



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

## RELEVANCE OF EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF KRISHNAMURTI IN THE LIGHT OF NATIONAL POLICY OF EDUCATION 2020

Sunipa Ghosh Dastidar

Research Scholar, Department of Education

Rabindra Bharati University, Kolkata

### Abstract

Jiddu Krishnamurti, a revolutionary thinker of the twentieth century, has an immense influence on human consciousness. He was a critic 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. He stressed much importance on self-knowledge and self-discovery. He criticised competition, ambition, authority; instead favoured love, goodness, care, compassion. Throughout his life, he worked to awaken human beings. He stressed on inner transformation and liberation of mankind. After a gap of almost three decades, in India New Education Policy was announced in 2020. In many ways, the National Education Policy 2020 echoes the educational thoughts of J. Krishnamurti. This study tried to find out the relevance of the educational philosophy of Krishnamurti in the context of NEP 2020.

*Keywords:* J. Krishnamurti, National Education Policy, educational philosophy, right education

### INTRODUCTION

Jiddu Krishnamurti, a liberated soul, is regarded as one of the most revolutionary philosophers of the twentieth century. He was an iconoclast who dedicated his entire life to the improvement of the quality of life of human beings. His approach to education is completely new, as his world view, and he challenges the current educational system. He seeks to establish a system with new sets of values, new minds, new human beings and new society. Krishnamurti regarded education as a tool for emancipation that might guide one's life in the right direction. He proposed a kind of education that could lead a man towards liberation. He focused his educational ideas on creating a society of awakened spirits eager to give birth to a new culture and willing to embrace change. To him, education is knowing one's own self, as the whole of the 'existence is gathered' within each individual.

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. 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.

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. Krishnamurti, revered by theosophists as their World-Teacher, stunned the world with a dramatic public renunciation of his status of 'Guru'. Krishnamurti emphasised independence and freethinking in his denial of 'authority' and 'Guru.' There is no need for any discipline, instructor, guru, or system, according to Krishnamurti, 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. Krishnamurti says, "The present system of education is making us subservient, mechanical and deeply thoughtless; though it awakens us intellectually, inwardly it leaves us incomplete, stultified and uncreative" (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. He observed that current education system emphasized technical and intellectual knowledge while ignoring the deeper aspects of human nature. 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. The emphasis is on external materialistic gains like riches, power, and position, with little attention paid to the individual's inner growth and spiritual enlightenment.

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. This leads to fragmentation of knowledge in man's mind and eventually creates conflict and confusion. According to him, not only the conscious mind but also the unconscious mind should be considered. 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.

## **EDUCATIONAL PHILOSOPHY OF KRISHNAMURTI**

Krishnamurti's 'Educational Philosophy' is a reflection of his philosophy of life. His philosophy of life as well as that of education is the result of his 'Perception of Truth'. Krishnamurti advocated for an educational system that could aid in the development of a conscious mind and heart in a mechanical human body as it is necessary to have a conscious mind and heart in order to understand the social structure and social functions.

### **Aims of education**

According to J. Krishnamurti, education aims to educate an individual about his own "self" and to awaken his "intelligence and sensitivity." 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. 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.

### **Right education**

Krishnamurti says, "the right kind of education means the awakening of intelligence, the fostering of an integrated life, and only such education can create a new culture and a peaceful world"(Krishnamurti, 1950). He envisioned an educational system that would assist a young mind in realising his or her full potential. Education is both curative and preventive (Krishnamurti, 1962). 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 uncondition 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. To create values is another most important function of

education as per Krishnamurti. Right education is that which motivates and encourages the observation of 'life' and 'self' on the part of the learner to eliminate fear. The idea is that true education begins with acceptance and eradication of the negative so that the positive can establish itself.

### **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 were advocated by him and these 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 dryly in order to pass examinations but are deeply connected to the individual's life by being co-related with 'self' to make them meaningful.

### **Methods of learning**

J. 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.

### **Role of school**

According to Krishnamurti, a school is place of learning and not merely a place for accumulating knowledge. He believed that there should be leisure in school to enquire not only outside what is happening around us, also to enquire what is happening inside. The environment of the school should be that of love and care. Krishnamurti is very much concerned with the security of children in school and he wants the school to be place where a student can feel at home when he lives on the premise of that school. He said, "a school after all is a place where the student is basically happy, not bullied, not frightened by examinations, not compelled to act according to a pattern, a system. It is a place where the art of learning is being taught. If the student is not happy, he is incapable of learning this art." (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.

### **Role of teacher**

The role of good teachers in shaping the child's life was mentioned by Krishnamurti throughout his life J. Krishnamurti says that the right kind of education begins with the educator who is free from the established patterns of thought. The teacher should encourage the student to think independently and cultivate the spirit of inquiry. Krishnamurti 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. He emphasized that the teacher should be free from the worry of the economic problem. "Every teacher should feel secure in the sense of being cared for, without financial worries...If the teacher is not happy, his attention will be divided and he will be incapable of exercising his entire capacity (Krishnamurti,1979). According to Krishnamurti, a teacher has to cure the spirit of competition or comparison in a child. The examination is one of many factors that instil 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 as a whole. 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.

### **The role of parents**

Krishnamurti was very much concerned about the parental effect on their children as parents play an important role in the children's upbringing. He emphasized that parents should take an active role in collaborating with the school to create a free mind. Otherwise, they would erase all of the good that had been done to the students. According to him, parents should possess certain fundamental attributes that will stimulate the sensitive mind of their children. Parents and teachers should re-educate themselves since the school and home environments should not be too dissimilar. 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.

### **Discipline**

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

### **KRISHNAMURTI AND NEP 2020**

The NEP 2020 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, Krishnamurti's educational thoughts have been reflected in the new NEP 2020.

### **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. The NEP 2020 documents, "a good education institution is one in which every student feels welcomed and cared for, where a safe and stimulating learning environment exists"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 function of education is to create human beings who are integrated and therefore intelligent(Krishnamurti, 1955). The NEP 2020 has also given importance to integrated education saying, "a holistic and multidisciplinary education would aim to develop all capacities of human beings -intellectual, aesthetic, social, physical, emotional, and moral in an integrated manner"p.36.

### **Creativity and critical thinking**

Krishnamurti criticized that the traditional education system makes uncreative people. He emphasized creativity, critical thinking. He laid emphasis on 'how to think' rather than 'what to think'. His ideas have been echoed in the lines of the NEP 2020, "education thus, must move towards less content, and more towards learning about how to think critically and solve problems, how to be creative and multidisciplinary, and how to innovate, adapt, and absorb new material in novel and changing fields" (NEP,2020,p.36) The NEP 2020 has given importance 'on the development of the creative potential of each individual.'(NEP,2020,p.4)

### **Experiential learning**

Krishnamurti stressed hands-on activities like gardening, carpentering etc. His ideas are in consonance with the National Education Policy 2020. This policy also recommends, "In all stages, experiential learning will be adopted, including hands-on learning, arts-integrated and sports-integrated education, story-telling-based pedagogy, among others, as standard pedagogy within each subject, and with explorations of relations among different subjects."

### **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". He advocated for day-to-day assessment system. Likewise, the NEP 2020 also has given much emphasis "on regular formative assessment for learning rather than the summative assessment that encourages today's 'coaching culture'" (NEP,2020,p.5).



### **Preservation of nature**

Krishnamurti laid much importance on nature. He said, "If the educator and the student lose their relationship to nature, to the trees, to the rolling sea, each will certainly lose his relationship with humanity and further sustainability" (Krishnamurti, 1983, p.194). The NEP 2020 also recommends that education should cultivate sensitivity towards nature and life as the aim of education.

### **Teacher**

Krishnamurti stressed the significant role of teachers. Teachers should be free from financial problems. He believed that a teacher can give his or her best when he or she is free from worries. He said, "every teacher should feel secure in the sense of being cared for, without financial worries...If the teacher is not happy, his attention will be divided and he will be incapable of exercising his entire capacity" (Krishnamurti, 1979). The NEP 2020 recommends career growth of teachers in terms of salary increase, promotion etc.

### **Holistic development**

Krishnamurti advocated for the holistic development of a child. He said, "education is not merely acquiring knowledge, gathering and corresponding facts, it is to see the significance of life as a whole." Echoing Krishnamurti, the National Education Policy 2020 recommends that the function of education is to 'promote each student's holistic development in both academic and non-academic spheres'.

### **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.'

### **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, "no hard separations between arts and sciences, between curricular and extra-curricular activities, between vocational and academic streams, etc. in order to eliminate harmful hierarchies among, and silos between different areas of learning" (NEP, 2020, p.5).

### **CONCLUSION**

Krishnamurti's philosophy of education is still very much relevant in today's world of artificial intelligence and machine learning. 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, 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.

### **REFERENCES**

- Krishnamurti, J. (1948). 5th Public Talk, 26th September, at Poona.  
 Krishnamurti, J. (1962). 2nd Public Talk, 7th June, at London.  
 Krishnamurti, J. (1973). *Education and the significance of life*. New Delhi, B.I. Publication.,  
 Krishnamurti, J. (1976). *Education and Significance of Life*. Delhi, B.D. Publication.  
 Krishnamurti, J. (1979). *Explorations and Insights*, Chennai: Krishnamurti Foundation India.  
 Krishnamurti, J. (1983). 'Lettes to School', Madras, K.F.I.  
 National Education Policy. (2020). Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD), Government of India.