

Gurukul Education and Its Impact on Modern Education

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Abstract

Education has played important role in the expansion of civilization in the world today. Similarly, in the context of education, Gurukul education is known as the oldest system of education. It is mostly true that education in the world got its root in the Gurukul education system. Our ancient Vedas, Purans, and Upanishads were written through the skills obtained from the Gurukul education system which are sources of vast knowledge. So, Gurukul education has played a major role in the transformation of modern education systems. So, the purpose of this research study is to present the impact of Gurukul education in building modern education in this form. This research study is a qualitative study and data are collected through interview-based on fieldwork and document analysis. The interview is taken face-to-face with teachers and students of Gurukul schools located in Chitwan, Nepal. The finding of this study show that Gurukul education is the root of all knowledge created by our ancient saints (Munis) and it has certainly got an impact on the present modern education. In modern education systems, there are traces of the Gurukul education systems to bring transformation as we find today. This study has got practical implications for the development of modern education showing the relation between Gurukul and modern education.

Keywords: Gurukul education, transformation of education, modern education, development of skills.

Introduction

Gurukul education is an ancient system of education. There is a special space for Gurukul education in eastern philosophy. At present, there is an expansion of Gurukul education more than that of a previous age. The meaning of Gurukul is related to the family of a teacher. In this way, the system of taking education by a student being at the place of a teacher is known as Gurukul. In this Gurukul education system, the students stay with their teacher for many years and take education as

lessons from Vedas and related to culture. According to Pertz (2013: 2-3), the word, “Guru” in Sanskrit refers to a person who has gained skill in providing knowledge and is also known as a specialist. In the same way, Jean, (1977: 266) has stated that a teacher is a person who has got specific knowledge about the meaning of life.

In the ancient education system, Gurukul education was a kind of system of schooling. Moreover, it was a kind of method of teaching which has existed in the world since ancient times. It was also the first form of education for the generations of human beings. The main aim of Gurukul education is to develop an ideal type of knowledge and the teachers in Gurukul used to teach their students about meditation, yoga, and other life-developing aspects of knowledge. In the past, mostly, students got knowledge of the philosophy of Vedas in the Gurukul education system. Furthermore, the students are treated equally in Gurukul education despite their socio-economic background.

Objective

The main objective of this study was to reveal the impact made by Gurukul education and analyze it as the main source of the present education system. More specifically, it will show that Gurukul education and Vedic philosophy is the main source of the present development of education.

Methodology

Since this was a qualitative study and the methodology applied was related to qualitative technique, the process of data collection was through semi-structured interviews. So this was also based on a fieldwork study of Gurukul schools located in the Chitwan district of Nepal. And data analysis process is interpretive; moreover, content analysis is done for this study.

Results and Discussion

This is a qualitative study and analysis has been made without any quantitative symbols. Moreover, a thick description has been done for content analysis including some reasonable themes which are given below:

Transformation of Gurukul Education: It is found that there is a transformation of the educational system of traditional Gurukul education. For this study, document analysis was made for traditional Gurukul education, and for modern Gurukul education, fieldwork was done. In ancient Gurukul education, the curriculum of teaching was based on eastern philosophy, Vedas, karmakanda, and legends. On the other hand, English, Science, Math, and Social Sciences are taught in modern Gurukul schools. To support modern Gurukul schools, Curriculum Development Centre [CDC] (2068 BS) has also framed rules and regulations to use modern subjects in Gurukul education systems.

The teachers in modern Gurukul schools are found child friendly. The system of past Gurukul education systems has been transformed into modern systems. According to Dhawan (2013), the teacher has to make rapport with the students and this role shows that Gurukul education has been transformed because teachers have been student friendly rather than seeking service from students. In the past, students in Gurukul schools would stay on the floor but now they stay on desks and benches. Ancient Gurukul education was informal but modern Gurukul education is known as formal. This is a transformation of the Gurukul education systems. Similarly, Pokharel (2074 BS) has written that the systems of ancient Gurukul education have been followed by the modern system of education. Pokharel has further added that the ancient universities namely, Taxashila, Nalanda, and Bikramshila Ballavi were the modified forms of the Gurukul education system. This writing of Pokharel shows that in the past Gurukul education was an informal mode of education but afterward large educational institutions were developed gradually. Also, the education system applied today is also related to the Gurukul education system to some extent.

Furthermore, according to Ghimire (2068 BS), students need to have been unmarried to take education in Gurukul education with a guru/ teacher. And after the pupil has completed their study with a guru in Gurukul, he will return home and conduct married life with his family members. In this way, as revealed by Ghimire, Gurukul education teaches disciplinary activities for students to be applied in their life. The products of Gurukul education are sharp in maintaining their lifestyle with knowledge and wisdom.

On the contrary, Arole (1998) has written that ladies were deprived of the opportunities to study Vedas because they were thought to be lower caste human beings. This revelation makes it known that in the past there was discrimination between males and females in the matter of studying and gaining knowledge.

On the other hand, Timilsina (2016) has stated that there is access to Gurukul education for women and there is no discrimination based on race, gender, and class. Timilsina has also added that based on Vedic philosophy, it is important to follow peace, tolerance, and morality as the demand of time and the Sanskrit language has been introduced in the private sector of education. In this way, Gurukul education has been expanded at present in many institutions.

Centre for Education Research Innovation and Development [CERID] (2007) has written that Gurukul is a place where education is delivered based on the philosophy of the Hindu religion and many former Gurukul schools are in the way of including formal curriculum useful for livelihood. This situation shows that Gurukul education has been providing formal education for the past few years. Moreover, Sanskrit education has been formal education in many universities all over the world.

Effect of Gurukul Education: There is the effect of Gurukul education in different sectors of education. Gurukul education has affected the rules and regulations of classrooms, disciplinary activities, education policy, and many other sectors. The

main central point of Gurukul education is a discipline that is also the basic norm of life. Today, there are different norms and values designed by policymaking people based on Gurukul education systems. Similarly, Gurukul education has affected the lifestyle of people including- the habit of a balanced diet, regular cleanliness, good behavior, and discipline. If people are free from bad behavior, they will be free from different kinds of diseases. The formation of study habits is the main essence of Gurukul education. The words 'learning by doing' is related to Gurukul education. Modern child-friendly education is also related to the Gurukul education system.

Similarly, Kumar (2016) has written that the aim of Gurukul education is simple living and high thinking. This is also the base of life because the people leading a simple life have been great people just as Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela, Karl Marx, etc. Because of these examples, it can be said that Gurukul education has provided great support for the development of modern education.

In the same way, Ghimire (2074 BS) has reported that Gurukul education taught and directed students to study for the first twenty-five years keeping themselves in the proximity of their teacher and eating once a day by begging alms. Moreover, the students had to take a bath daily and perform their regular activity of praying and worshipping the almighty, God, and they had to be busy in the service of cows and reforestation along with the activity of taking knowledge and lesson from their teacher. As mentioned above, the analysis of Gurukul education made by Ghimire shows that Gurukul education has given the right direction to the students to apply in their life.

Similarly, Paudel (2074 BS) has stated that Gurukul education is of such type of valuable system that what is learned is applied in real-life situations. Paudel has further said that the value of Gurukul education is growing day by day at present. The above-mentioned view of Paudel regarding Gurukul education is applied to the present modern system of education. Today it is commented that education needs to be job and market-oriented which is also the motto of Gurukul education.

The Root of Modern Education: It is praiseworthy to say that the base of modern education is the Gurukul education system. There was a study of different disciplines including science (cosmos), astrology, geography, social, moral study, philosophy, religion, and humanity in the Gurukul education system.

Likewise, people talk about inclusion in modern education, which is also a necessary aspect of Gurukul education. The goal of Gurukul education is also to make provision of education to all groups of people without any discrimination. Today, different policies of education mention equity and access to education, which is also derived from Vedic philosophy, on which Gurukul education is based.

Yogi (2068 BS) has stated that Gurukul education and Sanskrit have been synonymous terms and emphasized Sanskrit texts as being the sole sources of civilization and culture. Yogi has also reminded us that there are separate Sanskrit Departments in many universities in the world, such as Oxford University and Cambridge University. Likewise, this information has added to the universal value of Sanskrit education as well as Gurukul education.

According to Pokharel (2068 BS), there are sixty-four types of art to be learned from a teacher in the Gurukul education system since ancient times. Also, Pokharel has added that children learn culture from family members (father and mother) as well as further lifelong learning is gained from the teacher. In this way, it is understood that Gurukul education has got an impact on the modern education system. It is because modern educationists also have got focused on job-oriented education and lifelong learning.

The continuous evaluation was also a system applied in Gurukul education, which has got the main priority in modern education. Evaluation is the main process to find out students' achievement, which was the system of Gurukul education applied long ago. Pathania (2011) has quoted that the human being is such type of living creature who depends upon others and gains knowledge, and direction for a good life; moreover, human beings gain social norms and values from teachers. This view has justified that Gurukul education is the source of human knowledge from which human beings learn social norms and values.

Conclusion and Implication

This study has disclosed that Gurukul education is the main base of knowledge. Gurukul education taught the world about the moral lesson. It is the Gurukul education system that linked knowledge with wisdom. Gurukul education taught both systems of education – theoretical and practical. For instance, Gurukul education taught its students to be job-oriented effectively. Moreover, Gurukul education fostered emotional intelligence in students. Similarly, the main base of Gurukul education is to gain an identity as self and social being. Similarly, Reddy (1979) has written that learners in Gurukul get education through discussion. Today also this system has got priority. So, there is a great impact of Gurukul education in modern education. This study has got practical implications for the development of modern education showing the relation between Gurukul and modern education.

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