



REVIEW OF RESEARCH

ISSN: 2249-894X

IMPACT FACTOR : 5.2331(UIF)

VOLUME - 7 | ISSUE - 4 | JANUARY - 2018

UGC APPROVED JOURNAL NO. 48514



COMPARATIVE STUDY OF GURUKUL AND PRESENT EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Chanabasappa Sidramappa Mulage

Head, Dept. of English,

Santosh Bhimrao Patil Arts, Commerce and Science College, Mandrup,

Tal: South Solapur, Dist: Solapur.

ABSTRACT—

Education is crucial for successful, contended, and worthwhile life. But the million dollar question is: what kind of education? The paper is an attempt to find out an answer to the question by comparing present day education with the education imparted in gurukuls in ancient India. The present paper tries to throw light on the merits and demerits of the



both. While doing so there is an attempt to attempt to know various dimension of education and how education can help in the holistic development of a student. It is also a humble attempt to suggest as to what kind of education is needed to be imparted in our schools and colleges today.

KEY WORDS: Education, present, gurukul, student, life.

INTRODUCTION :

Informal education is a lifelong process. However, the present paper is concerned with formal education. Therefore, it would be appropriate to see a few definitions of formal education. A few of them is as follows.

- 1) Dictionary.com defines the term education as ‘the act or process of imparting or acquiring general knowledge, developing the powers of reasoning and judgment, and generally of preparing oneself or others intellectually for mature life’.
- 2) Merriam-Webster dictionary defines it as ‘the field of study that deals mainly with methods of teaching and learning in schools’.
- 3) Cambridge dictionary defines it as ‘the process of teaching or learning, especially in a school or college, or the knowledge that you get from this’.
- 4) About it Encyclopaedia Britannica writes, ‘Education, discipline that is concerned with methods of teaching and learning in schools or school-like environment as opposed to various nonformal (e.g., rural development projects and education through parent-child relationships). Education can be thought of as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. In this sense, it is equivalent to what social scientists term socialization or enculturation’.

From the above definitions it becomes ample clear that though it seems to be simple, it is quite difficult to define the term *education*. None of the above definitions can encompass all the dimensions of education, though they talk about a few of them. The last one given in Encyclopaedia Britannica is better than all other preceding definitions as it equates education with 'socialization' and 'enculturation'. To grasp the meaning of education, now let's see a few quotes on education by some of the best minds.

- 1) Education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another. – G. K. Chesterton
- 2) Education is the passport to the future, for tomorrow belongs to those who prepare for it today. – Malcolm X
- 3) Education is a progressive discovery of our own ignorance. – Will Durant
- 4) Do not train children to learning by force and harshness, but direct them to it by what amuses their minds, so that you may be better able to discover with accuracy the peculiar bent of the genius of each. – Plato
- 5) Perhaps the most valuable result of all education is the ability to make yourself do the thing you have to do, whether you like it or not. – Thomas Henry Huxley
- 6) There are two educations. One should teach us how to make a living and the other how to live. – John Adams
- 7) Education is not a preparation for life; education is life itself. – John Dewey
- 8) The roots of education are bitter, but the fruit is sweet. - Aristotle
- 9) I have never let my schooling interfere with my education. – Mark Twain
- 10) The only thing that interferes with my learning is my education. – Albert Einstein
- 11) The highest education is that which does not merely give us information but makes our life in harmony with all existence. – Rabindranath Tagore
- 12) Right education should help the student, not only to develop his capacities, but to understand his own highest interest. – J. Krishnamurti
- 13) Education is the manifestation of perfection present already in man. – Swami Vivekananda
- 14) Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world. – Nelson Mandela

Comparison of Gurukul Education System with the Present Education System: Now let's compare the present education with the education given in gurukuls in ancient India with reference to the points mentioned in the definitions and the quotes given above.

According to the first definition given above, education develops a student's powers of reasoning and judgment and prepares him intellectually for future life. Present system of education gives emphasis on transfer of information from teacher to student and rote learning. It in no way develops a student's reasoning and judgement, let alone preparing him for future life. On other hand, gurukul system of education of ancient India certainly developed these faculties of the students and prepared them thoroughly for their future life. It developed the student's intelligence quotient, emotional quotient, social quotient, adversity quotient, ethical quotient, spiritual quotient, and all other dimensions of his personality. The students were prepared physically as well as mentally for future life. They were given training in the use of arms as per their inclination. They were instilled in the spirit of self-respect and self-confidence and were made strong in all ways. They were also taught to respect others. The greatest significance was given to the development of moral and ethical consciousness. In addition, it was strived to develop the scientific temperament of the students. Therefore, many scientific inventions took place in India when the remaining world was still primitive. Gurus in gurukuls would not only clearly tell a student at the very beginning of his education that the student should use his discretion faculty and learn only virtues of his gurus and ignore their vices, but also they helped him in all way to develop his faculties of reasoning and judgment. The prime emphasis was on the development of a student's character. No effort was spared in to develop him holistically. Obviously, after the completion of his education, a student would be fully prepared for his future life and attain the four *purusharthas* viz. *dharma*, *artha*, *kama*, and *moksha*. No such holistic development of students takes place in the present system of education.

According to Encyclopaedia Britannica, education can be thought of as the transmission of the values and accumulated knowledge of a society. In this sense, it is equivalent to what social scientists term socialization or enculturation. It cannot be said of today's education as it transmits information, but values and accumulated wisdom of the society. It is not at all a sort of socialization or enculturation. On the other hand, it does not acquaint the students with rich Indian culture; moreover, it is making them look down upon their own rich culture which, on the other hand, is attracting scores of western people. Contrary to it, gurukul education was really equivalent to socialization/enculturation. In ancient times, youngsters from all strata of society would get education in gurukuls. In other words, children belonging to different social, economic classes studied together in a gurukul living there. A student has to share the room with other students which also helped in his socialisation as it taught him sharing, adjustment, understanding others, thinking of others, living amicably with others, etc. Besides getting education that developed them mentally, emotionally, physically, socially, etc., they had to do various kinds of work such as sweeping their rooms and gurukul premises, fetch water and dried twigs and branches, seek alms, and many odd works. This instilled many qualities in the student needed to live a respectful, dignified life, and happy co-existence. This happy co-existence included non-human beings, and all other entities in external nature. In other words, environmental education too was imparted in a gurukul. To use the words of Rabindranath Tagore, it was the highest kind of education as it not merely gave information but made human life in harmony with all existence. In a gurukul the students were also trained in disaster management. In gurukul system of education, the wisdom related to various aspects of life that was accumulated through many generations was transmitted to the students through the study of the four Vedas (Rigved, Yajurved, Atharvaved, and Samved), Ayurveda (Medical Science), Dhanurveda (Science of Archery), Krishishastra (Science of Agriculture), Arthshastra (Economics and Commerce), Dharmashastra (Science of Ethics), Vyakarnshastra (Science of Grammar), Jyotishshastra (Astrology), Science of Arts and Music, Atomic Science, etc. Apart from the study of these texts, there was an emphasis on the inculcation of virtues and values in the students. Except Vedas, all other subjects were optional and the students chose only those subjects that interested them and which they found useful for the career they intended to do in future. The students were made aware of apparent (dream) and transactional reality (present life), the absolute reality (Parbrahma/the Supreme Soul) and unity in the universe by helping them develop their consciousness, which helped them live amicably with other human and non-human beings as they saw the existence of the Supreme Soul in everything – living and non-living things. In Gurukul education system there was a fine balance between theory and education which helped its students attain all the four *purusharthas*. Education imparted in a gurukul was not a preparation for life, but life itself.

According to G. K. Chesterton, education is simply the soul of a society as it passes from one generation to another. We all know that today's education is certainly not the passing of the soul of a society from one generation to another as it is disconnected from social reality. However, the above definition of education can be said to be true of gurukul system of education as it was rooted in social reality; it transmitted wisdom related to different aspects of life accumulated through many generations and prepared the students for the later social life. In this sense, it can be said that gurukul education system passed the soul of the society from one generation to another. It taught how to live in a society with dignity and achieve four *purusharthas*. Thus, gurukul education, as Malcolm X said, was the passport to the future. It was also a progressive discovery of our own ignorance as Will Durant said for its prime purpose was awakening of a student's consciousness which enabled him to realise the true state of himself and the whole cosmos; it helped him realise his ignorance and eradicate it. It was a sort of education that caused the manifestation of perfection present already in man. Obviously, there was not any difference between schooling and education, or learning and education as it is today; hence these differences are mentioned by Albert Einstein and Mark Twain, but no ancient scholar. Gurukul education was the right kind of education as it not only developed a student's capacities, but to understand his own highest interest. Students were trained in the use of weapons as per their liking/inclination. The same was true of vocational training given in gurukuls. Therefore, the varna system then was not based on the birth, but one's choice of vocation. One

chose a vacation which he was good at. Obviously, the whole society was benefitted from it. One thing should be noted here that no occupation was considered superior or inferior to other occupations then time; all occupations were considered equally dignified. Gurukul education taught them how to live amicably with others while causing the self-progress as well as the progress of the society they lived in. Therefore, it would not be wrong to say that gurukul education was the most powerful weapon which the people in ancient India used to change themselves and the society they lived in.

CONCLUSION:

Present education system is memory based, while gurukul education system struck a good balance between theory and practice. Present education prepares its students for a career, while gurukul education prepared the student not only for their career, but also for a contented, worthwhile life. Present education system has lately realised the significance of soft skills for successful career and life, while they were inbuilt in gurukul education. In short, gurukul education was far better than the present day education as it helped in the holistic development of the students that resulted in their contented, successful, and worthwhile life. Therefore, we need to restructure our education system based on gurukul education system prevalent in ancient India.

REFERENCES:

- 1) Altekar, A. S. *Education in Ancient India*. Delhi: Isha Books, 2009.
- 2) Balkrishna. *The Gurukul System of Education and Its Critics, Etc.* Saddharma Pracharak Press, 1911.
- 3) Gawande, E. N. *Value Oriented Education: Vision for Better Living*. New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2008.
- 4) Sharma, Ram Nath and Rajendra K. Sharma. *Problems of Education in India*. New Delhi: Atlantic Publishers and Distributors, 2004.
- 5) <https://www.britannica.com/topic/education>
- 6) <https://www.dictionary.com/browse/education>
- 7) <https://www.dictionary.org/dictionary/english/education>
- 8) <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/education>
- 9) <https://www.thehindu.com/features/education/famous-quotes-on-education/article4543948.ece>