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## **GURUKUL: APRISTINE FRAMEWORK FOR AN IDEAL WAY OF LIFE**

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### **ABSTRACT**

The Gurukul system, which served as the foundation for an ideal way of life and holistic education, played a crucial role in shaping individuals from a young age. The experiences, education, and rituals that were imparted during this period had a profound impact on their future lives. Unlike conventional schools, the Gurukul was not merely an educational institution but rather the residence of a Guru, who also served as a parent and teacher. In order to reside in the Gurukul, disciples were required to contribute to the daily tasks and responsibilities of the ashram. This collective participation fostered a sense of unity and shared responsibility among the disciples. Furthermore, disciples were expected to offer Gurudakshina, a token of gratitude and respect, to their guru upon completion of their education. This practice aimed to instill the value of utilizing education for the betterment of oneself and society, by encouraging disciples to excel in various examinations through the path of truth. The Gurukul system not only focused on intellectual development but also nurtured the holistic growth of individuals. By emphasizing the cultivation of a cultured mind alongside physical development, the Gurukul system aimed to produce well-rounded individuals. Even in contemporary times, certain regions continue to uphold the traditions of the Gurukul system, recognizing its enduring benefits and relevance. This research paper delves into the Gurukul system, exploring its advantages, significance, and accomplishments in the present era.

**Key words:** Education System, Gurukul, Guru-Shishya Parampara etc

### **INTRODUCTION**

सहनौयशः | सहनौब्रह्मवर्चसम् || तैत्तेरीयउपनिषद, शीक्षावल्ली, ३.१||

The Guru, together with the disciples, offers prayers for success in attaining ultimate power or '*Brarahmatej*'. The Upanishad originated from the idea of sitting in close proximity. All the Upanishads consist of a dialogue between *Guru* and *Shishya* in a question-and-answer format. The former form serves as a connection between the *Acharyas* are Eastern form and *Shishyas* are northern form, where *Shishyas* were research scholars and their *Acharyas* - sages were scientists, and the attainment of research success from them is considered as *siddhi*.

In this system, knowledge of various subjects was acquired through practical experience. The disciples, under the guidance of subject experts, were taught by the *Acharyas* who



understood their inclinations. The curriculum encompassed a wide range of disciplines such as languages, arts, sciences, medicine, agriculture, management, sports, and education based on a structured syllabus. The students' proficiency in day-to-day activities was enhanced as they were required to participate in all household chores at the Guru's residence. The gurukul system fostered unity as children from diverse backgrounds, including those from royal families and commoners, lived together harmoniously. The gurus treated and educated all students equally. The Acharyas, led by vice-chancellors, shared their knowledge under their supervision. Consequently, the students returned home as exemplary individuals. Gurukul exemplifies an ideal system that nurtures exemplary citizens. By focusing on the holistic development of the mind and body, this method encourages individuals to distance themselves from external temptations and become cultured householders.

The deliberate sabotage of this system occurred during the period of British rule with the intention of guaranteeing the enforcement of the state system. The repercussions of this deliberate act have been witnessed in the ongoing social transformations that have been unfolding across generations up until the present day.

#### **AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

1. The aim is to recognize and assess the most effective methods within the components of the novel educational framework.
2. Examining the efficacy of the Gurukul education system.
3. Assessing the correlation between the 'New Education Policy 2020' and traditional 'Gurukul' education system.
4. Emphasizing the importance of the ancient 'Gurukul' education system.

#### **NEW EDUCATION POLICY AND GURUKUL**

The foundation of the New Education policy is built upon the Five poles and Five sheaths (Panch Koshas).

Five poles-

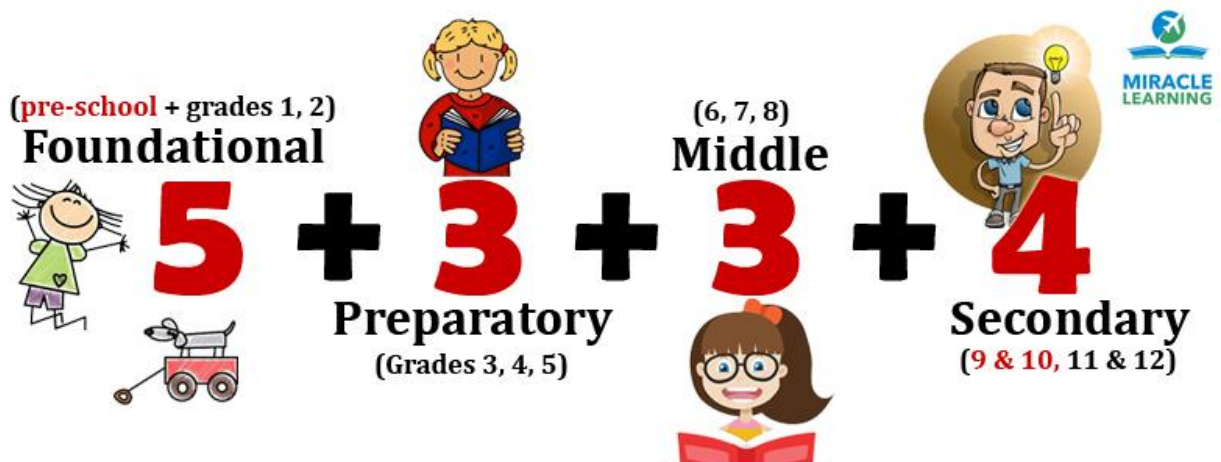
1. Adhiti – It is an introduction, in which study, recollection, reflection and remembrance has mentioned.
2. Bodh- It is conceptual understandings through play, enquiry, experiments, discussions or readings which develops curiosity, critical thinking, and foundation of future learning?
3. Abhyas- It is the reinforcement through practice, hands on experience which develops life skills, problem solving, collaboration, patience.
4. Prayog – It is an application or integration in real life which can develop multidimensional thinking power, individuals can become confident, capable and responsible.
5. Prasar – It is an expansion of knowledge through sharing for lifetime.

Panchkoshas-

1. The Annamay Kosh focuses on providing an intensive education and cooperative learning experience for the physical development of individuals.
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2. The ManomayaKosh aims to create a conducive environment and instill positive values in order to enhance the intellectual, emotional, and mental work performed by individuals.
3. The PranamayaKosh emphasizes education and practical training in activities such as pranayama and yoga, which contribute to maintaining a healthy and balanced body and mind.
4. The VidnyanmayKosh encompasses the knowledge and understanding of societal norms and regulations, enabling individuals to effectively participate and contribute to the rule-making process within a society.
5. The AnandmayKosh encompasses the positive transformation of both the country and the environment as a whole, achieved through the integration and application of the aforementioned educational components.

As per the latest education policy, the structure is now organized into a 5+3+3+4 format. In same way, under the traditional Gurukul system, children would typically commence their education at the age of 8.



Source: <https://images.app.goo.gl/iPbLZB1vDvKFP9Lf7>

### VARIOUS PROCESSES WITHIN THE GURUKUL TRADITION

It exhibits a deep consideration for the Panchapadi and Panchakosh. Although unintentional, these processes encompassed rituals and education. Upon awakening during the auspicious time of Brahma Muhurta in the morning, one would engage in a series of activities including attending to bodily functions, performing physical exercises, practicing yoga, taking a refreshing bath, and dedicating time to self-study. The ashram served as both the guru's residence and the disciples' dwelling, necessitating the involvement of all in tasks such as tree planting, water collection, stove maintenance, food production, animal husbandry, supervision, agriculture, place of yajna, and overall house management. Each disciple had a specific task, ensuring an equitable distribution of responsibilities. Following this, the Guru imparted knowledge by reciting 'Santha' to the disciples, encompassing various Vedas and sciences. Subsequently, question and answer sessions were conducted, enabling the disciples to delve



deeper into their understanding. Upanishads, similar in nature, were also created. The years of education were filled with routines such as meals, rest, play, studying the lessons taught, contemplating upon them, seeking necessary guidance, and conducting research. These routines facilitated the disciples' growth and development. Notably, parental intervention was absent within this system. Through a uniform approach to education, both the Guru and Shishyas were able to achieve satisfaction and happiness.

In general, the gurukul's layout was designed in a circular manner, fostering a feeling of camaraderie. During the instructional sessions, the disciples would gather beneath a tree, with the Guru positioned in close proximity, providing guidance. This approach facilitated a harmonious and interactive educational experience, promoting both joy and effective communication.

The examination was consistently conducted in various locations, ensuring regular practice and a clear understanding of the concepts. There was no intense competition to copy and pass the exam, leaving no room for stress or its subsequent effects.

सत्यंवद| धर्मचर| स्वाध्यायान्माप्रमद|

सत्यानाम्प्रमदितव्यम्| धर्मान्नप्रमदितव्यम्|

कुशलान्नप्रमदितव्यम्| भूत्यै नप्रमदितव्यम्|

स्वाध्यायप्रवचनाभ्याम्प्रमदितव्यम् | देव पतृकार्याभ्याम्प्रमदितव्यम् ||

तैत्तरीयउपनिषद, शीक्षावल्ली, ३.११||

Upon returning home from the Guru's abode, the disciple would offer Gurudakshina, not only as a token of gratitude but also as a means to implement the acquired knowledge. In this manner, the disciple, now a householder, would live in society as an enlightened and cultured individual. The acharya would bid farewell, providing guidance to prevent any future mistakes. The Taitriya Upanishad's Shiksha Valli contains the phrase '*Pramaditvyam*', which serves as a reminder to avoid making errors.

### **FEATURES OF THE GURUKUL EDUCATION SYSTEM**

The admission of students at the age of 8 without any fees. This allows for equal access to education, regardless of financial background. Additionally, the Gurukul system encompasses all aspects of education, research, living, and eating within one centralized location. This holistic approach ensures that students are fully immersed in their educational journey. One notable aspect of the Gurukul education system is the emphasis on learning in the mother tongue. This approach not only helps students connect with their cultural roots but also enhances the learning experience by making it more focused and enjoyable. Furthermore, the design of the Gurukul does not rely on traditional teaching methods but rather on guiding students. This guidance takes place in natural surroundings, such as under trees, in a circular manner, fostering a closer connection with nature.



Unlike other educational systems that prioritize competition and high-paying jobs, the Gurukul system focuses on the overall development of students. While competition exists, the ultimate goal is not solely to secure a lucrative job or go abroad. Instead, the emphasis is on personal growth, character development, and the pursuit of knowledge. In the Gurukul system, the vice-chancellor or Acharya plays a crucial role in guiding the disciples. They identify the inclinations and talents of each student and allocate time accordingly. There is no concept of appraisal, promotion, or future planning, as the focus is on nurturing individual potential rather than conforming to predetermined career paths.

Lastly, the Gurukul education system fosters a culture of inclusiveness and equal participation. All students are encouraged to actively engage in various activities and tasks, promoting a sense of community and shared responsibility. This collaborative approach ensures that every student feels valued and contributes to the overall functioning of the Gurukul. Overall, the Gurukul education system offers a unique and comprehensive approach to learning, encompassing various aspects of education, personal development, and community participation. By prioritizing individual growth, cultural connection, and holistic education, the Gurukul system aims to shape well-rounded individuals who are not only academically proficient but also socially conscious and culturally rooted.

### **THE DIMINISHING PROMINENCE OF THE GURUKUL MODEL**

The Gurukul system experienced a significant decline during the British rule, as politicians, led by education scholar Macalloy, sought to dismantle the Indian knowledge system in order to strengthen British dominance. Various methods were employed to undermine the Gurukul tradition, resulting in the proliferation of inequality based on religion, caste, and gender. This poisonous influence was so deeply ingrained that even after the British departed, their English rule continued to exert control. The education system implemented during this period gave rise to a class of clerks who served as instruments of British subjugation. The sacred bond between Guru and Shishyas were severed, and in its place emerged a system that prioritized examination and the teachers who prepared students solely for this purpose.

### **CONCLUSION**

The Gurukul tradition, considered as the cornerstone of the Indian knowledge system, was characterized by its exemplary framework, study methodology, and cultural practices. Under this system, young disciples would enter and emerge as well-informed and cultured individuals, both intellectually and morally. However, the British rulers perceived these very values as oppressive, leading them to introduce a more structured and standardized form of education for the students. Nevertheless, in present times, Gurukuls in various states of India continue to uphold certain aspects of this tradition. In line with the New Education Policy, if the Gurukul tradition is revitalized in accordance with the Indian knowledge system, it has the potential to position the country at the forefront of global by education, experimentation, and research.



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