

# Integrating Integral Yoga Psychology in Education for Holistic Growth

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## ABSTRACT

This research explores the transformative impact of integrating Integral Yoga Psychology into education for holistic growth. Grounded in Sri Aurobindo's philosophy, it investigates the influence on teachers' and students' development, emphasizing key principles such as individualized approaches, spiritual integration, and a dynamic learning environment. The study, conducted in five major integral schools in India, unveils three pedagogical principles, delves into the role of the psychic being, and emphasizes a family-like environment, project methods, and holistic practices. The findings underscore integral schools as environments rooted in transformative principles, aligning with psychological concepts and fostering a comprehensive educational experience. The study contributes to ongoing discussions on effective educational practices.

**Keywords:** Integral Yoga Psychology, Holistic Education, Sri Aurobindo, Transformative Learning, Pedagogical Principles, Psychic Being, Integral Schools, Dynamic Learning Environment, Individualized Approach, Spiritual Integration, Experiential Learning, Project Methods, Holistic Practices, Teacher-Student Relationship, Aesthetic Development, Global Perspective.

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## INTRODUCTION

In the educational realm, the pursuit of a comprehensive and transformative approach to learning has gained increasing significance. This research explores the profound impact of integrating Integral Yoga Psychology, as conceptualized by the philosopher and spiritual thinker Sri Aurobindo, into educational practices. Transcending conventional boundaries, Integral Yoga Psychology embraces a holistic view of human development, encompassing physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions. This study aims to unravel the ways in which the principles of Integral Yoga Psychology influence the personal and professional growth of teachers and the overall development of students.

### Key Principles of Integral Yoga Psychology in Education:

- 1. Harmonious Development:** Integral education aims at the harmonious development of all facets of an individual, aligning with Integral Yoga Psychology's emphasis on the integration of physical, mental, emotional, and spiritual dimensions.
- 2. Individualized Approach:** Recognizing and nurturing the unique potential of each student resonates with Integral Yoga Psychology's view of individualized spiritual growth.
- 3. Integration of Spirituality:** Central to both integral education and Integral Yoga Psychology is the recognition of the spiritual dimension of human existence, cultivating inner consciousness and connection to a higher purpose.
- 4. Harmony of Head and Heart:** The integration of rational thinking and emotional intelligence aligns with the Integral Yoga Psychology principles, emphasizing the synthesis of different aspects of the psyche.
- 5. Beyond Academic Knowledge:** Integral education, influenced by Integral Yoga Psychology, extends beyond academic knowledge to emphasize character building, moral values, and a sense of responsibility.

**6. Dynamic Learning Process:** Viewing learning as a dynamic and interactive process reflects the transformative nature of Integral Yoga Psychology, promoting personal evolution.

**7. Experiential Learning:** Encouraging experiential learning aligns with the yogic philosophy of self-discovery and direct experience.

**8. Physical Education and Well-being:** Recognizing physical health as integral to overall growth echoes the importance placed on well-being in Integral Yoga Psychology.

**9. Cultural and Aesthetic Development:** The significance of arts, literature, and cultural activities corresponds with Integral Yoga Psychology's emphasis on creativity and aesthetic refinement.

**10. Global Perspective:** Fostering a global perspective aligns with Integral Yoga Psychology's vision of a harmonious and interconnected world.

### **Qualitative Research Methods:**

#### **1. Site Selection:**

- Purposeful selection of five major integral schools in India for diverse representation.

#### **2. Data Collection:**

- Teacher Interviews: Conducted face-to-face interviews with 35-40 teachers, exploring their pedagogical principles and practices.
- Surveys: Utilized survey forms for teachers inaccessible for physical interviews.
- Classroom Observations: Observed 10-15 classrooms in Delhi and Auroville for contextualized exploration of pedagogical practices.
- Case Studies: Undertook in-depth case studies on select teachers, delving into their unique approaches within the integral education system.
- Student Interviews: Ongoing interviews with students to capture diverse perspectives on their educational experiences.

#### **3. Data Analysis:**

- Thematic analysis approach applied to interviews, surveys, observations, case studies, and student interviews for pattern identification.

#### **4. Current Status:**

- Significant progress in teacher interviews, surveys, and classroom observations. Ongoing efforts dedicated to completing case studies and student interviews.

**Note:** Important aspects still pending on the school, teacher, and student levels.

### **RESULTS OR FINDINGS:**

#### **1. Three Pedagogical Principles: Adopted by all integral school teachers:**

- Nothing can be taught.
- The mind must be consulted in its own growth.
- Working from the near to the far, from that which is to that which shall be.

**2. Psychic Being:** Explored in detail by experienced practitioners, emphasizing the role of the psychic being and how teachers guide students to let their psychic being take charge.

**3. Teacher as Guide or Facilitator:** Teachers see themselves as guides, aiding students in discovering answers rather than providing direct solutions.

**4. Family Environment with Discipline:** Integral schools, like Mirambika in Delhi, cultivate a family-like atmosphere with disciplined living. Students address teachers as Diyas (didi and bhैया).

**5. Emphasis on Project Methods:** Integral education places significant importance on project methods, fostering mental growth and practical learning.

**6. Holistic Practices:** Common practices across integral schools include meditation, prayers in Sanskrit, physical training, gardening, music, painting, and dance classes.

**7. School Environment:** Integral schools are characterized by cleanliness, orderliness, and a peaceful atmosphere with an abundance of greenery.

## DISCUSSION

**1. Pedagogical Principles by Sri Aurobindo:** Integral to the long-term vision for education, these principles offer a transformative approach at various levels—school, teacher-student relationships, and society.

**2. Emphasis on Project Methods:** A key feature of integral education, signaling commitment to mental growth and practical learning, encouraging critical thinking and hands-on experiences.

**3. Holistic Practices:** The incorporation of meditation, prayers, physical training, and gardening reflects a commitment to a holistic approach. These practices nurture spiritual and mental dimensions, fostering balanced development.

**4. Cultivation of Creativity:** The provision of music, painting, and dance classes underscores a commitment to cultivating creativity and aesthetic sensibilities.

**5. Greenery and Well-being:** The prevalence of greenery not only enhances aesthetics but aligns with the broader emphasis on holistic well-being.

## CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study sheds light on integral schools as environments deeply rooted in the transformative principles of Integral Yoga Psychology. The teacher-student relationship, emphasis on project methods, and provision of artistic classes resonate with integral psychological principles, fostering a comprehensive and enriching educational experience. Embracing Sri Aurobindo's vision, the pedagogical principles align with integral psychological concepts, guiding educators and students towards psychological growth, individualized learning, and a harmonious approach. The commitment to practices like meditation and physical training reflects a holistic education, contributing to the ongoing dialogue on effective educational practices. These insights underline the significance of a balanced and holistic approach in fostering the overall development of students within integral school environments.

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