial system of education and uphold a nationalist alternative. The idea of national education is connected to the concept of the struggle for

freedom. The British imperialism was not confined to the political sphere. To strengthen their political dominance they implemented a parallel imperialism in the intellectual and cultural domains. The British used Macaulay's system of education to implement this agenda. Because of this, it became the aim of the nationalists to acquire an intellectual and cultural autonomy along with political freedom. They proposed an alternative national education system as a pre-requisite to political independence.

Under the chairmanship of Rash Bihari Bose, a National Council of Education was set up as part of the *Swadeshi* educational movement as a counter to the Westernized educational system introduced by the British government. The aim of this council was to set up educational institutions in the '*swadeshi*' mould. This came into existence in 1906 March 11<sup>th</sup>. The first educational institution set up by this 'National Council' was the Bengal National College in Calcutta. Sri Aurobindo was the first principal. Aurobindo, who was born in 1872 Aug 15<sup>th</sup> in Bengal and attained Samadhi in 1950 Dec 5<sup>th</sup> at Pondicherry, was a known as great thinker and educationalist. During the freedom struggle he was in the ranks of the revolutionaries and after few years this revolutionary evolved into an ardent spiritualist. He strongly believed that the freedom of the country was closely linked with the educational level of the masses.

According to Sri Aurobindo, the concept of national freedom could not be confined to the idea of political freedom because the basis of political freedom was to be freedom of intellectual slavery. This freedom of intellect was the product of an educational system which can inculcate pride and confidence in the national history.

**The research objective.** The main objective was to find the possible answers to the above mention problem and its impact. As a part of this research, I have to reestablish the greatness of the Indian system of education and the aim of national education is to imparted educational curricula rooted in national values in all over the country.

**The statement of basic material.** The aim of education should not be confined to a means of livelihood. Instead it should lead to the total development of one's personality and make one a complete person. The educational system evolved by the nationalist leadership as part of the freedom struggle was the blueprint for the future. Yet the system of education which was implemented in free India was not in line with the aspirations of the nationalist leadership. Education is an agency of social change, which transforms the society into a better place for man

to live. The right kind of education is undoubtedly a stimulus to think, question and inquire into the truth and thereby refine and purify the human consciousness. It is the function of education to impart the right kind of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values among the students. So, that they become harmonious within themselves and resourceful citizens playing their roles effectively in the development of the nation.

The studies carried out on education and education reforms in free India and the reports generated by the commissions set up for the same have pointed out that the aim of education in this country should cultivate nationalism among the students and to develop strong personalities. All the educational commissions set up have called for the development of the physical, intellectual, ethical and spiritual strength of the students. Doctor Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49), Kothari Commission (1964-66), National Educational Policy (1986), Ramamurthy Committee (1990), National Educational Advisory Report (1992), the instruction of the Planning Commission for value based education (1992), the report of the Parliamentary Committee led by S.B.Chavan (1999) [3] all these documents pointed to the need for a value based system of education. The development of personality is considered as the cornerstone of any educational effort. UNESCO defined education as, "The physical, intellectual, emotional and ethical integration of an individual into a complete man is a broad definition of the fundamental aim of education" [4].

The ultimate aim of traditional education was the production of holistic personalities dedicated to the service of the nation. The emphasis of education was the pursuit of knowledge rather than the pursuit of jobs. Contemporary education serves to popularize the culture of consumerism. This leads the society unavoidably to a situation of cut-throat competition. The reason for the present societal restlessness can be traced to this philosophy of 'the survival of the fittest'.

Sri Aurobindo agrees to this observation and states that, "Our goal is not mechanical. It is spiritual and based on the concept of 'dharma' (righteousness). Our target is not the establishment of new system of government but the reconstruction of the entire nation" [5] Our education system should serve to reconstruct the whole national edifice. One aim is the evolution of a new generation; a generation, which is to be nationalistic, culturally sublime and value based. Sri Aurobindo had a clear and precise view about the kind of educational system required to mould our generation in order to achieve the above aims.



The aim of colonial education was aimed at ensuring the intellectual slavery among the Indian masses. The system was designed to inject all the negative aspects of Western life into the national environment. Our educational system, should have aimed at inculcating the Indian nation with nationalism, love for the motherlands, self-respect and the need for self-sufficiency. Instead, the education system was designed to enslave the people with a sense of subjugation to the white man. Sri Aurobindo comments upon this, "Intellectual development guided by the well calibrated injection of 'English thought'. That is why we refuse to accept those ideas which are appropriate for our requirement. Instead, we choose to use the torn and soiled clothes which even the Englishmen have abandoned" [5].

Sri Aurobindo's concept of education was based on Bharatheeya philosophy and seeks to promote Indian culture, love for the motherland, and the Indian value system. He believed that India had much to learn from the West. He also believed that the spiritual gains of India could be useful to the West as much as the Western scientific knowledge would find use in India. The ultimate aim of education was the emancipation of the soul. The idea that 'humanity would evolve into an ideal society' was his unique contribution. His educational system was meant to create this ideal society. His philosophy is not just a philosophy based on God and his manifestation; it is actually '*Poorna Advaita*' (Integral Dualism). The philosophy that recognizes, matter, soul, the '*Nirguna Brahman*' (Ultimate Reality without any qualified qualities) and the '*Saguna Brahman*' (Ultimate Reality with auspicious qualities) is called Integral theory. His education policy is based on this integral philosophy. The core of His system of education is to evolve the human mind into the Supermind.

He upheld that Integral Education must emphasise the psychic and mental aspects in addition to the physical and mental aspects as denoted by the matter and spirit respectively. The cultivation of the aspects like, beauty, power, knowledge and love is essential what he termed as 'Integral Education'. Beauty is to be realised through physical culture. Power is to be related to control sensations. Knowledge helps in developing a mental make-up of an alert mind. Love is the formation of desirable feelings and emotions, which should be directed towards others and the communion with the Divine. He enunciated three principles of teaching methods. Firstly, nothing can be taught by heart. All knowledge is within one's self and as revealed through the process of

'*Swadharna*' and '*Swabhava*'. Knowledge is the seed of education; know the self. The duty of the teacher is to show the child where true knowledge lies and how the knowledge can come to the surface. The second principle is that the child should be consulted over his growth; nothing should be imposed from within. Education should be provided according to the needs of the individual. Thus flexibility, innovation and initiative are extremely essential for natural growth and education of the child. The third principle is that the child should be led from near too far. Our motto should be from known to the unknown. This is nothing but the holistic development.

For complete education must have five principal aspects relating to the five principal activities of the human being as earlier stated - the Physical, the Vital, the Mental, the Psychic and the Spiritual. Usually, these phases of education succeed each other in a chronological order during the growth of the individual. This however does not mean that one should replace the other but that all must continue in succession, completing each other, till the end of life. He states that, the education process should touch the physical, mental, psychic and spiritual faculties of an individual. This educational vision of Aurobindo is known as '*Integral Education*'. In this, Aurobindo gave maximum importance to physical and spiritual education.

The greatest educationalist, those who played important roles in designing education systems have, in their quest to develop ideal processes and structure of education. The pioneering educational philosophers like Rousseau, Montessori, Pestalozzi, Bertrand Russell, Paulo Freire, and Piaget, it is now being increasingly recognised that education must be based on the psychology of the child-nature. Each human being is a self-developing soul and that the business of both parent and teacher is to enable and to help the child to educate himself, to develop his own intellectual, moral, aesthetic and practical capacities and to grow freely as an organic being, not to be kneaded and pressured into form like an inert plastic material. The new pedagogy of national education impels a further realization of the potentialities of the child and its soul, a realization that was explicitly stated in the writings of the nationalist leaders who inspired and led the movement of national education in India, the dream of Sri Aurobindo Dayananda Saraswati, Swami Vivekananda, Mahatma Gandhi, Rabindranath Tagore and Sri Aurobindo. Their writings gave a clear expression of the deeper self and the real psychic entity within. In this paper I have tried to revisit the

philosophy of education of Sri Aurobindo who tried to provide solution to the problem generated by Macaulayan education system in India during pre and post colonial period. The basic material is to refer to their views from various authors' books and articles.

**Conclusion.** For him education should to inculcate morals and eternal values in its recipients. A generation which grows up without morals and ethical values is a force for disruption and a potential threat to the society as a whole. Today, one of the main problems confronting the world is a total collapse of moral values. He believed that the reformation of the nation is dependent solely upon youths with character and courage. He desires them to be truthful, pure at heart, and have a strong conviction. This indicates how important the values are for him for societal framework. He recognizes the contribution of music, poetry and fine arts towards the developments of the human minds which helps in purifying the human mind. His vision on education is fundamentally spiritual. Spirituality evolves from the distillation of all morals and values. When he says that the purpose of education is the evolution of a 'sattvika' entity, it is to be emphasized that this *sattvika* quality is the distilled output of a moral and value based development.

The true purpose of education is to help an individual transcend the '*tamasika*' and '*rajasika*' level to reach the '*sattvika*' level. For this to happen there should be elements of moral and dharmic content in the individual's life. It is due to this requirement that moral values are stressed as inevitable to a student's life. As per Aurobindo's educational vision, a person achieves perfection when he undergoes internal evolution and becomes a spiritual man. He considered this evolution into a 'spiritual man' as the logical conclusion of the moral education process.

The educational system of India was totally westernized. Yet this curriculum did not maintain the high standard of the western educational system. If that had happened we would have been able to stand along with the westerners down the line. So, in today's context, there is an urgent need for nationalism, love of the motherland, cultural awareness, and awareness of values. If we implement a system of education based on the ideas and thoughts of Sri Aurobindo, it forms the basis of the solution for most of the problems facing in the country. The promotion of the love for the nation, moral values, national integration and the imbibing of spiritual and cultural values by the new generation can be achieved by implementing a curriculum of education rooted in the philosophy of Sri Aurobindo.

Aurobindo believed that for the millions of people in the nation to be given an education, it was necessary to do so using their own methods, language and traditions. The education should be based on *Bharateeya* culture and tradition and the medium of education should be the Indian language which will be totally *swadeshi* and help us to bring *swaraj*. "Swami Vivekananda predicted that the time had come in human history for labouring communities to come forward, but he also cautioned that the oppressed might become worse oppressors if they are shorn of proper education and culture" [5]. Swami Vivekananda considered education not only as the medium to impart nationalism, but also as the path to the liberation of the oppressed and working classes.

The current addiction to anything that is Western and the widespread moral degradation are the direct impact of our flawed educational system. Those who acquire higher technical education are not prepared to serve the motherland. They are inclined to sell their skills to foreign countries for a price. In this era of globalisation, a generation which considers nationalism and love for the nation as notions of displeasure for their prospects they sell their talent and skill for money to foreign nation and to stop this brain drain and colonization of mind set. We need to implement a revised education scheme meant to inculcate love for the nation, the concept of national integration, pride in our culture and tradition is necessary and it is possible through implementation of national education rather than imposed colonial education system.

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