Chapter III

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Chapter III

METHODOLOGY

It is the unstoppable quest for knowledge of this being, the human, at the highest plane of evolution that makes man a researcher. It may be the other way around; that is, it may be the constant intellectual journey through experiments and observations that has led man to the highest plane of evolution. Indians use the word ‘Gaveshanam’ to indicate ‘Research’. The literal meaning of ‘Gaveshanam’ is ‘Looking for the cow’. Here ‘Cow’ is a metaphorical symbol of ‘Ultimate truth’. Thus research, according to Indian thinkers, is a constant search for the ultimate truth. In course of time there came into being a system of methodology for this effort to reach the ultimate truth.

“Research is a more systematic activity that is directed towards discovery and development of an organized body of knowledge. Research may be defined as systematic and objective analysis and the recording of controlled observations that may lead to the development of generalizations,
principles, or theories, resulting in predication and possibly ultimate control of events” (Best. 2002, P. 20).

Every country in the world makes a huge expenditure on research in the field of science and technology. This is because new discoveries and inventions help in the leap towards development and progress. Just as prominence is given to the field of science and technology, importance is given to research in the field of humanity, that is, the field of language, history and education. Notable among these are the research projects carried out in the fields of different educational subjects. Progress in the field of education determines the progress of a country. Because of this, research in the field of education is a point of serious and elaborate discussion.

3.1 Research Methodology in Educational Research

The research in this field can be classified as quantitative research and qualitative research. Quantitative research consists of those in which the data concerned can be analyzed in terms of numbers. Qualitative research can describe events, persons, and so forth scientifically without the use of numerical data.

“The methodologies utilized in the conduct of educational
research are based, in most instances, on research methods used in the behavioral and social sciences, relying most heavily on the psychology, sociology, and anthropology. Since research in these fields of study emphasizes logical positivism which uses experimental and quantitative research methods, most educational research also utilizes these methodologies. Still, some research concerns may be addressed more appropriately with a phenomenological or qualitative research approach derived from the humanities, particularly history and philosophy, or with qualitative methods from the social sciences” (Best. 2002, P.81). Because of the nature of the subject, the investigator has used Qualitative methods’ in this work.

Methodology occupies a very important role in any type of research as validity and reliability of findings depend upon the methods adopted in different stages of development. The selection of a method for research work depends upon the nature of the problem and the kind of data necessary for the solution of the problem. A great variety of methods and procedure have been developed to aid in the requisition of data.
Regarding the importance of methodology Barr says: “The machinery of the methodology occupies a very important position in any kind of research. The vehicle of any kind of research cannot perform its function without it, since it is to be carried out and outlines the detailed description of the research variable and procedure” (Barr. 1960, P. 60).

Educational research can be categorized on the basis of end results, data gathering techniques, methods of data processing degree of control exercised, approach, source of data, and number of other considerations. The decision about the method depends on the nature of the problem selected and kinds of data for its solution.

The success of any education investigation depends mainly upon the suitability of methods adopted for carrying out the same. Collection of data is also of supreme importance. Therefore selection of appropriate method and administration of tools need careful attention. The objectives of the study and the level of interpretation required determine the method for any particular study.
3.2 Nature of the Study

In this work, the investigator has attempted a descriptive and analytical study of Swami Vivekananda’s and Sree Aurobindo’s educational vision and ideas with a view to find out their significance and importance in the present context of things. Though the title of the study may mark it under the area of philosophy of education, the investigator has viewed it from a socio – political educational perspective rather than limiting it to a study of mere philosophy.

The hypothesis on which the study proceeds is that the educational ideas of Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo would solve many of the present problems in India in the light of the fact that they were the real source of inspiration for the freedom fighters of the 19th and 20th centuries.

3.3 Methods Followed

The method of analysis and interpretation adopted in this thesis follows the modes relevant to educational philosophy considering the context in which Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo had expressed their views as well as the significance
of their ideas in modern times. Hence it was decided to adopt the analytical method in this work.

1. The investigator has attempted to compare Swami Vivekananda’s and Sri Aurobindo’s contributions under the following captions:
   (a) Indian Philosophy and its philosophical bases with respect to education
   (b) Spiritual and cultural background of education and its impact on education.
   (c) National Integration and its relevance to education.
   (d) Patriotic viewpoints and their educational relevance.
   (e) Morals and values in education.

2. To compare Swami Vivekananda’s and Sree Aurobindo’s contributions with respect to the abovementioned five aspects.

3. Significance of Swami Vivekananda’s and Sri Aurobindo’s ideas regarding modern education.

In a study like this, there is little scope for using the questionnaire method or the experimental method and so the descriptive research technique based on intensive library work
has been mainly used in this study. “A descriptive study describes and interprets what is. It is concerned with conditions or relationships that exists, opinions that are held, processes that are going on, effects that are evident, or trends that are developing. It is primarily concerned with the present, although it often considers past events and influences as they relate to current conditions” (Best. 2002, P. 105). Thus the methods adopted for the study is actually a combination of the historical, descriptive and analytical methods and the data used in the study would justify this statement.

In this work, the primary source of data was collected from the complete works of Swami Vivekananda and the complete works of Sree Aurobindo. The Secondary sources were taken from several books and journal about Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo.

3.4 Data Collection

Qualitative research uses different forms of data that those used in traditional research methods. As Pattom puts forth: “Qualitative methods consist of three kinds of data collection: (1) In-depth open ended interviews (2) Direct
observation and (3) written documents. The data from interviews consists of direct quotations from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge. The data from observations consist of detailed descriptions of people’s activities, actions, and the full range of interpersonal interaction and organizational processes that are part of observable human experience. Document analysis in qualitative inquiry yields excerpts, quotations, or entire passage from organizational clinical program records, memoranda and correspondence, official publications and report, personal diaries, and open ended written responses to questionnaires and surveys.” (Pattom. 1990, P. 12)

It is the third method (analysis of written documents) that is used for this research work. Most of the data has been accessed directly from the works of Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo. Data has been also collected from the studies conducted by eminent scholars on the subject as well as periodicals which elucidate the same.
3.5 Analytical Procedure

In the absence of suitable titles and sub–heads and presentation of educational ideas in an organized manner in any of the complete works of Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo, the investigator has adopted his own procedure for categorization for the purpose of analytical study. The educational ideas of Swami Vivekananda and Sree Aurobindo are spread all over their complete works and so the analytical study is not based on a word by word or sentence by sentence method, but whatever found relevant for treatment as educational ideas are analysed in considerable depth.

A proper study of Swami Vivekananda’s and Sri Aurobindo’s educational ideas will necessitate a look into the values of man as a moral and spiritual being. The investigator feels that the exposition of the metaphysical notions of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo regarding ‘Brahma’, ‘Karma’, Supermind, Involution, Evolution, Descent and Ascent of the Supermind etc. will provide revealing insights into their character and personality. If their educational ideas are studied as isolated units, they will lose much of their significance.
The present study is attempted mainly from a sociological and cultural perspective. Swami Vivekananda’s and Sree Aurobindo’s own words have been put within quotation marks and their ideas are presented as they are presented in the books with suitable modifications by the investigator wherever it is felt necessary. Their epistles and poems bear a wide variety of hidden meanings and it is not required to go into their depths but for certain exceptions in this study. Every word that they uttered can be interpreted in several ways by different thinkers and so the impact of their ideas in modern times is the criteria for the investigator’s interpretations.

3.6 Note-taking and Writing the Report

The researcher has read the Complete Works of Swami Vivekananda, Sree Aurobindo and other related studies noting the quotations and passages required, bearing in mind the objectives of the study. Maximum care was taken to analyze and interpret the data in an unbiased manner. Materials are modified and edited with great care and attention to ensure that the final script is fool proof to the maximum level possible.
3.7 Emphasis of the Study

The thrust of the research has been to study the educational views of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo in the light of Indian philosophy and culture. Their ideas and methods of using education as a tool for national integration is also a subject of the study. The study also covers their use of education as a medium to promote nationalism. The researcher also has covered the methods adopted to inculcate morals and values through the educational effort. A comparative study of their views on their subject as well as the contemporary relevance of their views is also included. The research method adopted in this study is analytical and descriptive. The environment which molded the educational outlooks of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo is also covered. Both these eminent personalities had their own independent views on education. Their respective cultural backgrounds helped to mould these outlooks. Their view on the subject was very different from the contemporary Western ideas on the subject. The research on these views has been carried out based on the available literature on the same.
REFERENCES

3. Ibid. p. 105
4. Ibid. p. 81