

# Relevance of Gurukul Education System in Present Circumstance: A Philosophical Perception

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## Abstract

The society is composed of individuals and the aim of education is the overall improvement of mankind. At present, students are given education being in the society itself, they are affected directly or indirectly by the social evils such as idleness, egotism, poverty, sexual disability, materialistic appeal, evil practices, corruption, marginalisation, decline in moral values, destructive politics, etc. Thus, it is desirable that education should eliminate the evil social practices. The present aim of education is to fulfill the need of a better structure and revitalization of benchmarks. As a result, most of today's philosophers, socialists, educationalists and researchers are found judging the present education system against the ancient one, commonly known as the 'Gurukul' system. Now, in this paper we will enlighten Gurukul Education System and try to find whether it can bring the above mentioned problems to an end?

**Keywords:** Gurukul education system, India

## Introduction

In this living world, Human is such an individual who is dependent on others, from his birth till his last breath, to acquire knowledge and guidance. We can interpret from this that humans attain good characters from time to time by various techniques and behaviors. In ancient India, the Vedas, the Upanishads, the epics manifested and upheld the values of Indian society. Imparting value education was the main aim of the teachers of the ancient age (Pathania, 2011). From the time beyond our imagination, through the origin of Vedas, and till this very moment, the surroundings, society and teaching have affected the development of humans a lot because these are the only sources by which a child grows, develops, achieves, accomplishes and at last reaches great heights as a result of passionate thinking and study on the basis of his knowledge and will. Rabindra Nath Tagore, Maharishi Arvind, Mahatma Gandhi and such noble personalities have defined education as the finder of liberty, the one who has strengthened us mentally and emotionally, the one who has made us great philosophers and the one who makes us capable to find ways to success.

In these 69 years of independence, India has memorably developed in the field of technology, economy, social structure, democracy etc. but our education system has not reached the desired heights where it should have been and as a result there is mass dissatisfaction among the society as a whole. The present aim of education is to fulfill the need of a better structure and revitalization of benchmarks. As a result, most of today's philosophers, socialists, educationalists and researchers are found judging the present education system against the ancient one, commonly known as the 'Gurukul' system.

Is it likely to run the ancient Gurukul system at the present? It is a foremost need of the present for canvassers and educationalists to critically analyze these changes in education system. Why is there a need for such changes? In what manner these alterations will be implemented? In present times, millions of students from innumerable institutions step in the society yearly with a spellbound education. But, do they have the wisdom of devotion for their parents, respect for their educators, patriotism for their motherland and moral responsibility.

We believe today that activist education does not reflect that power or will to accomplish the laid aims through which the seed of humanity can be identified in people and also the physical, intellectual and emotional power of people can be boosted. It is believed that the present intend of education is to make more and more money and for that the mental power of people is developed. This thinking motivates each person on this territory. As, at present, students are given education being in the society itself, they are slowly but surely affected directly or indirectly by the social evils such as idleness, egotism, poverty, sexual disability, materialistic appeal, evil practices, corruption, marginalisation, decline in moral values, destructive politics, etc. Providing education in such environment is the cause of materialistic, social, individual and cultural wickedness.

The society is composed of individuals and the aim of education is the overall improvement of mankind. Thus, it is desirable that education should eliminate the evil social practices. Now, we will enlighten Gurukul Education System and try to find whether it can bring the above mentioned problems to an end?

Ancient Gurukul education system

In ancient India, the gurukuls were dedicated to achieve the highest ideals of complete human development that included physical, mental, spiritual development as well as leading to God-realization (Jain and Shelly, 2013). Devotion for the Almighty and religion, character formation, personality development, sense of duty as a citizen and as the part of society, development of fields of excellence and the protection as well as the expansion of national tradition and heritage was the aim of ancient Gurukul Education system. Our hope

from education is not only to teach but to join together knowledge and experience. The subjects under the syllabus at that very time were religion, ayurveda, vaishishika, economics, archery, justice, reasoning, all united together with some other subjects too. The age for a child to begin his education journey was five when he was taught the letters and words known as the Vidya Aarambh Ceremony. Then he was provided with the Vedic education under his Guru's supervision, called Upnayan Ceremony. And finally, the Samaptvartan (Ending) Ceremony, at the age of 25, when the students returned home. Instead of the so called convocation ceremony of present education system, an ending speech was delivered asking the students to always be honest, to abide their duties, not to be irregular when self studying, follow the good deeds done by them and donate with faith.

The classes were held in the shade of trees, and under some shelter during monsoon to ensure that the students are in touch with nature which benefitted their physical and mental development. The Gurukuls were situated at beautiful natural places which were near some rural or urban areas to fulfill the daily necessity requirement of the students and to have the facility of imploring. The age to begin Vedic education was usually eight to twelve years and for those parents who did not send their children to the Gurukul; a specific punishment was decided and implemented. The Shudras (low caste people) did not have the right to education. The time period for the study was twelve years and a student could study only one Veda in that time period. The session was of five months only. The holidays weren't too long for the students to return their homes due to the problems in transportation. So, the students returned home only after completing their education.

The education was totally influenced by religion. There was the provision of free education but after the completion of education, money, land, animals, grain, etc. was given as reward. Due to the lack of printed books, the lessons were delivered orally. There were certain rules for the students to adhere regarding their daily lives such as to lead a simple life, wake up early before the day breaks, get freshened up and take a bath early, and then worship the God and perform *havan*, etc. They could eat food twice a day. The students were asked to follow the rules of self control and discipline. The students had great respect for their teachers and treated them as their parents and king. The relation between the teacher and the students was of care, respect, trust and duty. Punishment was given but was not harsh. At that time, the state or the king did not interfere with the Gurukuls.

#### Discussion

Some features of Gurukul System that may be followed by present education system are character building and philosophy which should get an appropriate place in today's education system. The schools should be situated away from the noisy and polluted environs of the cities so that the students are not affected by the everyday fights and bad practices. In modern times, however, it is not possible to completely lead a life full of control, but we should try to adapt to such way of living.

Here, we will also analyze those concepts of Gurukul education system which when fully adapted by present education system may prove to be meaningless such as – using Sanskrit as the medium of instruction for attaining education, offer religion the supreme position in education, not granting access to education to Shudras and females. In this education system, the spiritual world was preferred over the practical or real world. They never went beyond the forethought of the religious conviction, and so, there was nothing such as independent thinking or thinking out of the box.

- What will be the qualifications or essentials for the teachers involved in the modern Gurukul System which our government wants to establish?
- In this education system, what subjects will be included in the curriculum?
- After independence, India has Secularism as a key feature of the Constitution, so, why will the religious minorities accept majority of only one religion in the education system?
- Will a student not face any complications regarding language after he has completed the education as in Gurukul Education System, the medium of instruction would be either Hindi or Sanskrit?
- How will our students coordinate with other countries when they are not acquainted with English language on time?

However, it is noteworthy that already some schools following Gurukul system have been set up such as *Navodaya Aawasiya Vidyalaya*, *Prabhat Ashram* in Meerut, *Chotipura Amroha* for girls and Gurukul Kangdi University (Brahmadeva Vidyalankar, 2015). These institutions resemble the Gurukul Education System. We can assemble information about Modern Gurukul Education System by examining these institutions and come across the challenges thrown by the trending educational institutions for such institutions.

#### References

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