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RELEVANCE OF JIDDU KRISHNAMURTI'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

NEELIMA DHINGRA*

RESEARCH SCHOLAR, INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION AND RESEARCH
MANGALAYATAN UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH (U.P.)

DR. YATENDRA PAL**

ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR
MANGALAYATAN UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH (U.P.)

ABSTRACT: Jiddu Krishnamurti, a liberated soul, is regarded as one of the most revolutionary philosophers of the twentieth century. He was a critic who devoted his entire life to raising the standard of living for people and had a profound impact on consciousness. He was a cynic of the present education system. He presented an unconventional and novel perspective in education and termed it as 'Right education' that enables an individual to perceive truth. Right education helps a child in a way to understand himself. Jiddu Krishnamurti believed that education should focus on preparing students for their entire lives, rather than just a portion of it (like vocation). Education should enable one to experience mental independence and courage. He stressed much importance on self-knowledge and self-discovery. He criticized competition, ambition, authority; instead favoured love, goodness, care, compassion. Role of good teachers in shaping the child's life was mentioned in Krishnamurti's teachings. Throughout his life, he worked to awaken human beings and stressed on inner transformation and liberation of mankind. After 1986, a gap of almost three decades, in India New Education Policy was announced in 2020. In many ways, the National Education Policy 2020 imitates the educational thoughts of Jiddu Krishnamurti. This study tried to find out the relevance of the educational philosophy of Jiddu Krishnamurti in the context of NEP 2020.

Keywords: *National Education Policy (NEP), Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SGT4), Jiddu Krishnamurti, Educational Philosophy, Right Education*

INTRODUCTION

Jiddu Krishnamurti, a revolutionary thinker of the twentieth century was an iconoclast who dedicated his entire life for raising the standard of living for people. As his world view, his approach to education was completely new. He challenged the current educational system. Through his educational thoughts, he focused on constructing a society based on conscious soul willing to give birth to a new culture, prepared to accept changes. Krishnamurti's vision on education can be simply stated that: help the children to understand themselves by exploring the psychological issues of life and enable them to uncover their undiscovered pleasures of life, which

transcend society, religion, and education. Provide the children with religious education, help them to learn constantly and to take every event in their life as a learning opportunity whether it is success, fear, conflict, jealousy, disappointment, etc. Krishnamurti viewed education as an instrument of liberation which could provide the right direction to one's life.

Krishnamurti strongly opposed the ideas of competition, ambition, rewards, and punishments because, according to him, they create hindrance in the path of learning about 'self' and 'life'. Moreover, they breed envy, resentment, hatred, enmity, and wars in the long run. The purpose of education, in Krishnamurti's view, is to cure a child of the mindset of comparison or competition. This is the competitive attitude that motivates ambition, ambition makes them mechanical, forces them to attain the highest position or makes them aloof. The examination is one factor among many, it teaches a child a sense of superior or inferiority. So, this is also a duty of teachers collectively to neutralize the ill effect of examination. Examinations, success, reward, and punishment in school unintentionally develop unpleasant feelings such as competition and jealousy in young impressionable minds. Krishnamurti favoured curiosity, inquiry, analysis, rational thought, alertness, awareness, and observation. The worst thing, according to Krishnamurti, is to grow up mediocre. Present education system is not for all round development but supports lopsided growth which further leads mediocrity.

Jiddu Krishnamurti wanted man to be a fearless seeker of truth as well as a lover of goodness and beauty; however, he never proposed any path for seeking truth. He sought to make every individual a truth-seeker in himself, without the assistance of any institution or guru. He was not in favour of any guru or book that is specifically designed to approach the truth. He always said: a school can't perform rightly unless the idea of employee and employer is abolished. Employer's authoritative nature forces the employees to be mechanical. Abolition of employee employer relationship refers no authority i.e., division vanished which further leads proper teaching. Hierarchy does not mean authority. Hierarchy is necessary to maintain the order. Coordination and cooperation among teachers are the prerequisite. It can be seen in Krishnamurti's views i.e., *'to run a school where theories are wiped out, everyone is indulged to produce a new generation of people, a sense of deep communion is established, and children are looked after'*. Krishnamurti, adored by theosophists as their World-Teacher, stunned the world with a dramatic public renunciation of his status of 'Guru'. But Krishnamurti emphasised independence and freethinking in his denial of 'authority' and 'Guru.' According to Krishnamurti, *'There is no need for any discipline, instructor, guru, or system, to realise the great mystery of life'*.

Krishnamurti was not at all satisfied with the present education system and the quality of education provided by it. He stated in his essay, *when educational systems fail to prepare conscious individuals, it results in increasing damage and suffering. While governments teach the next generation to be the effective technologists and warriors they require; Regimentation and prejudice are fostered and enforced. We must evaluate these truths when considering the relevance and goal of our lives as well as the meaning of existence. Since the environment can either turn a youngster into a brute or help him develop into a sensitive, intellectual human being, we must learn how to create new environments in a beneficial way* (Krishnamurti,1950). He observed that current education system emphasized technical and intellectual knowledge while ignoring the deeper aspects of human nature. *The current educational system, according to Krishnamurti, is making us subservient, mechanical, and deeply thoughtless; though it awakens us intellectually, it leaves us internally incomplete, stultified, and without creativity* (J. Krishnamurti,1973). He claims that instead of 'awakening the intelligence' the present educational system around the world is making people uncreative, insensitive, and promoting mediocrity by fostering conformity. It focuses on external aspects of man while leaving him hollow from within. The traditional education system emphasises acquiring technical skills but does not enable men to understand and address their underlying psychological concerns and spiritual enlightenment. Even In 1922, when Krishnamurti travelled to University of California, Berkeley. Krishnamurti was enchanted to see the institution's noticeable environment of freedom and equality. When he returned from California University, he wrote a letter to Lady Emily: *"for such a university to be transplanted to India, without professors for whom religion is as important, if not greater, as [sic] education"*. (Krishnamurti, 1922).

Krishnamurti prioritizes two thoughts i.e., "Holistic growth of child" and "Educating the educators" i.e., Empowering yourself. As per Krishnamurti, *if I transform myself, it will affect the mankind even if I belonged to Russia or India...To transform the world, there must be regeneration within us* (Krishnamurti,1953).

Krishnamurti advocated for a holistic approach to education, as opposed to our current educational system, which emphasises only specific mental faculties while completely ignoring the finer aspects of man's characteristics. He believed that the unconscious mind should be considered in addition to the conscious mind. For Krishnamurti, education is far more than just acquiring facts and knowledge from books; he believed that intelligence comes only through consciousness, which is understanding one's entire psychological process.

KRISHNAMURTI'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY

Krishnamurti's 'Educational Philosophy' reflects his philosophy of life. His philosophy of life as well as that of education is the result of his 'Perception of Truth'. Krishnamurti argued in favour of a system of education that may help a mechanical human body develop a conscious mind and heart as it is necessary to have these to understand the social structure and social functions.

"Education is both curative and preventive" (Krishnamurti, 1962). Krishnamurti believed that the true purpose of education was to help the adult mind unconditioned itself as well as to understand the daily process of living so that one could develop in freedom and create a new world—a world that had to be entirely distinct from the one we currently live in. Krishnamurti stated that *the real job of education is not to transform you into a clerk or a judge, but to enable you to grow in freedom and grasp the entire structure of this corrupt society, so that you will break away and build a new world—one not founded on avarice, power, and prestige* (Krishnamurti, 1962). Education was the first and last love of Krishnamurti's life. While he himself abhorred book-learning, was caned in school for not learning his lessons and could never clear his matriculation, not even after a lot of private tuition and three attempts (in his third attempt he submitted blank papers), he still had an honorary degree conferred upon him by Benares Hindu University on 13 December 1921. And, he has set up eight schools in his lifetime, the first being the Rishi Valley School. He firmly believed that the only hope for the world lies in correct education of children and this education must start at a very early age. He wanted children to be brought up without any feeling of racism, cultural traditions and not even nationalism. He was also against any kind of competition or division between the children. Krishnamurti was far more concerned with the quality of the heart and mind in education, rather than the content. He viewed intelligence as a vital universal force. His approach to education was to awaken such intelligence in the young before a child becomes conditioned by customs, tradition and by the society. In that sense, the role of teachers is to become enablers in an environment of empathy and love, rather than authorities on the subjects they taught.

AIMS OF EDUCATION

According to J. Krishnamurti, education is a lifelong process. He asserts, *to understand life, is to know oneself, and this is both the foundation and the goal of education. It helps us to know what we are living for. Education aims to educate an individual about his own 'self' and to awaken his 'intelligence and sensitivity'* (Krishnamurti, 1950). Krishnamurti believes that true learning comes with the abolition of fear, obedience, and authority. So, the aim of education should be freedom from fear. Education helps us to understand a higher and wider significance of life.

"The real function of education is to help you, from childhood, to be yourself all the time" (Krishnamurti, 1962). According to Krishnamurti, the true function of education is to liberate a child from any form of bondage. Education, according to Krishnamurti, should emphasise the awakening of intelligence.

Another aim of education is to create a truly religious man and to create new values (Krishnamurti, 1950) Krishnamurti denies the aim of education as the flourishing of virtues and excellent personal integrity; rather, he prefers to nurture the quality of love. According to him, education must aim to make pupils so capable that they can themselves discover their true vocation in life.

True education is assisting the individual in becoming mature and liberated, to substantially blossom in love and goodness. Education should assist each person in identifying any psychological barriers (Krishnamurti, 1950). He has talked about two instruments available to human beings. One was knowledge and the other was intelligence. Knowledge enables one to gain mastery over technical skills whereas intelligence is born out of observation and self-knowing.

RIGHT EDUCATION

Once Krishnamurti said: *Unless you fundamentally change, the future would be what you are right now. Only when young people receive the right kind of inclusive education can such a major transformation arise.* Krishnamurti also said that *the right form of education is the awakening of intelligence, the nurturing of a holistic life, and only such education can create an entirely new culture and a peaceful world* (Krishnamurti, 1950). We know that once a student's intelligence awakens, or when their sense of self vanishes, there won't be any more distractions for them. So, if teachers impart right kind of education, it must approach the awakening of intelligence. He envisioned an educational system that would assist a young mind in realising his or her full potential. The current educational system teaches a child to accommodate in with society rather than to establish a new society. According to Krishnamurti, the true role of education is not only to assist the human mind to unconditioned itself, but also to grasp the entire process of existence from day to day so that one can grow in freedom and build a new world, completely different from the existing one.

CURRICULUM

Krishnamurti encouraged the cultivation of the finer aspects of life in terms of the aesthetic, emotional and spiritual development of the students. He proposed art and craft should be included in the curriculum, besides academic subjects. Dance, music, and culture hold a key position in the curriculum propagated by him. Krishnamurti laid great emphasis on 'art of Listening'. He emphasized a curriculum where the art of listening is understood and developed. Students should do hands-on activities like gardening, carpentry, painting etc. In his schools, subjects are not taught ironically to pass examinations but are deeply connected to the individual's life by being co-related with 'self' to make them meaningful.

METHODS OF TEACHING/LEARNING

There are two types of knowledge—technical knowledge (or scientific and factual knowledge) and psychological knowledge. Krishnamurti doesn't deny applying any method in classroom in terms of technical expertise. However, less methodology is appropriate when it comes to imparting psychological knowledge that deals with relationships and outlook. Krishnamurti was a staunch critic of traditional learning methods. He believed that methods can never be fixed in advance. He claimed that academic subjects like history, geography, and mathematics should be taught in a natural setting that allows for self-observation. He advocated for heuristic and active methods. The lecture style makes learning tedious. He went against the convention that the teacher knows everything, and the student is merely there to receive because he knows nothing. Krishnamurti argued that for learning methods and curriculums, both teachers and students must assist one another in considering details and making understanding from all subjects with an open mind.

DISCIPLINE

Discipline, according to J. Krishnamurti, is the process of forcing one to do something one does not want to do. Coercion, resistance, compulsion, forcing, or pressurizing someone to do it by offering a reward are all examples of discipline. Discipline brings fear; it is not the way of love. Hence, discipline should be avoided.

ROLE OF TEACHER

In his entire life Krishnamurti experienced that in the shaping of child life the good teachers play an important role. But Krishnamurti himself refused to be anyone's guru. He didn't want people to just obey him without thinking. According to J. Krishnamurti, the appropriate sort of education starts with the teacher who is free from the pre-existing thought patterns. The teacher should cultivate the spirit of inquiry and encourage the student to think independently. Krishnamurti said that *to condemn anything is the most foolish course of action, instead of condemning hatred, you should consider how dislike, hatred, etc. are created* (Krishnamurti, 1954). He also said that *the understanding of all these problems of the whole process involved there in is education* (Krishnamurti, 1954). So, for him Education plays an important role. The sole motto of a teacher should be to

assist students in developing a good mind—one that is able to deal with life's numerous challenges head-on and does not want to run away from them. Krishnamurti asserts that a teacher must help a student overcome their tendency toward comparison or rivalry. The examination is one of many factors that instils in a child's mind a sense of superiority or inferiority. It is the collective responsibility of teachers to mitigate the negative effects of examination. A teacher should help a student to attain a good mind capable of dealing with numerous problems of life. The role of a teacher is to ensure that the parents' involvement at home does not disrupt whatever good has been accomplished at the school.

Every teacher should feel confident in the knowledge that they are taken care of, free from financial concerns... If the teacher is unhappy, his focus will be split, and he won't be able to use all his abilities (Krishnamurti,1979). Krishnamurti emphasized that the teacher should be free from the worry of the economic problem. He said innumerable times that we should keep the teachers safe and secure. A teacher who is free from all types of problems can enjoy his teaching in a real sense.

THE ROLE OF PARENTS

According to Krishnamurti, *a kid cannot fully develop until there is a positive relationship between the parent, the student, and the teacher* (Krishnamurti, 1961). Krishnamurti was very much concerned about the parental effect on their children as parents play an important role in the children's upbringing. Parents should be wise enough to know and consider the mission and vision of the school. Parents need to understand their role because home itself is the first school of a child. Parents and teachers both have a role in educating children. Two centres of right education i.e., the home and the school play their central role to prepare very strong foundation for life-long journey. So, there should not be any misunderstanding between the heads of two institutions of right education. They must master the skill of cooperating. For the holistic development of child there must be ordination between teachers and parents. According to him, parents should possess certain fundamental attributes that will stimulate the sensitive mind of their children. Since the school and home environments should not be too dissimilar, parents and teachers should re-educate themselves. Parents should not undo the good work that has been done at the school. There should not be any contradiction between the influence of parents and schools.

ROLE OF SCHOOL

Jiddu Krishnamurti, a well acknowledged, one of the most respected teachers in the world, dedicated his entire life to educating people about their own training and possibility for freedom. School has special place in Krishnamurti's life. He always favoured establishments of small schools. He believed that though it is little difficult to run these schools economically, but the flourishing of a school never depends on its finance. Instead, it is the willingness to sacrifice oneself. The goal of Krishnamurti's schools is to educate the whole person. According to Krishnamurti, a school is a place to learn, not only a place to gather information. He also believed that There should be leisure time in school so that students can inquire about both what is happening inside and outside around them. The environment of the school should be that of love and care. Krishnamurti is very much concerned with the security of children in the premises of the school, and so, he wants the school to be a place where a student can feel at home. He stated, *A school, after all, is a place where the student is fundamentally happy, not tormented, not afraid of exams, and not required to perform in a certain way, according to a system. He declared, in this setting, the art of learning is taught. The pupil cannot learn this art if he is not happy* (Krishnamurti, 1979). Krishnamurti was not satisfied with the performance of educational centres. He opposed the idea of employee and employer as this idea of superiority and authority inhibits a school to perform rightly.

KRISHNAMURTI'S EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY IN THE CONTEXT OF NATIONAL EDUCATION POLICY 2020

To build a new system that is in line with the aspirational goals of 21st-century education, including SDG4, the National Education Policy 2020, the first education policy of the twenty-first century, recommends the revision and redesigning of all parts of the educational framework. This is a comprehensive and concise policy document that meets present educational needs in a changing global scenario while attempting to protect and

foster India's socio-economic and cultural values. In many aspects and ways, Krishnamurti's educational thoughts have been reflected in the new NEP 2020.

SDG 4

The education goal, Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), aims to 'promote inclusive and equitable quality education and foster lifelong learning opportunities for all'. SDG 4 consists of ten targets that must be accomplished in the upcoming years, including equal access to high-quality pre-primary education, free primary and secondary education, and affordable technical, vocational, and higher education.

EXAMINATION SYSTEM

Krishnamurti criticized the traditional examination system. He said, "*Just to stuff the children with a large amount of information, rendering him pass exams, is probably the most unintelligent type of education*". The examination is one of many factors that instils in a child's mind a sense of superiority or inferiority. It is the collective responsibility of teachers to mitigate the negative effects of examination. He advocated for day-to-day assessment system.

Likewise, the NEP 2020 has placed a strong emphasis on 'frequent formative assessment for learning rather than the summative testing that supports today's coaching culture' (NEP, 2020, p.5).

TEACHER-TAUGHT RATIO

Krishnamurti points out the theme teacher-taught ratio in these words: *When a teacher is overpowered by vast and unmanageable numbers, it is nearly impossible for them to have an important and personal contact with their students.* (Krishnamurti, 1955). He talks about the teacher-taught ratio in the class and its impact on the teaching learning process in minute detail. The bigger teacher-student ratio is a hindrance in the classroom as it leads to monologue which further results in isolation and average development of the children. In a packed classroom, it teaches 'what to think', whereas in an unfilled one, students are taught 'how to think'. So uncrowded classrooms are the sine qua non of joyful teaching and learning.

Likewise, the NEP 2020 also has given much emphasis on pupil-teacher ratio. '*At the level of each school, a pupil-teacher ratio (PTR) of under 30:1 will be ensured; regions with high proportions of socioeconomically disadvantaged kids will aim for a PTR of under 25:1*'.

TEACHER

Krishnamurti stressed the significant role of teachers in the building of child's life. Teachers should be free from financial problems. He believed that teachers could give their best when they are free from worries. The NEP 2020 recommends career growth of teachers in terms of salary increase, promotion etc. One of the fundamental principles on teachers: *Teachers and professors are at the centre of the educational process; NEP places a strong emphasis on their recruitment and conducive working environments, their professional growth, and service terms* (NEP, 2020, p.6).

HOLISTIC DEVELOPMENT

Krishnamurti advocated for the holistic development of a child. According to him, *education is not merely acquiring knowledge, gathering, and learning facts, it also entails understanding the value of one's life.* Echoing Krishnamurti, the National Education Policy 2020 in one of the fundamental principles also recommends that *to promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic realms is the purpose of education* (NEP, 2020, p.6).

EXPERIENTIAL LEARNING

Krishnamurti stressed hands-on activities like gardening, carpeting etc. His ideas are in consonance with the National Education Policy 2020. In addition, this policy suggests that *Experiential learning will be adopted in all stages, including hands-on learning, arts- and sports-integrated education, and story-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relationships among different subjects.*

LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

Krishnamurti preached that *education should be presented to the children as an environment – a free environment – where children learn to grow in psychological freedom to create new values* (Krishnamurti, 1950). According to him, the school should be the place where students can feel safe and secure so that their minds can work without being shackled by fear. In the same line, the National Education Policy 2020 also focuses on supporting and optimal learning environments. According to the NEP 2020, some of the guidelines are *a good educational institution is one in which every student feels welcomed and cared for, where there is an environment that is safe and stimulating for learning* (NEP, 2020, p.5).

Flexibility is necessary so that students can select their educational paths and programmes and, in effect, design their own course in life in accordance with their interests and talents; (NEP, 2020, p.6).

‘Several initiatives will be needed to guarantee that learning environments are engaging and supportive and enable all students to succeed, in addition to providing the necessary resources and infrastructure, such as high-quality libraries, classrooms, labs, technology, sports/recreation areas, student discussion spaces, and dining areas’ (NEP, 2020, p.39, 12.1).

NO HIERARCHY OF KNOWLEDGE

He advocated that methodology and pedagogy should ensure no hierarchy of knowledge. Arts, crafts, dance, music, sports should be included in the curriculum. His thought is reflected in the lines of the National Education Policy 2020, *There should be no hard divisions between the arts and sciences, curricular and extracurricular activities, vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to remove silos and damaging hierarchies across various fields of learning* (NEP, 2020, p.5).

INTEGRATED EDUCATION

The emphasis of the National Education Policy 2020 on integrated education resonates with the educational thoughts of Krishnamurti. Krishnamurti says: *The purpose of education is to create a whole person who can deal with life intelligently—not just in part* (Krishnamurti, 1948). So, a person who attains self-realization must be an integrated one. Without being integrated, self-realization is impossible. *The purpose of education, according to Krishnamurti, is to produce integrated, intelligent humans.* (Krishnamurti, 1955). Krishnamurti believes that once a student's intelligence awakens, or when their sense of self vanishes, there won't be any more distractions for them. The NEP 2020 has also given importance to integrated education saying, *A holistic and multidisciplinary education would attempt to develop all human beings' capacities in an integrated way, including intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral* (NEP, 2020, p.36).

CREATIVITY AND CRITICAL THINKING

Krishnamurti criticized the traditional education system as it makes uncreative people. He emphasized creativity, critical thinking. Instead of emphasising ‘what to think’, he placed emphasis on ‘how to think’. His ideas have been echoed in the lines of the NEP 2020, *‘Therefore, education must shift away from teaching knowledge and toward teaching students how to think critically, resolve problems, be creative and multidisciplinary, as well as how to be innovate, adapt, and take in new information in domains that are new and evolving’* (NEP, 2020, p.36).

The NEP 2020 has given importance *‘on the development of the creative potential of each individual’* (NEP, 2020, p.4).

PRESERVATION OF NATURE

Krishnamurti laid much importance on nature. Right kind of education helps to live in peace with the environment and the entire planet. He stated, *each will lose his relationship with mankind and further sustainability if the teacher and the student lose their relationship to nature, to the trees, to the flowing sea* (Krishnamurti, 1983, p-194). The NEP 2020 also recommends that education should cultivate sensitivity towards nature and life as the aim of education. NEP 2020 also makes it mandatory for children to spend some time in the nature.

COMPASSION RATHER THAN AMBITION

Krishnamurti was a staunch critic of competition, ambition; he favoured compassion, love, and care. NEP also has given the emphasis on creating human beings with the qualities of rationality, compassion, empathy, resilience, scientific temper, and creativity along with upholding of ethics and values. The NEP's guiding principle: *ethical and constitutional principles such as justice, liberty, responsibility, pluralism, equality, and respect for others; respect for public property; cleanliness; civility; a sense of democracy; a spirit of service; and respect for ethics and human values* (NEP, 2020, p.6).

CONCLUSION

Krishnamurti's writings as well as talks not only cover the entire gamut of education but also work as a torchbearer, guide the teacher as well as taught about a way of life and brings clarity of mind. Krishnamurti's philosophy of education is still very much relevant in today's world of artificial intelligence and machine learning. Krishnamurti's teachings help us to read our own life, its various chapters, and innumerable hidden pages. He intended that education should equip an individual in such a way that he or she can cope with day-to-day problems and find solutions in his or her own way. Krishnamurti advocated for a safe and secure learning environment, holistic development in the child, integrated education, no hierarchy of knowledge, and external as well as internal development of human being. His ideas are very much reflected in the latest National Education Policy 2020. With the implementation of the National Education Policy 2020, Krishnamurti's vision of creating a new mind, a new human being and a new society will become a reality. Like His teachings, NEP encourages individuals to maximise the development of their unique talents and abilities.

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