Abstract

The core of this study is the contribution that the educational philosophy of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo can make in reforming the present Indian educational scenario. There are many similarities in the lives and worldview of these personalities who lived in the second half of the 18th century and the first half of the 19th century. Both of them believed that national education was a prerequisite for political freedom from foreign rule.

Hypothesis: 1) If we implement a system of education based on the ideas and thoughts of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo, it forms the basis of the solution to most of the problems facing the country. 2) The promotion of love for the nation, moral values, national integration, and imparting spiritual and cultural values to the new generation, can be achieved by implementing a curriculum rooted in the educational views of these two eminent personalities. 3) The level of education can be elevated if the above curriculum is implemented.

Objectives of this study: 1) To identify the contributions of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo with respect to:
   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 the contributions of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo with respect to the above mentioned five aspects. 3) To analyse reflectively the perspectives on education of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo and their impact on the present educational scenario with respect to the five select dimensions. 4) To analyse the opinions of educationalists and philosophers regarding the educational vision and mission of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo.

Methodology of this study in brief: This study is conducted mainly by drawing upon the consolidated works of Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo and by applying an analytical cum descriptive method for the research. The investigator has tried to conduct a comparative study of the ideas regarding education of these two individuals. The investigator has taken into account the opinion and comments of other thinkers and philosophers regarding Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy.

Major findings: Both of them gave emphasis to a system of education based on spirituality. Both of them considered the emancipation of the soul as the ultimate aim of education. Both of them were of the opinion that knowledge was not something to be acquired from an external source. According to both
of them, knowledge resides within each individual and it is the duty of the teacher to make the student aware of this internal knowledge and to guide him to discover it. Vivekananda’s philosophy was based on Advaita, while that of Sri Aurobindo was based on ‘Poorna Advaita’ which, in turn, had evolved from the concept of advaita. Aurobindo’s unique philosophy talks of a supramental being which results from the evolution of consciousness of ordinary individuals.

Both these individuals believed that the core of our education should be Indian philosophy and culture. They were convinced that the inclusion of yoga as part of the education syllabus would result in spiritual development. The idea of ‘Integral Education’ is Sri Aurobindo’s unique contribution.

Both of them argued that education should be a medium of national integration. Their dream was to evolve a system of national education. It was Sri Aurobindo who gave a practical framework for national education.

Both of them believed that a system of education, which lacked the capacity to inculcate love for the nation, was impotent. Both were convinced that only a ‘Swadeshi’ system of education which is based on the culture and traditions of the country, has the capacity to inculcate nationalism. Aurobindo’s ideas on patriotism were theoretical while that of Swami Vivekananda’s approached was that of a visionary.

Their idea was that ‘Dharmic’ and moral values should be imparted to the new generation through the medium of education. Character formation could be carried out only through moral education. Moral education was mandatory for personality development. However, the idea that fine arts, if included in the educational curriculum, would impart a sense of values is a unique idea of Aurobindo.

**Scope of the study:** In this age, when the concept of nationalism and national unity is being challenged, a system of education which inculcates nationalism, love for the nation and national integration is vital. Both Swami Vivekananda and Sri Aurobindo emphasised the need for a system of education, which made the students aware of the cultural tradition and the national values of the nation. In this age where moral and Dharmic values are under threat, a system of education which lays emphasis on moral and value based education has great relevance.