

# Teaching-learning process at Sri Aurobindo's Integral School - An Explorative Study

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## ABSTRACT

Education brings emancipation from the darkness of ignorance and populates an individual's personality with the versatility of knowledge, skill, and abilities. In an education system, enthusiasm for learning and clarity in teaching multiply the success of what is a genuine desire of students and the objective of an institution. From western to eastern, from pre-independence to post-independence, the dynamism in the process of teaching and learning has always been a center of attraction for all the educationists, policy-makers, committees and commissions to provide effective assistance and self-evaluative measures to both learners as well as teachers. Hence, best practices of the teaching-learning process in the context of quality outcomes are always the need of the hour. The researcher conducted a study to explore the teaching-learning practices of one Sri Aurobindo's Integral School located at Kendupatana village, Khordha district concerning physical, mental, emotional, social, spiritual development of elementary students, methods of transaction of curriculum, assessment and evaluation techniques perceived by teachers, perception of the headmaster on supervision and self-cooperation. Twenty-four teachers, one hundred-five students, and one headmaster were selected as a sample through a purposive sampling technique, and data was collected through a self-developed open-ended questionnaire and semi-structured interview schedule. Thick description and microanalysis of data resulted that learner-centered approach was strongly followed in classroom transactions, a cordial teacher-taught relationship was developed, task analysis, storytelling, play way, demonstration, group discussion method, songs, and drama were the common strategies adopted by the teachers at the elementary level. Further, the institution focused on regular yoga practice, meditation, and pranayam for the development of student's physical, mental, and psychological well-being. The headmaster of the institution was always ready and friendly to discuss anything regarding their school's improvement with their staff and students.

Keywords: *Teaching, Learning, Integral Education, Elementary Level, Supervision, Self-co-operation, Psychological well-being*

## Introduction

Education has the power to change and modify individual's behaviour into a fullest extent. Addition of rationale thinking, knowledgeability and self-sufficiency and development of personality by improving all aspects of life as physical, mental, spiritual, vital, emotional, social and cultural is the sole purpose of acquiring knowledge

through education. In today’s era, information and knowledge stand out as most important and critical input for growth and survival. In preference to searching at education really as a means of achieving social upliftment which ultimately depicts the importance and necessity of the appropriate way of gaining knowledge through suitable teaching learning process. Overall behavioural changes of an individual is shaped and moulded not merely as a result of maturation and coincidence, it is the effectiveness of planned teaching-learning processes. The practice of appropriate teaching-learning process plays tremendous role in reviving the knowledge, skill and abilities for both student and teacher. The Teaching-learning practice deals with the process of transmission, well learning environment, student’s participation, evaluation and higher index. Motivating and giving feedback to the children is the crucial parameter in teaching learning practice. Many educationists from eastern and western world put their valuable implications in the light of teaching-learning practices where Sri Aurobindo highlighted on integral system of education and emphasized on development of cognitive, physical, vital, spiritual and psyche aspects of personality with sense of integrity, beauty and harmony. He advocated that our education system should adopt innovative techniques for imparting education and make students multiskilled to face modern day challenges of life. In a broader sense, integral signifies evolution of humanity, promoting the principle of unity in diversity. The sense of integrity should be inculcated from the initial phase of education then only it can reflect through lifelong.

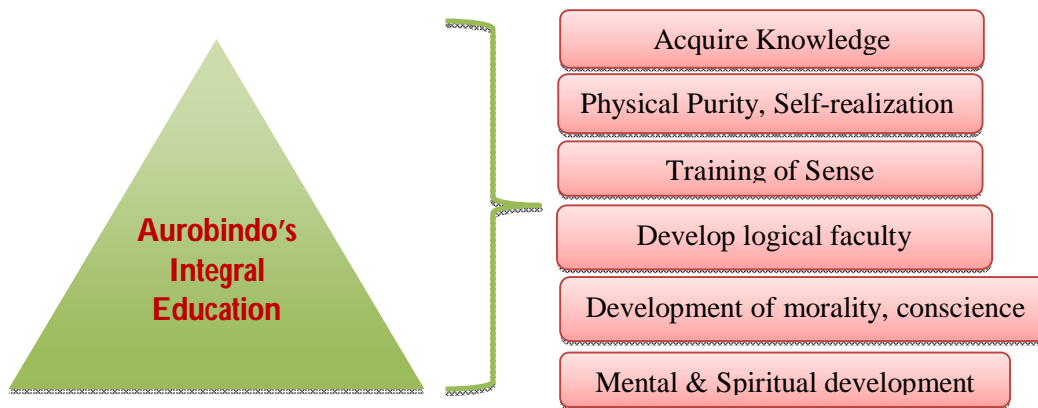


Fig 1. Focal points of integral education

## Review of related literature

Ashok and Sindhuja (2023) Conducted a study on “Application of Integral Education - Scope, Challenges and Opportunities” to explore the principles of Integral education practised in classroom teaching, learning and evaluation, to understand Perception about bringing the principles into the mainstream of NEP (2020) in terms of challenges in implementing Integral education principles to mainstream education, to seek recommendation

and suggestions to overcome these challenges. Researcher used a questionnaire as a tool for data collection. Findings of the study revealed that examined Integral Education teachers' perception on bringing the practices/methods into the conventional education and identify curriculum practices based on IEP. Majority of the respondents felt positive about practising aligned with the principles of IEP as it gives greater scope for self-reflection and self-observation. Respondents opined that IEP enables teachers to consciously create class teaching materials as per the needs of the child and understand the child's view of learning. The common evaluation approach followed were EBD, Multi method and Portfolio method. Few recommendations from integral teachers and observations from the currents study considering NEP 2020 implementation will be helpful as an instrument and wide scope for pedagogical research, interventions, and innovation.

Malik and Suman (2021) investigated a study on "General And Educational Philosophy Of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh". Objectives of the study were to study the life of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh and the educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh. Design of the study was a Philosophical and Historical method. Findings of the study reported that AorobindoGhosh was born to KrishnadhanGhosh (father) and Swarnalata Devi (mother) on 15 August 1872 in Calcutta in the Bengal province of India. His father Dr. Ghosh wanted to mould him in the colours of western civilization. Therefore, he was sent to the Irish Christian School in Darjeeling for his primary education. At the age of 7 he went to study in England. He completed his education under the patronage of the priest couple there. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is based on the belief that the intellectual development of man has reached its climax. There should be inner and spiritual development ahead of it. If man does not progress in this direction, then not only will his alternative sequence be blocked but he will also move towards his downfall. Sri Aurobindo did not consider sense experience as the highest knowledge, but considered it to be a lower order of knowledge. According to him there are many degrees of knowledge and the highest order is the spiritual experience which we can attain in this world.

Ahmed and Godiyal (2021) conducted a study on "Educational and Philosophical thought of AurbindoGhosh and Its It relevance in Present Education Scenario" to explain AurbindoGhosh's life and to describe ShriAurbindo's educational philosophy. Historical approach was used by the researcher as a design of the study. Findings of the study revealed that Sri Aurobindo presented his idea in 1910 and 1937, it is still applicable to today's educational system. Sri Aurobindo's philosophy is applicable to a child's whole development, obligatory education for at least 6-14 years, lifetime and ongoing education, vocational education, creativity, science and technology studies, literature, and so on. The primary contribution of Sri Aurobindo to future education is to prepare for future life. National integration, international integration, value education, and non-formal initiatives for rural and unorganised sectors were also prioritised by Sri Aurobindo.

Berggreen-Clausen (2020) studied on "how learning based on the three pedagogical principles of Integral Education be assessed". It was found that education in Auroville is unending, universal perspective based through transformative educational leadership. Through the Learning Community (TLC) approach and method, the integral learning is tangible. The future suggestion and recommendations from the interim report of Integral education in Auroville highlighted that Auroville education need a Horizontal way in exchange of qualified teachers between the different school, regular exchange of qualified teachers between the different schools, even taking part in school and educational conferences, need for structured and organised options to choose their subjects between schools in Auroville.

Das (2020) Conducted a study on "Educational Philosophy and contribution of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh to the field of education". The Objective of the Study was to recognize factors responsible for strengthening various dimensions of education in Sri- Aurobindo's philosophy and to comprehend the principles of teaching aims of education, transaction, school, curriculum, a relationship between teacher and pupil, discipline etc. It was a conceptual Paper. The findings of the study revealed that Shri Aurobindo saw education as a tool for the real working of the spirit of the mind, a body of the nation and individual. According to the Educational Philosophy of him, everyone has spiritual consciousness by some extent in the form of some special ability which should be

recognized and allowed to progress by the teacher. He involved all to uplift man from the present state to a brighter future. He thought of such education that is for an individual that will make it's one central object the growth of the soul, its powers and possibilities. During the time of sadhana at Pondicherry, he was actively involved in strengthening his vision for mankind. Lastly, he extended his philosophy into the sphere of education at the Ashram with the setting up of Sri Aurobindo International Centre of Education. This has been acting as a veritable laboratory for applying the principles of his philosophy in education.

Roy(2018) Conducted a study on “Aurobindo’s idea on spiritual education”. The Objectives of the Study were to critically examine the spiritual education of Aurobindo Ghosh and to comprehend the importance of Aurobindo’s spiritual education in today’s education system. This one was a conceptual paper. Findings of the study reported that Sri Aurobindo’s concept on spiritual education has been critically examined, analysed and synthesised and found that his spiritual education is relevant to the present demand of not only of our country but also of the world.He gave emphasis on the mind which has a great role to play in spiritual education.In the present context, Aurobindo’s spiritual education is of great demand to maintain the permanent peace not only of India but also of the world.The human civilization has reached in this age of globalisation with the scientific discoveries like artificial satellite,enrichment of communication facilities, genetic technology,spaceexploration,robotic and many other technologies.In spite of it present world is facing various alarming situations which can turn the world into a necropolis in a blink of an eye.Under the circumstances to maintain global peace,values and harmony and to promote international Brotherhood Aurobindo’s idea of spiritual education is very much relevant.

Hussain and Yadav (2018) Conducted a study on “Educational Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh: A Social Work Perspective” to outline the relevance of the educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh to the school social workers. Findings of the study revealed that Aurobindo Ghosh's philosophy is very much relevant to the teachers, parents, school social workers and other stakeholders. Working with the students, diagnosing the challenges facing the child and doing apt intervention are some of the roles played by the school social workers. The role of the social workers extend to pertaining areas. The school social workers visit the home of the students, prevent school dropouts, reduce stress and perform other related tasks. He also deals with the psychosocial problem of the students, children etc. The social workers also generate awareness on social evils like substance abuse, sexual abuse, child labour and similar issues and other important aspect related to the students and child development. The school social workers play roles like facilitating school-community relations and provide a variety of services to students in special education programmes. The educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo is very much pertinent to the school social workers, teachers, parents and other stakeholders. “It is vitally important for the social workers and other stakeholders to understand that in educational settings, they are neither teacher nor an administrator, but act as a facilitator. His philosophy illuminates the path and enlarges the scope of full thinking along the new lines. So the educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo helps not only the school social workers, but also other stakeholders.

Goksoy (2018) conducted a study on teaching learning practices using survey method. Semi structured interview and focus group discussion were used to collect data. Result revealed that school facilities and environmental condition affect teaching learning process.

Rao (2018)conducted a study on teaching and learning practices. He has used survey method, questionnaire and interview schedule for collecting information. He has concluded that teaching and learning are to join hands and a synthesis to bring about desired changes in the behavioural pattern of the learners.

Oyekan (2018) has conducted a study on teaching as a profession. He stated that teaching is a honest profession that calls for the highest degree of responsibility. It is a creative, intellectually, demanding and rewarding job.

Coombs (2017) has conducted a study on school support towards quality education. He has found that the schools manned by well-motivated professional teachers shall readily churn out responsible competent manpower resources to managing our economy and environment for sustainable development. The researcher used survey method and semi structured interview schedule, questionnaire for collecting data.

Chanda (2017) Conducted “A Study of Educational Vision of Aurobindo Ghosh” to study the educational vision of Aurobindo Ghosh. Findings of the study revealed that Sri. Aurobindo was against the prevalent education system. He strongly believed that our education should be best suited to the needs of modern life. Sri. Aurobindo himself writes “Education to be true must not be a machine-made fabric but a true building or living evocation of the power of mind and spirit of human being”. The 20th century considered the birth of a new phenomenon in which the world is interconnected and dependent on each other termed as globalisation. Sri Aurobindo’s philosophical thoughts and principles of teaching are utmost important if a human being wants to live in peace and harmony. In the global era, his philosophy is very much relevant to achieve and maintain permanent peace in the world. It is very necessary to uplift the human being from materiality to spirituality. Sri Aurobindo said, “peace is the first condition, without which nothing else can be stable”. He also gave emphasis to national and international integration and value education, which promotes international Brotherhood and helps in character building worldwide.

Debbarma (2017) Conducted a study on “Educational thoughts of Aurobindo Ghosh with relevance to present educational context”. Objectives of the Study were to study the relevance of Aurobindo Ghosh educational thought in the present education system and to study the significance of Aurobindo Ghosh contribution in the field of education. Investigator used Historical method as a design of the study. Findings of the study stated that the contribution made by our renowned educationist is that it is relevant to the existence of the education system. It helps to cater the needs, interest, motivation, attitude and aptitude of the learner. Aurobindo has mainly given priority to the present pedagogy used in our teaching-learning process. He laid stress on physical development, where the students can remain physically fit for undergoing his work. Rough education purity of senses is to be achieved before any development is possible.

Maitreya and Aggarwal (2017) investigated a study on “Involvement of the educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh in the current system of education”. The Objective of the study was to study the involvement of the educational philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh in the current system of education. It was a conceptual paper. Findings of the study revealed that Sri Aurobindo's Educational Philosophy is student oriented philosophy which recommends focusing on integral development of students covering the whole aspects of education such as psychic and mental, spiritual, physical, vital by cultivating the beauty, power, knowledge and love. Sri Aurobindo's desires a free environment for students so that he can surface out his hidden expertise and innovation. According to the Educational Philosophy of Sri Aurobindo Ghosh, everyman has divinity to some extent in the form of some special ability which should be identified and allowed to grow by the teacher. Thus Sri Aurobindo desires to have such an education system through which a student can be allowed to grow his mind completely in his own way and subsequently he can be converted into a healthy, knowledgeable, and spiritual as well as wise man that is capable of making the Earth a perfect place to live like a heaven i.e. full of divine. This study is helpful to guide the teacher to choose the correct form of teaching and provide inspiration and facilities to students for the complete growth of mind.

Cooks (2016) has conducted a study on impact of teaching. He found that teaching is an instrument to effect personal and national development. They would be able to exchange creative ideas and skills as means to enhance their teaching competencies and a professional growth.

### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To find out the teaching learning practices followed in elementary level with regard to mental, physical, emotional, social and spiritual development.
2. To find out the perception of teachers about the teaching learning practices with reference to methods of transaction, teacher-taught relationship and active interaction and assessment and evaluation.
3. To find out the perception of headmaster about the teaching learning practices with reference to supervision and self-cooperation.

### Research Questions

1. What are the teaching learning practices taken by Sri Aurobindo's Integral School with regards to mental, physical, emotional, social and spiritual development?
2. How do the teachers of Sri Aurobindo's Integral School perceive about the teaching learning practices with reference to methods of transaction, teacher-taught relationship and active interaction and assessment and evaluation?
3. How do the headmaster of Sri Aurobindo's Integral School perceive about the teaching learning practices with reference to supervision and self-cooperation?

### Methodology

#### Case Size

The study consisted twenty-four teachers, one hundred five students and one headmaster of Sri Aurobindo's Integral School located at kendupatana village of Khordha District as sample of the study which were selected through purposive sampling technique. Focus of the study was on the elementary level teaching learning Practices of Sri Aurobindo's Integral school.

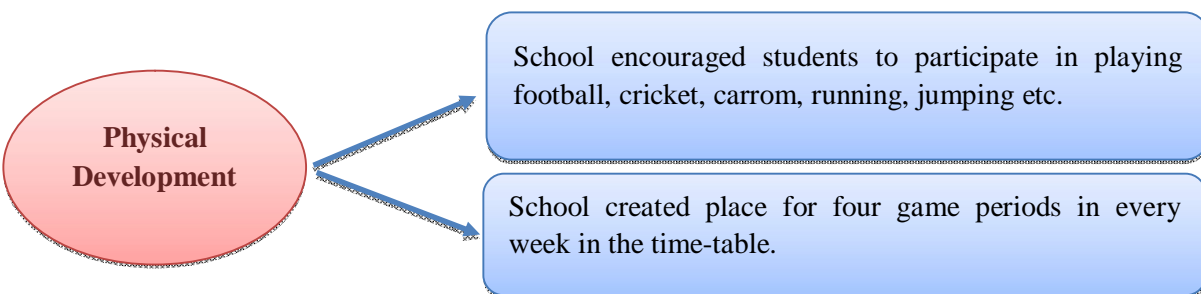
#### Data collection and data analysis

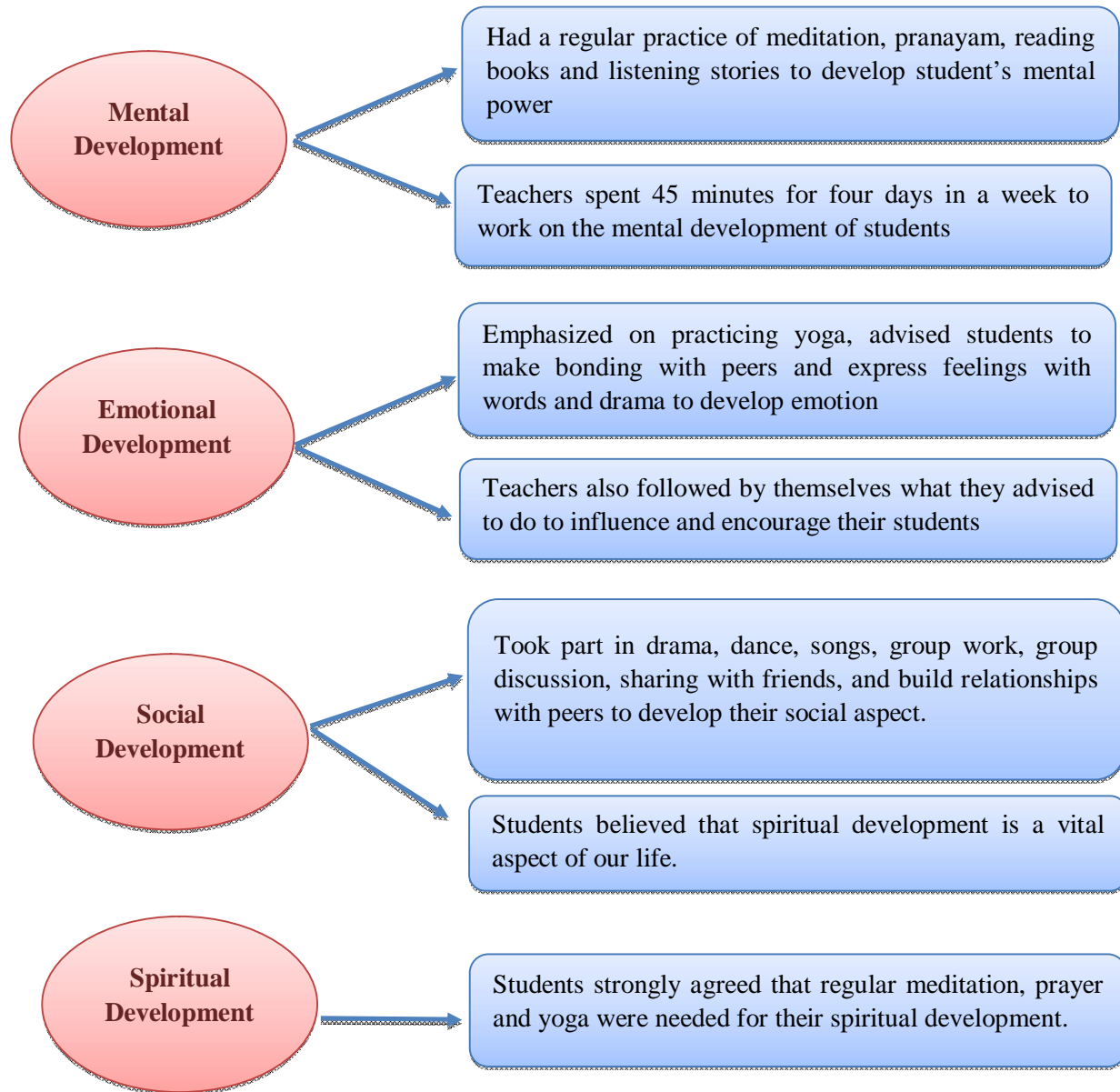
The required data was collected through administering open-ended questionnaire to students and semi structured interview schedule to headmaster and teachers. The tools developed by the researcher considered mental development, physical development, emotional development, social development, spiritual development, methods of transaction, teacher- taught relationships, assessment and evaluation, Supervision and Self-cooperation as the dimensions of the study. After preparation, the content validity of the tools was tested by 5 experts and special educators. The investigator also analysed data observed by her with thick description. The interview had been transmitted into verbatim. Micro analysis on the verbatim had been done manually.

#### Result and Discussion:

*The present study explored following details of the Teaching Learning Practices at Elementary Level of selected Sri Aurobindo's Integral School as per the objective of the study:*

1. **What are the teaching learning practices are taken by Sri Aurobindo's Integral School with regards to mental development, physical development, emotional development, social development and spiritual Development?**





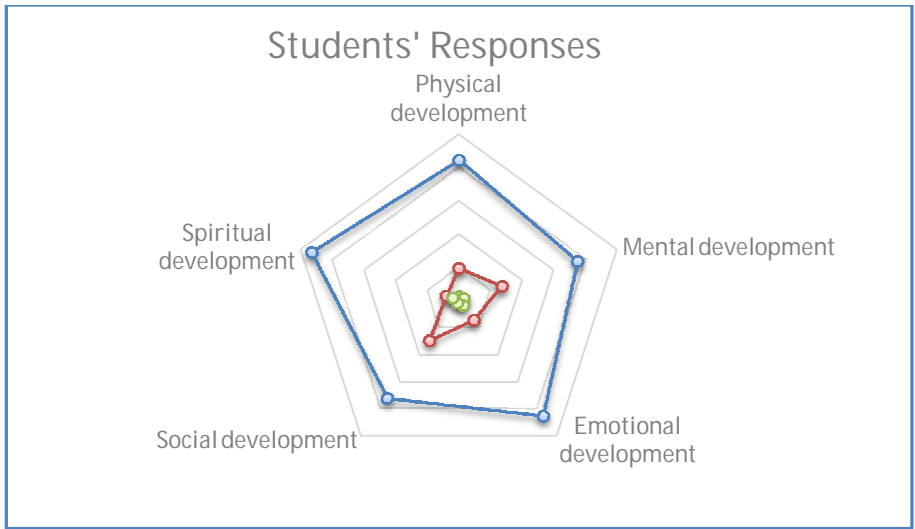
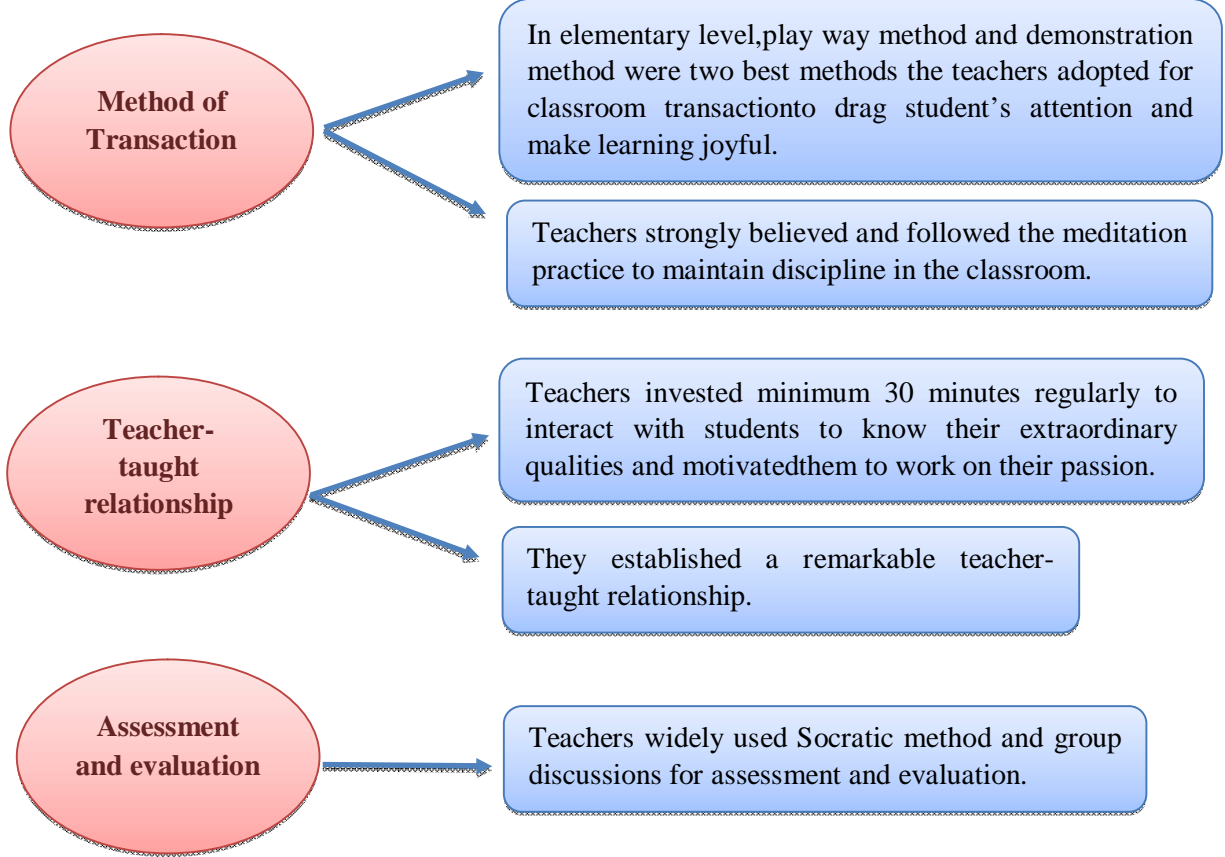
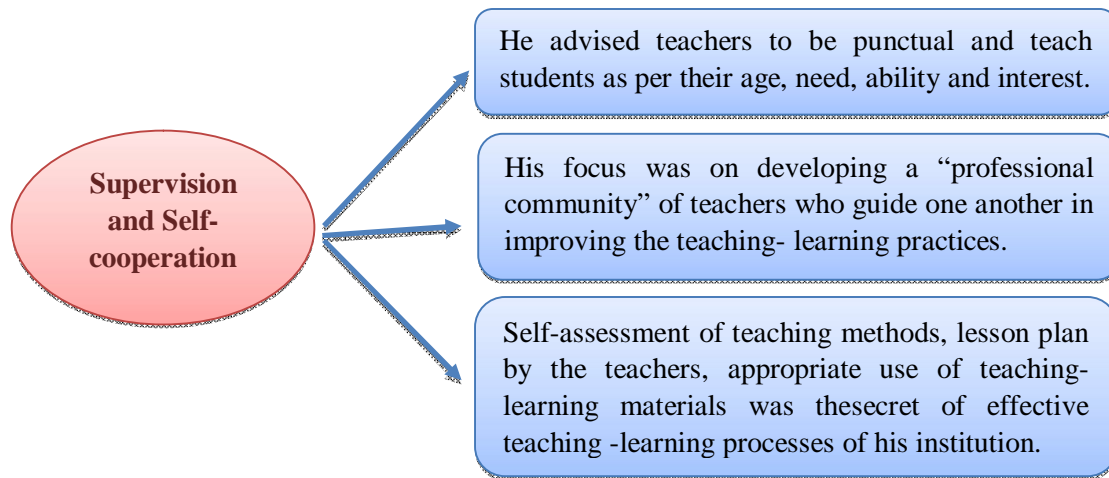


Fig 2. Students' responses as per the facilities provided for the teaching learning practices

**2. How do the teachers of Sri Aurobindo's Integral School perceive about the teaching learning practices with reference to methods of transaction, teacher- taught relationships, active interaction and assessment and evaluation?**



### 3. How do the Headmaster of Sri Aurobindo's Integral School perceive about the teaching learning practices with reference to Supervision and Self-cooperation?



#### Shortcomings of the institution to adopt better teaching-learning practices

- Lack of competency of their teachers in using ICT.
- Not getting any financial assistance from the government to buy different modern style teaching materials.
- Lagging behind in gaining technological facilities or smart teaching-learning environment.

#### Conclusion

The case study of the selected school clearly shows that for the holistic development of an individual, greater importance on student's participation in co-curricular activities, regular doing yoga & meditation, learning through collaborative techniques, strong teacher-taught relationship, Socratic method of teaching, developing professional community among teachers, self-assessment of teaching methods are the key elements of effective teaching learning practices which were followed by the stakeholders of Sri Aurobindo's Integral School.

#### Consent

As per international standard or university standard, Participants' written consent has been collected and preserved by the author(s).

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## Appendices – A: Questionnaire for Students

### PRIMARY INFORMATION

Name of the students:-----

Name of the school:-----

Gender:-----

- 1) What kind of fitness activities you should practice in your school?
- 2) What kind of sports are available in your school?
- 3) Do you have game period? If yes then which kind of game you have played at that time?
- 4) Do you have Physical education teacher? If yes then mostly which kind of game he/she will practice you?
- 5) What kind of mental activities you should practice in your school?
- 6) Which activities are highly effective for your mental development?
- 7) How much time teachers are giving to the students for their brain development?
- 8) What kind of activities you should practice for your emotional development?
- 9) How your teachers are helping you for your emotional development?
- 10) What kind of social activities you should practice for your social development?
- 11) Do you think social development is a vital aspect of your life? Why?
- 12) Which kind of practices include in your curriculum for your social development?
- 13) What kind of spiritual activities you should practice in your school for your spiritual development?
- 14) Do you think that spiritual development is a vital aspect of your life? Why?

## Appendice – B :InterviewscheduleforTeacher

### PRIMARYINFORMATION

Nameoftheschool:-----

Nameoftheteacher:-----

Gender:-----

### Herearesomequestions

- 1) Whatmethodsinclassroomdo youadopttomake your classeffective?
- 2) Whatmethoddoyouuse tomaintaindisciplineinyour classroom?
- 3) Whichmethod is veryhelpful fortransaction ofcontent knowledge?
- 4) Whichmethod makethe studentseasytounderstand theconcept?
- 5) Doesyourinteractionwithstudentssupportanorderlyanddisciplinedclassroom?
- 6) Do youbringoutthebestinyour students?
- 7) Doesyourrelationshipenergizeother?
- 8) Whichtoolsdoyouusetomeasurethepreference of yourstudents?
- 9) Whatkindofassessmentstrategiesdoyouuseinyourclassroom?

**Appendice–C:InterviewscheduleforHeadmaster**

**PRIMARYINFORMATION**

**Nameoftheschool:-----**

**NameoftheHeadmaster:-----**

**Gender:-----**

1. Howdoyouorientnew teacherduringtheir firstyearonthejob?
2. Howdo youawarethe staffmembers abouttheirrolesandresponsibilities?
3. Whataretheteachinglearningpracticesavailableinyour school?
4. Whatarethestrengthsandweaknessesofyourschool?
5. Howdoyoumanagetheschool?
6. Howdoyouplanand prioritize yourwork?