Chapter 4

Nature and Aims of Philosophy of Education

4. A. Nature of Philosophy of Education

Philosophy of education is concerned with the problems and implications in the field of education. The nature and structure of philosophy of education is varied depending on the philosophical theories. The word 'educere' itself carries different meanings. It stands for 'to lead out' in Percy Nunn. But in Sir John Adams' philosophy of education it stands for 'to train or mould according to some specification'. But as a branch of social philosophy it deals with the values, norms and the problems of the society. It is a dynamic process and deals with all the epistemological, metaphysical and ethical aspects of philosophy. It is mainly concerned with the educational value.
4. A. i. Russell’s view

During the period of the First World War, Russell realized the value of society and institutions. He focused his concentration on the duty of the society and institutions. He was himself involved with problems of economic, political and social origin. He was against the repressive system of education, which gave people an unconscious impulse towards fighting and killing, and that everything in the social order had to be reconsidered and revived accordingly. Russell wrote several articles and two books on education. These two books are “On Education” (1926) and “Education and Social Order” (1931). His ideas on education received great publicity. Russell’s philosophy of education is not based on philosophical standpoint. He developed his educational ideas from psychological and behaviourist viewpoint in social touch. He observed the social destruction and unethical condition of his time in society, and thought about what type of education should be introduced to the people. This is perhaps the reason that in his first book “On Education” Russell discusses about the aim of education and the modern educational theory. Special emphasis has been given to the education of character and intellectual education.
Russell and Whitehead advocated realistic view of education. To Russell, education is the key to the new world view. Moreover, Russell's educational view is psychological and behaviourist, based on empirical and scientific fact. In "On Education" Russell introduced behaviourist theory showing the main springs of action as instinct and relax, which are quickly overlaid in the child's development by habits. To develop a sense of discipline in the young children, Russell suggested starting habit formation in the early stage of life. Russell's educational theory is an integral part of his general outlook. Neither of his books on education is philosophical in nature; they are, rather, empirical observations based on psychological explanations. Modern philosophy of education has a great impact on the present social melodies. Here, humanism, reason, faith, emotional integration and values of life have received high impetus. As a result a dynamic, synthetic and universal outlook has been developed. Russell considers his realistic universal view as follows: "We want artists, but we also want men of science. We want great administrators, but we also want ploughmen and millers and bakers. The qualities which produce a man of great eminence in some one direction are often such as might be undesirable, if they are universal."
Whitehead also aims for the realistic view of education and thinks that many of the failures in education are due to the neglect of the modern scientific thought regarding education.

Education for Russell is in two senses- the broader and the narrower sense. He defined, "In the broader sense, education will include not only what we learn through personal experience—the formation of character through the education of life. Of this aspect of education, vitally important as it is, I will say nothing, since its consideration would introduce topics quite foreign to the question with which we are concerned.

In the narrower sense, education may be confined to instruction, the imparting of definite information on various subjects, because such information, in and for itself, is useful in daily life. Elementary education—reading, writing, and arithmetic—are almost wholly of this kind. But instruction, necessary as it is, does not per se constitute education in the sense in which I wish to consider it." Russell defined education as information, by means of instruction, of certain mental habits and a certain outlooks on life and the world.
Russell divided his whole concept of philosophy of education into two parts—education of character and education in knowledge. In his words, "I distinguish between education of character and education in knowledge, which may be called instruction in the strict sense. The distinction is useful, though not ultimate: some virtues are required in a pupil who is to become instructed, and much knowledge is required for the successful practice of many important virtues. For purposes of discussion, however, instruction can be kept apart from education of character." Nevertheless, in education, both the aspects are important for Russell.

4. A. ii. Sri Aurobindo’s view

In Sri Aurobindo’s philosophy the concept of education is a significant concept. His philosophy of education emerged with his other philosophical activities. The philosophy of life is correspondent to the philosophy of education. The aim of education follows the aim of life. Education helps to realize the purpose of the existence of human beings on earth. The education system in general is to realize human perfection. But for Sri Aurobindo human perfection itself is imperfect if the mind,
which helps to realize the Divine Body, Divine Life and the Divine perfection, is imperfect. These three concepts of Divine Body, Divine Life and the Divine perfection analyze three questions – what is the purpose of creation, what is the highest one can do individually and how the whole world can be happy. Therefore a proper study of the human mind is the true basis of education. He wrote, "The true basis of education is the study of human mind, infant, adolescent and adult."sr

Sri Aurobindo not only emphasized the education of the human mind but also said that education makes one ready for a total life. Total life implies the integral life. Integral life again is the total personality of the individual and its association to the outer world. Individual life is related to the full purpose and scope of one's own life as well as the community to which he belongs and finally with the nation. In his own words: "That alone will be a true and living education which helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life and all that is in the individual man and which at the same time helps him to enter into his right relation with the life, mind and soul of the people to which he belongs and with that great total life, mind and soul of humanity
of which he himself is a unit and his people or nation a living, a separate and get inseparable member." Therefore education relates the individual life with the communality and nation. It integrates all the elements of life, mind and soul of an individual.

Again education has to be *trikāla darshree* i.e., vision fixed on the past, present and future simultaneously. Sri Aurobindo asserts: "The past is our foundation, the present our material, the future our aim and summit." He is very hopeful about the future of the modern youth. It is natural for the youth to look hopefully towards the future with all blissful dreams, hope and the drive to progress towards perfection.

Sri Aurobindo condemned the informative knowledge as education. Informative knowledge itself cannot be the education. "Information cannot be the foundation of intelligence; it can only be part of the material out of which the knower builds knowledge, the starting point, the nucleus of fresh discovery and enlarged creation." Therefore Sri Aurobindo believes that an education that confines itself to imparting knowledge is no education. The various faculties of memory, judgement, imagination, perception, reasoning, which build the edifice of thought and knowledge for
the knower only train to bring fresh materials and use them more skilfully.

Sri Aurobindo's philosophy of education is relevant to the contemporary thought. His educational ideas are regarded as new ideas. There are two reasons why it is new. Sri Aurobindo thought that old educational thoughts cannot solve human problems. We must discard the past and open our minds very wide to a completely new thinking. For him "A new centre of thought implies a new centre of education." Again the second thing is that the goal of education cannot be different from the goal of the creation, the goal of life. Education should fulfil the purpose of the creation of the World. Therefore Sri Aurobindo's philosophical ideas imply his educational ideas. For him education is the means to achieve the aim of the human life. In this regard, his philosophy of education is also distinct like his other philosophical ideas, relevant to the contemporary world and integral in nature.
4. B. Aims of Philosophy of Education

In olden days the aim of education was connected with the concept of good life and good society. But in the twentieth century the new emerging philosophical problems experienced that philosophy is not a sort of super-science of good and evil. Philosophers have concentrated more on the central problems of philosophy—those connected with knowledge and belief, appearance and reality, free will and determinism, mind and body, space and time. In this period philosophers generally neglect issues like education or social institutions. Moreover the philosophers were in dispute about the aim of education just as they were not in agreement regarding philosophical problems. Richard S. Peters insists that many disputes about the aim of education are disputes about principles of procedure rather than about 'aims' in the sense of objectives to be arrived at by taking appropriate means.\(^9\) Peters does not think that education has aims or ends. According to Jacques Maritain the basic aim of education is obtaining freedom, and this freedom is possible only through knowledge and wisdom, goodwill and love. In his words, "the prime goal of education is the conquest of internal and spiritual freedom to be achieved by the individual person, or, in
other words, his liberation through knowledge and wisdom, goodwill and love.\textsuperscript{10}

4. B. i. Russell’s View

Russell has cited a few examples about the divergent aim of education in correspondence to the time and geography of a place. In the education system of China and Athens children crammed patriotic poems of the great poet Homer and classical songs of Confucius. Both desired to achieve joy in life. The educational system of Japan contributed to their national progress. The Jesuits made the good of Catholic Church the only aim of education. The educational system of England remained concerned with serving the interests of only a particular group of the society. In this educational system, attention is paid to creating qualities that were considered necessary for the protection of aristocrats and aristocracy. But all these aims are partial and have a lot of shortcomings. The Chinese system of education made them lazy and sceptic about reality, while the educated class of Japan was too industrious and conservative. The Jesuits could not give central place to the child in their education for their religious belief and the education system of
England ignored the human qualities like intelligence, imagination, compassion, sympathy etc.

Russell considers the educational system of USA modern and suitable for the day. American education is based on modern educational principles, beliefs and practices. It is economically prosperous, with a democratic attitude and free thinking, only because of its developed educational system. But still this system is not without blemish. In the American educational system too much of importance has been given to nationalism. Although patriotism is the first essential quality of a citizen, yet in the world of citizenship, its excess is also not desirable. According to Russell, the child is the ends, not the means. American education considers nationalism as an end and the child as its means. This position is not acceptable.

Russell specially wishes to consider the qualities which are desirable in a certain proportion of mankind and universally desirable. So development of ideal character has been universally accepted as one of the main aims of education. "The power of education in forming character and opinion is very great and very generally recognized" Russell says.
To form the basis of an ideal character Russell takes four characteristics as important—viz. vitality, courage, sensitiveness and intelligence.

**Vitality:** Vitality for Russell is rather a physiological than a mental characteristic. It is universally present in a man of good health but it goes on decreasing with advancing years. It is a quality which gives pleasure, even without the existence of any pleasurable external stimulus, manifests itself in feeling pleasure in sheer act of living. Vitality heightens pleasures diminishes pains. An individual based on these qualities makes his own existence pleasant and contributes to others' pleasure also. So Russell says, "This quality is so important that all men should possess it." ¹²

**Courage:** Courage is another factor essential to complete character building. By courage here Russell implies not absence of fear but the absence of irrational fear. Fear is at the root of various evils in the society, so fear should be eliminated. And fear should be overcome not only in action, but also in feeling. Again, it is not only in conscious feeling but also in the unconscious feeling as well. But how can we overcome it? In Russell's opinion, the
absence of fear is one thing and the power of controlling fear is another. The first way, to Russell, is the repression. Through the means of repression, irrational fear can be removed. Next is to train children such that they voluntarily submit to a command for achieving a common purpose, because when children are taught to submit to the command of their elders in the name of humanity, it leads to a habit of unquestioning submission, sometimes for respect and sometimes for the petty prize of acquiring credit from others.

**Sensitiveness:** Sensitiveness is the third important quality for Russell in character building. Russell used the term sensitiveness synonymous with emotions. A person is emotionally sensitive when many stimuli produce emotions in him, but the quality accepted is may not be a good one. If sensitiveness is to be good, the children must be taught the appropriately correct emotional response. Russell mentioned about sensitiveness in two stages—emotions, the quality, which is not necessarily a good one. Mere intensity is not good or needed, but emotions are good when the reaction is in some sense appropriate. It includes the child's drives, emotional pleasures like child loves of praise and hatred of
The next stage in the development of a desirable form of sensitiveness is sympathy. It is physical sympathy when a child cries seeing his brother or sister in crying. Sympathy takes place in two senses—first to feel sympathy even when the sufferer is not an object of special affection, secondly to feel it when the suffering is merely known to be occurring, not sensibly present. It consists of abstract sympathy. Abstract sympathy is though very necessary but it is very rare. Abstract sympathy is that when a person feel sympathy with suffering by an event which enable a man to be moved emotionally, e.g. people think war as a dreadful phenomenon only when their near and dear is mutilated, otherwise they do not think of it as dreadful. Russell thinks that all these common phenomena happen due to the fact that sympathy is not stirred, in most people, by merely abstract stimuli would wipe out a large proposition of the evils that exist in the modern world today.\(^{13}\)

**Intelligence:** Intelligence is the fourth criterion while making an ideal character in Russell's philosophy of education. Russell overruled the virtue life of traditional philosophers saying that intelligence does more good to man than an artificial; conventional
virtue. By intelligence Russell mentioned both of the knowledge the actual knowledge and the receptivity to knowledge. Intelligence properly signifies rather an aptitude for acquiring knowledge than knowledge already acquired. But Russell thinks that the aptitude for acquiring knowledge is acquired only by exercise. Impart information is the best way to train intelligence. Russell thinks intelligence is necessary for the subsistence of the modern world. So he says, "I do not believe that it is possible to train intelligence without imparting information, or at any rate causing knowledge to be acquired. And without intelligence our complex modern world can not subsist; still less make progress. I regard the cultivation of intelligence, therefore, as one of the major purposes of evaluation."14

Therefore in the aim of character formation, Russell gave importance on these four qualities. When these four characteristics will be produced in the highest degree by education, very few people would be unhappy. Russell stressed on three causes of unhappiness in his time- ill health, poverty and unsatisfactory sex life.15 But to be healthy is not tough in today's world; today even old age can be postponed. Poverty according to
Russell is, "since the industrial revolution is only due to collective stupidity, sensitiveness would make people wise to abolish it, intelligence would show them the way, and courage would lead them to adopt it."\(^{16}\)

Unsatisfactory sex life is due to bad education and persecution by the authorities. Irrational sex fear is the effect of the traditional education that thought that fear is the only way to make women virtuous, and they have been deliberately thought to be cowardly both physically and mentally. Russell wants education to produce fearless women who can transform the world by bringing into it a generation of fearless children. Perhaps it is the cause Russell says education is the key to the new world.

Russell tried to make a balance by means of compromises. The humanistic elements in education must remain, but they must be sufficiently simplified to leave room for the other elements of the new scientific world. Russell mentioned about three divergent theories of education in his time. The first is that the sole purpose of education is to provide opportunities of growth and to remove hampering influences. The second holds that the purpose of education is to give
culture to the individual and to develop his capacities to the utmost. The third holds that education is to be considered in relation to the community rather than in relation to the individual, and that its business is to train useful citizens. Russell thinks that no one of the three is adequate by itself, and that the choice of a right system of education depends in great measure upon the adoption of a due proportion between the three theories. The first theory, which is the newest theory of Russell's time, is a negative theory while the third is the oldest one. The first theory is a negative theory for Russell because it dominates much progressive thinking on education. This theory is more or less connected with compulsory education, liberalism and freedom. Liberal thought was started by Rousseau. Belief in freedom in education exists in great measure among socialists, and even communists. There is more truth in the first theory but not with whole perfection, because for Russell, education has two purposes—"On the one hand to form the mind, on the other hand to train the citizen." 

Russell differentiates between individual and citizen as follows: "The will of the individual considered in isolation is the will which says 'let such things be'. The attitude of the citizen is a very different one. He
is aware that his will is not the only one in the world, and he is concerned, in one way or another, to bring harmony out of the conflicting wills that exist within his community. The individual as such is self-subsisted, while the citizen is essentially circumscribed by his neighbours. But, for a healthy society, both types of education are considered, but Russell has given primary importance to individual education. Moreover he is equally concerned about the changing society. He is aware and therefore writes: ".......the education of the individual is to my mind a finer thing than the education of the citizen; but considered politically, in relation to the needs of the time, the education of the citizen must, I fear, take the first place."

4. B. ii. Sri Aurobindo's View

As Russell maintains that character formation is the universal aim of philosophy of education Sri Aurobindo holds that immurgence of the perfect human being should be the aim of education. This perfect or integral human development is possible only through integral education. But the term 'Integral Education' not was used by Sri Aurobindo in his writings anywhere. He only speaks of 'Integral Yoga' or 'National Education' or education only. He uses
the term 'Integral Perfection' and 'Integral Personality' also. The term 'Integral Education' is used by The Mother in her message to the Education Commission for National Development for the first time after two decades of Sri Aurobindo's death. She says,

'India has or rather had the knowledge of the spirit but neglected matter and suffered for it.

The west has the knowledge of matter but rejected the spirit and suffers badly for it.

An Integral Education which could with some variations is adapted to all the nations of the world must bring back the legitimate authority of the spirit over a matter fully developed and utilized.'

Therefore the Mother states that Integral education consists of the concept that man is neither matter nor spirit alone. Man is both a spirit and soul embodied in matter. It is the integration of both matter and spirit. This point of view of the Mother originally followed the same concept of Sri Aurobindo.

Brought up in the west Sri Aurobindo had the first hand knowledge of the western system of education. Like Vivekananda and Tagore he was also aware of the advantage of the European system of
education. Though one of the greatest admirers of ancient Indian thought, Sri Aurobindo was a votary of the synthesis of whatever is good in East and West. This synthesis is visible everywhere in his thought. Therefore while presenting a scheme for Indian education he advocated the synthesis of ancient Indian educational ideals along with the western methods and techniques. For Sri Aurobindo the first problem in a national system of education in India is to give an education as comprehensive as the European one and more, though without the evils of strain and cramming. He searches for a system of teaching which shall be natural, easy and effective. Therefore integral education implies the integration of the west and the east.

Again when Sri Aurobindo integrated education his scheme of education is integral in another two series –

I. Integration of the Individual, community and universal humanity.

II. The integration of the physical, vital, mental, psychic and spiritual education.
True and living education for Sri Aurobindo is the integration of three things, the man, the individual in his commonness and in his uniqueness, the nation of people and universal humanity. Therefore true education helps to bring out to full advantage, makes ready for the full purpose and scope of human life all that is in the individual man and which at the same time help him to enter his right relation to the community he belongs to and to the universal humanity. It is to prepare the mind and the soul of the individual potentialities, uniqueness and commonness. At the same time it has to develop a right relation of the individual with the life, mind and soul of the community and humanity. Therefore true education is the integration of the individual, community and the total humanity.

Another aspect of integral education is the bringing out of the facets of an individual personality. The total personality of an individual is related to the five principal activities of the human being - the physical, the vital, the mental, the psychic and the spiritual. Therefore education helps to develop these five aspects in a chronological order following the growth of the individual. This however does not mean that one should replace another but that
all must continue completing each other, till the end of life. Therefore Sri Aurobindo’s integral education is quite similar to Pestalozzi’s ‘harmonious development’ and Herbert Spencer’s ‘whole life’ or ‘complete living’.

Now the question arises; what is the aim of integral education? For Sri Aurobindo man is not integral in nature. Ordinary man to be an integral one needs an integral education. Man is a growing being and a developing soul. Therefore the human mind cannot be moulded into a form as wished by the parents and teachers. He should get the freedom and opportunity to grow according to the law of his over being and possibilities. In Sri Aurobindo’s view the present world crisis is nothing but the preparation of the manifestation of an evolutionary mutation, which is pressed upon man by the gigantic development of his outer life, out of proportion with his present day limited faculties – mental, ethical and spiritual. The shake-up that mankind is undergoing in every domain—scientific, social, political, philosophical, ethical and religious is nothing but the demolishing of the past indispensable to the forward movement. It is only the integral education which lays equal stress on the development of both material and spiritual
aspects of man. Only integral education can meet the needs of modern humanity and free it from the crisis it is passing through. Sri Aurobindo's integral education is also similar to the Gitā. The Gitā gives status to the all-round development of the individual to achieve the individual and social responsibility. The virtuous knowledge of the Gitā is similar to the spiritual knowledge of Sri Aurobindo.

But there is an ultimate aim of integral education which is most comprehensive and includes all other aims and objectives. There is a Supreme Divine consciousness and we want to manifest this consciousness in physical life. Bringing down the Supra mental, the creative Truth-consciousness of the supreme upon the earth is that which made possible the birth of the new supra-mental race in the world. This is the foundation and true aim of integral education.

But to achieve the supreme consciousness the material existence of man cannot be neglected. For material aspect scientific and technological progress has to be ensured, agricultural and food production has to be effected, economic standard has to be raised, poverty has to be eradicated, employment opportunities
have to be facilitated. These material aspects fulfil the needs of the outer personality of man. But this outer personality is a formation of the ego constituted of ignorance and desires. Therefore the authority of the spirit of the inner personality has to be established over the outer. This higher aspect of human personality can control and guide the outer as the rider controls the horse.

Again, self-discovery and self-realization are the keynotes of integral education. The aim of education is not to prepare a man to succeed in life and society, but to increase his perfect ability to its utmost.

Therefore Sri Aurobindo's integral education is a revolution in the contemporary educational thinking. The demand is claimed by Norman C. Dowsett in the following words, "The new approach to education necessitates a reassessment of the psychology supporting it. This is to be found in the various works of Sri Aurobindo and The Mother on education, the basis of which is also to be found in Sri Aurobindo's The Synthesis of Yoga." Sri Aurobindo's psychology arises out of the experience and understanding of the five minds, i.e., the physical mind, the vital
Physical Education

Sri Aurobindo has given special prominence to physical education and its practice as a means for the development and maintenance of the health and strength of the body. Physical education is needed not only for individual purposes, but also for social activities, in war as well as in peace, and also for national aspect. Sri Aurobindo said, "A generalization of the habit of taking part in such exercises in childhood and youth and early manhood would help greatly towards the creation of physically fit and energetic people."²³ Again he has given importance to physical education, health, strength and fitness of the body because it helps in the development of discipline, morals and strong and sound character. There are some kind of sports which help to form and even necessitate the qualities of courage, hardihood, energetic
action and initiative or call for skill, steadiness of will or rapid decision and action, the perception of what is to be done in an emergency and dexterity in doing it.

Sri Aurobindo thinks that a highest and completes education of the mind is not enough without the education of the body. Seeking the total perfection of an individual Sri Aurobindo said, "Perfection is the true aim of all culture, the spiritual and psychic, the mental, the vital and it must be the aim of our physical culture also."24 We cannot leave aside the physical part, for the body is the material basic, it is the instrument which we have to use. Sri Aurobindo's ideal is the Divine life, the spirit fulfilled on earth, life accomplishing its own spiritual transformation even here on earth in the conditions of the material universe. And this kind of aim is not possible unless the body too undergoes a transformation.

The development of the physical consciousness is considered as the aim by Sri Aurobindo, but for that the right development of the body itself is an essential element. For this health and strength, fitness is the first need. For Sri Aurobindo, "A Divine life in a material world implies necessarily a union of the two ends of existence, the spiritual summit and the material base."25 This is
the evolution theory provided by Sri Aurobindo-- the ascending of matter to the heights of the spirit and the descending of the spirit into the matter with all its lights and glories and powers which fills and transforms life in the material world to become more and more divine. But a supreme or total perfection is possible only by a transformation of our lower or human nature, a transformation of the mind into a thing of light, our life into a thing of power, an instrument of right action, right use for all its forces, from its narrow potentiality to the self fulfilling force of action and joy of life. In this way we can conceive the divine life on the earth.

In pursuit of perfection Sri Aurobindo advised the practice of yoga, where the process is spiritual and psychic. Even its vital and physical process are given a spiritual or psychic turn and raised to a higher motion than belongs properly to the ordinary life and matter.

Sports and physical exercises are useful for the education of the individual in childhood and first youth. These are also means for bringing out the child's latent possibilities to its fullest development. But Sri Aurobindo believes that the means and methods what we use in the physical education should be limited
by the nature of the body. In human perfection only this kind of selection of means and methods can help to develop the power of mind, will, character etc. To develop the body and its perfection the means are those of its natural qualities and capacities and, secondly, the training of the general fitness.

Health and strength are the first conditions for the natural perfection of the body. And for it some activities like sports, physical exercise, etc. may be some kind of effective preparation. "In some of them a training for common action, combined movement, discipline are needed and for that our physical exercises can make one ready; in others a developed individual evil, skill of mind and quick perception, forcefulness of life energy and subtle physical impulsion are more prominently needed and may even be the one sufficient trainer"²⁶

For Sri Aurobindo, Physical education is the transformation of the physical body into the divine body and manifestation of divine beauty in the physical which consists of physical culture in the scheme of integral education. We know that evolution proceeds from the physical to the spiritual. Unless the physical base is sufficiently strengthened, purified and transformed, the
development of other aspects of the personality remains a vain chimera or at least haphazard, partial and imperfect. In this context physical education assumes great importance.

Physical education asserted its rightful place even from the earliest Vedic days and continued throughout the ages. In ancient days the skills of archery, sword play, boxing, hunting and other varieties of physical exercises claimed as much practice as the learning of the scriptures and realization of the self. In ancient Greece also, points out Sri Aurobindo, all sides of human activity were equally developed and the gymnasium, chariot-racing and other sports and athletics had the same importance on the physical side as on the mental side the arts, poetry and drama, and were especially stimulated and attended to by the civic authorities of the city-state.

Physical education in games and exercises are for entertainment as well as for the outlet of the body's energy and natural instinct of activity or as a means for the maintenance of the health, strength and other development of the body. Besides all these, there are also many fields of physical education. It develops the habits, capacities and qualities which are much needed for better health.
It helps in war as well as in peace, in political and social activities, indeed in most of the provinces of a combined human behaviour.

Physical education contributes not only for physical development and bodily perfection but also towards emotional satisfaction, mental maturation, psychic liberation and spiritual fulfilment. The earliest and the most elementary form of physical education is play. The urge for play is instinctive to all human beings, particularly to children. Through play they find their emotional and creative self expression. The spirit of play develops a sense of detachment towards all activities of life and makes life not only bearable but also enjoyable. Again physical transformation implies the manifestation of the supreme spirit in the physical. So it has an immense contribution for integral development and integral perfection.

**Vital Education**

The vital being according to Sri Aurobindo, is that which is concerned directly with life. It also can be called "life force", and all the movements connected with the life-force belong to the vital being. Wherever there is life, in plant or animal or man, there is life-force – without the vital there can be no life in matter and no
living action. The fundamental working of the vital being is that it takes the form of Desire, the desire for objects, for possession, lust, ambition and generally speaking, all *sada ripus*—"the six inimical tendencies"—belong to the vital plane. The Mother says, "The vital is the seat of desires and passions, of violent impulses and equally violent reactions of revolt and depression." The correct way to deal with vital is to provide it with a proper education so that the life energies are properly guided and utilized.

People are generally confused about the goal of life. It is common concept that the goal of life is to be happy. Again there is a set idea that one is born with a character which cannot be changed. But we know that all existence is based upon the delight of being and without which there would be no life. But it has to be clearly understood that the delight of being is a quality of the Divine and hence unconditional and it should not be confused with the pursuit of pleasure which is transitory. True happiness doesn't lie in satisfying desires. Desires are never satisfied. One desire leads to another and brings in more and more unhappiness. In fact true happiness lies in overcoming a desire rather than satisfying it. The
Mother reminds us, “In the world, as it now is, the goal of life is not to secure personal happiness, but to awaken the individual progressively towards the Truth – consciousness.”28 The inborn character is also changeable though it is tough. When the individual turns the light within himself into the subcontinent the attitude and the conviction gradually begins to change and one awakens to the possibility that character can be transformed.

The vital has three sources of subsistence. The one most easily accessible to it comes from below, from the physical energies coming through the sensations. The second is on its own plane, when it is sufficiently vast and receptive, by contact with the universal vital forces. The Third, to which it usually opens only in a great aspiration for progress, comes to it from above by the infusion and absorption of spiritual forces and inspiration. So, there are three sources of the vital -- the first is individual, the lower physical-vital, depending on the sensations; the second is the universal, the vital-vital, depending on the environment; the third is the spiritual, the higher-vital or the higher force descending from above.
Vital education of the child should begin as early as possible, indeed as soon as he is able to use senses. Because vital in man's nature is a despotic and exacting tyrant. Vital education has two principal aspects, very different in their aims and methods, but both equally important. The first concerns the development and use of the sense organs. The second is the progressing awareness and control of the character, claiming in its transformation. In Nyāya philosophy of education also, proper training of the senses is given importance as the perceptional knowledge is acquired through sense contact. In western concept too Froebel and Montessori have laid stress on sense training.

**Mental Education**

Mind is the crown of humanity. This mind is the main force of modern education, but its effective working rests on the support of the body and the vitality and emotions. That is why unless we develop the other two parts also, the mind stands on a weak foundation, and is afterwards enslaved to the limitations of the other parts.

The great quest of the mind is knowledge and the seeking for perfection. The mind is never satisfied with what is; it always
wants to improve, organize and optimize. Measurement, planning, strategy and analysis are the necessary faculties without which our lives cannot improve. But the mind is not just analysis; there is also the "right brain" and its faculties of synthesis, insight, comprehension, creativity, intuition and inspiration.

The true role of mind is the formation and organization of action. The mind has a formative and organizing power and also puts the different elements of inspiration in order, for action and for organizing action. It is not an instrument of knowledge, but it can use knowledge for action, to organize action. When the mind is well developed it becomes very powerful and capable. Sri Aurobindo said, "Not only science but art, not only book-knowledge and information but growth in culture and character are parts of a true education; to help the individual to develop his capacities, to help in the forming of thinkers and creators and men of vision and action of the future, this is a part of its work."²⁹

To describe the mental education the following five phases can be laid down:
1. Development of the power of concentration, the capacity of attention.
2. Development of the capacities of expansion, wideness, complexity and richness.
3. Organization of ideas around a central idea on a higher ideal or a supremely luminous idea that will serve as a guide in life.
4. Thought control, rejection of undesirable thoughts, so that one may, in the end think only what one wants and when one wants it.
5. Development of mental silence, perfect calm and a more and more total receptivity to inspirations coming from the higher regions of the being.

Sri Aurobindo pointed out that the first qualities of the mind that have to be developed are those which can be grouped under observation. We notice more but observe less. The six senses are the components of the faculty of observation, but its basic is attention. Sri Aurobindo wrote, "Full concentration of the faculty of observation gives us all the knowledge that the three chief senses can gather about the object, or if we touch or taste, we may gather
all that the five senses can tell of its nature and properties. Those who make use of the sixth sense, the poet, the painter, the yogis, can also gather much that is hidden from the ordinary observer. The scientists, by investigation ascertain other factors open to a minuter observation. These are the components of the faculty of observation, and it is obvious that its basic is attention, which may be only close or close and minute.30

The next qualities to be developed are the memory and judgement. To develop memory and judgement Sri Aurobindo advised the way in the following words, "The student should not be made to repeat the same lesson over again in order to remember it. That is mechanical, burdensome and unintelligent way of training the memory. A similar but different flower should be put in the hands and he should be encouraged to note it with the same care, but with the avowed object of noting the similarities and differences. By this practice daily repeated the memory will naturally be trained. Not only so, but the mental centres of comparison and contrast will be developed.31

Judgement will naturally be trained along with the other faculties. At every step the learner will decide- what is the right idea,
measurement, appreciation of colour, sound, scent etc. and what the wrong one is. Sri Aurobindo mentioned the best way to develop correct judgement is to make the boy compare his judgements with those of others. If he is wrong, it should at first be pointed out to him how far he was right and why he went wrong; afterwards he should be encouraged to note these things for himself. Every time he is right, his attention should be prominently and encouragingly called to it so that he may get confidence.

Another mental centre to develop is the centre of analogy, Sri Aurobindo wrote, "The learner will inevitably draw analogies and argue from like to like. He should be encouraged to use this faculty while noticing its limitations and errors. In this way he will be trained to form the habit of correct analogy which is an indispensable aid in the acquisition of knowledge."\(^{32}\)

Another very important and indispensable instrument of the mind is imagination. It may be divided into three functions—the forming of mental images, the power of creating thoughts, images and imitations or new combinations of existing thought and images, and the appreciation of the soul in things, beauty, charm,
greatness, hidden suggestiveness, the emotion and spiritual life that pervades the world.

Again Sri Aurobindo believes that the mental faculties should first be exercised on things, afterwards on words and ideas. Our dealings with language are much too perfect and the absence of a fine sense for words impoverishes the intellect and limits the fineness and truth of its operation. The mind should be accustomed first to notice the word thoroughly, its form, sound and sense; then to compare the form with other similar forming the points of similarity and difference, thus forming the foundation of the grammatical sense, then to distinguish between the fine shades of sense of similar words and the formation and rhythm of different sentences, thus forming the foundation of the literacy and the syntactical faculties. All this should be done informally, drawing on the curiosity and interest, avoiding set teaching and memorizing of rules. The true knowledge takes its base on things, arthas, and only when it has mastered the thing, proceeds to formalize its information.
Psychic education

Man is a complex of the body, life and mind. He has the physical self, the life-self and the mental self. Holding all from behind is the *chaitya purusha*, the care of consciousness individual as a being. This is the psychic being, according to Sri Aurobindo. The psychic being is formed out of a divine essence. First it is a spark of the divine fire. Psychic being is a part of soul which is involved in evolution and develops. We call it ‘*antarātman*’. It is the self that projects something of itself into the movement of evolution and this something is the psychic being.\(^{33}\)

The psychic being is the evolutionary part of the central being, which is an eternal portion of the Divine. “*The Psychic is like the wire between the generation and the lamp.... The Divine is the generator, and the body, the visible being, is the lamp. The function then of the psychic is to contact the two.*”\(^{34}\) So, it is the link between matter and Divine and it is the presence of the psychic being in man that makes it possible to transform the human nature into Divine Nature.

Man is the only being in whom the psychic being is present or developed. Animals or cosmic gods do not have this presence.
Though gods are capable of different cosmic powers they are devoid of or deprived of the psychic experience. In the animal it is not yet developed. Though man is the only creature in this world with this psychic power, hardly conscious of this divine presence in him and seldom desires to profit from it. He is more concerned with his mental ideals, vital demands and physical habits. But once man is conscious of this divine presence in him and hands over the guidance of his life’s journey to this presence, there is no end to his progress.

Psychic education includes the following aspects –

I. Self-confidence, self-reliance and self-realization.

II. Ability to lead others and to be led.

III. Initiative.

IV. Taste for cleanliness and hygienic habits and respect for the rules of hygiene.

V. Respect for healthy, hygienic and beautiful things and dislike for the country.

VI. Love to lead higher and exemplary life.

VII. Love for well-regulated and well-disciplined life, dislike for lethargy, disorder and vandalism.
VIII. Take every happening in life in a playful and sportive spirit, taking victory and defeat with equanimity.

IX. Taking joy in the achievements of oneself, the institution, country and humanity at large.

X. Wholesomeness and essential Integration.

XI. Interest and joy in the work done.

XII. A love for beauty and harmony in the body for its own sake.

When we say physical or vital or mental education we say the education of the respective parts of the individual. But "with psychic education we come to the problem of the true motive of life, the reason of our existence upon earth, the very discovery to which life must lead and the result of that discovery, the concentration of the individual to his eternal principle."

Therefore the aim of psychic education is the discovery of the divine presence, the psychic presence in oneself. This discovery makes clear the purpose of life to evolve from manhood to divine and this discovery also helps to find the direction of life. But this discovery is not easy at all because man is seldom guided by his psychic being. He is usually led by his physical mind or vital mind
or thinking mind, and only sometimes by the psychic mind. Hence the objective of psychic education is to become conscious of the psychic presence in oneself, bring it to the surface and be guided by it. Psychic being is different from all of our limited physical, vital and mental being. Only when we transcend all these limitations, at least momentarily, until it becomes constant, continuous and permanent, can we have the experience of the psychic.

Experience of the psychic is the cause of one’s connection with the universe. It makes able to get out of the darkness of the ego, the I-ness. Once we are able to get rid of this dark room of ego, we are in the open light of universality.

Awakening of the psychic being brings the physical, vital and mental being under control and guides their proper conduct and development. Again, the right education of the body, life and mind leads to the discovery of the psychic. Therefore it is a reciprocal process. The Mother suggests some activities for the discovery of the psychic being:
i. Give up all personal seeking for comfort, satisfaction, enjoyment or happiness. Be duly a burning fire for progress, take whatever comes to you as a help for progress and make at once the progress required.

ii. Try to take pleasure in all you do, but never do anything for the sake of pleasure. Never get excited, nervous or agitated. Remain perfectly quiet in the face of anything and everything. And yet be always awake to find out the progress you have still to make and lose no time in making it.

iii. Never take physical happenings at their face value. They are always a clumsy attempt to express something else, the true thing, which escapes your superficial understanding.

iv. Never complain of the behaviour of anyone, unless you have the power to change in his nature what causes him to behave; and if you have the power change him instead of complaining.

v. Whatever you do, never forget the goal which you have set before you there is nothing small or big in this enterprise of a great discovery; all things are equally
important and can either hasten or delay its success. Thus, before you eat, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the food you will take brings to your body the great discovery, and give it the energy of persistence and perseverance in the effort.

vi. Before you go to bed, concentrate a few seconds in the aspiration that the sleep may restore your fatigued nerves; bring to your brain calmness and quietness, that on waking up you may, with renewed vigour, begin again your journey on the path of the great discovery.

vii. Before you get up, concentrate on the will that your action may help, at least not hinder in any way, your march towards the great discovery.

viii. When you speak, before the words come out of your mouth, concentrate a while just long enough to check you allow those alone that are absolutely necessary and are not in any way harmful to your progress on the path of the great discovery.

The suggestions are only to remind the purpose of life and for the discovery of the psychic being. But the sole purpose of psychic
education is to lead the individual consciousness to his psychic transformation. Psychic transformation implies the integration of the physical, vital and mental around the psychic centre. This may also be called metaphorically "the psychic colorization". The psychic integration does not take place in a day; it is achieved through several stages, and even in several births.

The first step of integration is the discovery of the psychic, the experience of which is unmemorable. One remembers all his past lives and has the experience of living from the beginning of creation; one has lived eternally and is going to live for eternity. This is what Plato called Remembrance. The Remembrance is associated with the experience of an immense joy or bliss which is the product of the sense of deathlessness or immortality. This remembrance is the psychic birth as the scriptures call it. This experience is followed by the sense of the good and the sense of Truth. The psychic, which is an essential portion of the Divine, perceives that there is no evil and no ugliness in this universe; everything is god's creation, everything is beautiful, everything is beneficial, and everything carries god's sweet purpose behind it.
The next step is the contact with the supreme Reality through the mind, heart and the will with an experience of the truth, good and beauty. When it is approached through the thinking mind, there is the impression of the impersonal Reality and the feeling of a Supreme Truth, a Supreme Good, a Supreme Beauty, a Supreme Purity, a Supreme Bliss in the mind. The heart is the psychic being's own centre and hence the contact is direct through love and adoration of the All Beautiful and All Blissful, the All Good, the True, the spiritual Reality of Love. The consecration of the will in works proceeds by a gradual elimination of the ego-will and its motive power of desire. In this way, finally, one feels the Force, or Presence acting within and moving or governing all the actions and the personal will is entirely surrendered or identified with that greatest Truth-will, Truth-power or Truth-presence. The next step is governance from within of all our thoughts, desires and actions with the unerring psychic light.

The last step of the psychic integration and transformation is the exchange of spiritual experience with the cosmic force and consciousness and finally an opening of the lower consciousness to the light and influence of the higher consciousness.
Sri Aurobindo believes that the being of man is composed of these elements— the psychic behind supporting all, the inner mental, vital and physical, and the outer, quite external, nature of mind, life and body which is their instrument of expression. But above all is the central being (jivatman) which uses them all for its manifestation: it is a portion of the Divine Self; but this reality is hidden from the external man, who replaces this innermost self and soul of himself by the mental and vital ego. Though few persons are aware about their true central being, it is always there, standing behind the action of mind, life and body and most directly represented by the psychic which is itself a spark of the Divine. It is by the growth of the psychic element in one's nature that one begins to come into conscious touch with one's central being above. When that happens and the central being uses a conscious will to control and organize the movements of the nature, it is then that one has a real self-mastery, a spiritual, as opposed to a partial and merely mental or moral one.
Spiritual Education

Psychic transformation leads to another kind of experience which is known as spiritual education. Spiritual education is not to devote education for spiritual values only. It should lead to the discovery of the spirit and identification with it. In that sense psychic education is also a form of spiritual education. Spiritual transformation is the raising the consciousness to the spiritual heights and bringing down the higher consciousness into the lower.

Now the question is: what is the spiritual being? The central being has two aspects – one that participates in the evolutionary process, known as the Kshara Purusha or the psychic being and the other which does not participate in the evolutionary process but presides over the destiny of the individual the Askhara Purusha, otherwise know as the Jīvātman or the spiritual being.

The Mother distinguishes between psychic life and spiritual consciousness as follows – "So one can say the psychic life is immortal life, endless time, limitless space, ever progressive change, unbroken continuity in the universe of forms. The spiritual consciousness on the other hand means to live the infinite and the
eternal, to be projected beyond all creation, beyond time and space. To become conscious of your psychic being and to live a psychic life you must abolish all egoism, but to live a spiritual life you must no longer have an ego.  

Spiritual education is becoming conscious of the presence of spiritual Being. It is the spiritual transformation. The spiritual transformation is said to have begun in a person when his vision opens to something above him and his consciousness rises up towards it and its power descends into his being. This opening of vision helps the mind to rise into a higher plane of pure self, silent, tranquil, illimitable, or it rises into regions of Light, or of Felicity, or into planes where it feels an infinite power or a divine presence on experiencing the contact of a divine Love or Beauty or the atmosphere of a wider and luminous knowledge. Therefore it is the unity of the ascent mind and descent higher consciousness. The final culmination of spiritual transformation is achieved when the end of the consciousness fixes itself on a higher plane and from there sees and governs the mind, life and body. While the psychic transformation is a process of deepening and widening the consciousness, spiritual transformation is a process of
heightening the consciousness and bringing down the higher consciousness into the lower.

Knowledge, according to Sri Aurobindo, is the same as Brähman, the one, the eternal, the infinite and harmonious. The integral knowledge is already there in the integral reality. It is neither a new nor a still non-existent thing that has to be created or acquired by the mind. It is only to be discovered or uncovered. It is the truth which is veiled there in our deeper and greater self. It is self revealed to a spiritual endeavour. It is the very stuff of our spiritual consciousness, and it is by walking to it even in our surface self that we can possess it. He writes, “...the real knowledge is that which is a recreate to the mind, of which the mind only yet reflections, but which lives in the spirit.”\textsuperscript{37} Therefore ultimately only spiritual education leads to the integral knowledge.

**General Estimate**

Regarding the aim of education we have seen that both Bertrand Russell and Sri Aurobindo are different in their aims. When Russell has very practically claimed that the universal aim of education is character formation, for Sri Aurobindo it is the human perfection. Though Sri Aurobindo developed his view in the aspect of the
spiritual, it is an integral view of life. Both of them demanded for the all round development of the individual from different points of view. But here we can say that the Russell’s aim of all round development through character formation is a part of Sri Aurobindo’s aim. Character formation is a part of human perfection. For the formation of the individual character Russell has developed four criteria, viz. vitality, courage, sensation and intelligence. On the other hand Sri Aurobindo’s human perfection is followed by five types of education, viz. physical education, vital education, mental education, psychic education and spiritual education. For Russell vitality is rather a physiological than a mental characteristic. For Sri Aurobindo it is the life-force – without the vital there can be no life in matter and no living action. Russell has discussed life in two senses—individual life and social life. Individual life is concerned with the person himself with his full possibilities. Social life is the life related to the society, nation and the common human being. But Sri Aurobindo’s individual life is not limited to the respective individual. It is related to the full purpose and scope of his own life as well as community to which he belongs and lastly, with the nation. Russell pointed the purpose of education to form the mind on one hand, and on the other hand to train the citizen. But here we should be clear that by the term citizen
Russell does not limit it in a country only. Instead, by the word, Russell implies the world citizen.

Russell's educational ideas are derived from psychological and behaviourist viewpoint in social touch. Sri Aurobindo also considered the proper study of human mind. For him the true basis of education is the proper study of human mind.

From the above point we have seen that Russell's concept of education is based on realistic philosophy of education while Sri Aurobindo's one is idealistic in nature. Sri Aurobindo holds that the aim of education is the same as the aim of life. And the aim of life is human perfection, the realization of the Divine. But Russell is realistic in the sense that his concept of philosophy of education is rational and it is for the good of the universal human society. It is to overcome the miseries of the individual and the society. Russell defined education as the information, by means of instruction, of certain mental habits and a certain outlook on life and the world.
References

1 Russell, B: On Education, p-34
2 Russell, B: A Free Man's Worship and Other Essays, p-52
3 Op-cit, p-11
4 Sri Aurobindo & The Mother: On Education, p-19
5 Sri Aurobindo: SABCL vol. 17 p-198
6 Ibid, p-205
7 Sri Aurobindo- The Brain of India, p-7
8 Ibid, p-5
9 Frankena, William K: Philosophy of Education p-47
10 Ibid, p-39
11 Russell, B: Principles of Social Reconstruction, p-100
12 Russell, B: On Education, p-42
13 Educational Philosophy of Bertrand Russell p-121
14 Russell, B: On Education, p-50
15 Ibid, p-55
16 Ibid
17 Russell, B: Education and social order p21
18 Russell, B: The Scientific Outlook, p-199
19 Op-cit, p-10
20Ibid, p-20

21Sri Aurobindo: CWM, vo12, p-25

22A New Approach to Education p-35

23Sri Aurobindo and the Mother: On Education (ed.) By the department of physical education, Pondicherry, P-4

24Ibid p 7

25Ibid p 7

26Ibid p 14

27CWM 12 P-6 and cited in Saraswati, A.V: Integral Education: Thought and Practice P-314

28Saraswati, A.V: Integral Education: Thought and Practice, p-315

29Sri Aurobindo and The Mother: A new Education for a new consciousness P-79

30Sri Aurobindo & the Mother: On Education, P-44

31Ibid,p-45

32Ibid,P-47

33Dowsett, N.C. Psychology for Future Education, p-204

34Saraswati, A.V: Integral Education: Thought and Practice, p-389
35 Ibid., p. 399

36 Ibid., p. 399

37 Sri Aurobindo: Essays on the Gita, pp. 194-95