



ISSN : 2456-1363

# International Journal of Scientific Research & Growth

*A multidisciplinary journal for empowering the research*

## **Gurukul Education System for Better life: Bharatiya Education Stem**

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### **Abstract**

The kernel of Gurukul system of education is intrinsically based on time tested values and principles. It envisions its strength in developing a native sense of concentration and interest while enhancing a child's knowledge and development of the brain. The wards in the Gurukul are oblivious of outer distractions, living in close proximity of a teacher, where greater emphasis is laid on students mental, and cognitive, spiritual and physical wellness. The system functions on the well-rounded holistic development of a child, enshrining values such as discipline, self-reliance, right attitude, empathy, creativity, and strong moral beliefs. Initiating children into such an enriching atmosphere in the early stages helps them

hone their perceptive skills and critical thinking from a tender age, giving them an edge over others.

To propound the importance of Guru, it has been said that Guru Brahma, Guru Vishnu Guru Devo Maheshwar, Guru Sakshat Paramam Brahma Tasmai Sri Guruve Namah|

**Keywords:**-Gurukul, Education system and Bharat

### **Introduction**

A gurukula or gurukulam (Sanskrit: Gurkul, romanized: gurukula) is a type of education system in ancient India with shishya ('students' or 'disciples') living near or with the guru, in the same house. The guru-shishya tradition is a sacred one in Hinduism and possibly appears in other dharmas in India, such as Jainism and Buddhism. (In the Sikh tradition by contrast, the word Guru has a very restricted use and not generally applied to individual teachers, while the institution of Gurdwara has a major social role instead of a monastic one.) The word gurukula is a combination of the Sanskrit words guru ('teacher' or 'master') and kula ('family' or 'home'). The term is also used today to refer to residential monasteries or schools operated by modern gurus. The proper plural of the term is gurukulam, though gurukulas and gurukuls are also used in English and some other Western languages.

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The gurukula system of education has been in existence since ancient times. The Upanishads (1000-800 BCE) mention multiple gurukulam, including that of guru Drona at Gurgaon.[2] The Bhrigu Valli (a discourse on the Brahman) is said to have taken place in Guru Varuni's gurukula. The vedic school of thought prescribes the gurukula (sacred rite of passage) to all individuals before the age of 8 at least by 12. From initiation until the age of 25 all individuals are prescribed to be students and to remain unmarried, a celibate. The 'Gurukul' system of education is the epitome of Indian style of learning. Basically, a gurukul is a school where students live along with their mentors and receive education, moral values and life skills under their guidance. This process of learning is being practiced since early ages in India. Gurukul has mythological connotations. 'Luv-Kush', the 'Pandavas', 'Pralaadh', 'Arjun' and even Lord Krishna studied in a 'Gurukul'. Even today, gurukul holds significance as it is known to develop the students holistically.

The Gurukul education system was a form of residential education system where the students lived in a Gurukul which was the home of the teacher or 'Acharya' and served to be the centre of education. The kernel of this education system lies in the principles of discipline and hard work. Students were expected to learn from their gurus and use their knowledge in practical life. The relationship that existed between the student and teacher is sacred and it often didn't involve any formal

payments but a Gurudakshina that the student offered the teacher as a homage to their relentless support. This education system began in ancient times during the Vedic age when there was no particular form of formal education but the learning was skill-based and religiously rooted in Vedas, Puranas and holy texts which were the imperative guide for students to expand their horizon of knowledge.

Listed below are some of the major objectives of the Gurukul education system.

Holistic Development

Personality growth

Spiritual Awakening

Awareness about nature and society

Passing on of knowledge and culture through generations

Self-control and discipline in life

## **Why Is The Gurukul System Valuable?**

The Gurukul System has been very valuable for the students. The modern day education is different from the gurukul education system especially because it focused on quality and holistic education:

**Applied Knowledge:** Gurukul focused on applied knowledge and offered an education that prepares them for all fields of life. Today, it can be done by combining academics and extracurricular activities along with mindful and spiritual awareness. 266



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**Student-teacher relationship:** Gurukul creates a teacher and student relationship that creates a secure learning environment. This way students have trust in their caregivers.

**Value-based Learning:** Gurukul offered value-based learning where learning happens as per the uniqueness of the child. This offers healthy competition and reduces stress levels amongst children.

How the students were divided in the Gurukul

Students were divided into three categories:

Vasu - One who has attained education till the age of 24 years.

Rudra- One who has attained education till the age of 36 years.

Aditya- Those who have attained education till the age of 48 years.

Equal facilities were given to everyone in Gurukul. In Manusmriti, Manu Maharaj has said that everyone should send their boys and girls to the Gurukul, do not deprive anyone of education and do not keep them in the house. The description of the origin, functioning and various religious leaders of the Nath sect, Gurukul was very active regarding equal education

of men and women. Example: In the Uttaramcharita, there is a mention of a woman named Atreyi studying with Luv-Kush in Valmiki's ashram. This shows that co-education has been in India since ancient times. The stories of Kahod and Sujata, Rahu and Pramadwara are also mentioned in the Puranas. It is known from these that girls used to study with the boys and they were married when they became young.

Later on, the Gurukuls of boys and girls were separated, just as boys were given education, in the same way girls were also given education, education of scriptures and weapons and knowledge of Vedas was given.

## **Nalanda University (Gurukul)**

Nālandā, pronounced was a renowned Buddhist monastery and university in ancient Magadha (modern-day Bihar), India. Located near the city of Rajagriha (now Rajgir) and about 90 kilometres (56 mi) southeast of Pataliputra (now Patna), it operated from about 427 to 1197 CE. Nalanda was established during the Gupta Empire era, and was supported by numerous Indian and a few Javanese patrons – both Buddhists and non-Buddhists. Over some 750 years, its faculty included some of the most revered scholars of Mahayana Buddhism. Nalanda mahavihara taught six major Buddhist schools and



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philosophies such as Yogacara and Sarvastivada, the Hindu Vedas and its six philosophies, as well as subjects such as grammar, medicine, logic and mathematics. The university was also a major source of the 657 Sanskrit texts carried by pilgrim Xuanzang and the 400 Sanskrit texts carried by Yijing to China in the 7th-century, which influenced East Asian Buddhism. Today, it is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

## **TakshaShila University (Gurukul)**

Taksha (the shortened moniker for TakshaShila) Institute was named after “Taksha’s Cut-Rock (or ‘Stele’) City” in ancient northern India, the site of the ancient world’s supposed first international university (c. 800 BCE – 550 CE). It was described as the wealthiest city of that time, in India. The designation “Taksha” symbolizes the abiding ideals of solid and deep-rooted respect for teachers, unfettered freedom of thought, learning of different streams of knowledge, excellence in education, and extraordinary discipline that prevailed at the ancient University.

Some scholars date Takshashila’s existence back to the 8th century BCE. It was known as a center of learning at least several centuries before Christ, and continued to attract students from around the ancient world until its destruction in the 5th century CE. At ancient Takshashila University, 10,500

students (two out of three applicants rejected) came from within India and outside (Babylonia-now Iraq, Greece, Egypt, Syria, Asia Minor-now Turkey, Arabia, and China), to be taught by nearly 2000 master-teachers. The curriculum consisted of some 68 elective courses, including philosophy, law, state-craft, defense, warfare strategies, grammar (several languages), the 18 arts (music, dance, fine arts, etc.), mathematics, astronomy, astrology, plants & herbs, medicine (Ayurveda, Ayurvedic acupuncture, etc.), and surgery. Some of these, such as medicine, were taught for up to seven years before graduation.

## **Vikramashila University(Gurukul)**

Vikramashila was founded by Pāla king Dharmapala in the late 8th or early 9th century. It prospered for about four centuries .Vikramashila is known to us mainly through Tibetan sources, especially the writings of Tāranātha, the Tibetan monk historian of the 16th–17th centuries.Vikramashila was one of the largest Buddhist universities, with more than one hundred teachers and about one thousand students. It produced eminent scholars who were often invited by foreign countries to spread Buddhist learning, culture and religion.



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The most distinguished and eminent among all was Atisha Dipankara, a founder of the Sarma traditions of Tibetan Buddhism. Subjects like philosophy, grammar, metaphysics, Indian logic etc. were taught here, but the most important branch of learning was Buddhist tantra.

## Conclusion

It is evident from the above mentioned facts that Gurukul system is the path towards a healthier, conscientious world. We should progress with this vision to educate young minds and foster ethical, social, moral and spiritual values through holistic learning. So there is no doubt that there is a need to integrate both the education systems. We need to understand the Gurukul, how it works, what the society looked like in the past and how the purpose of Gurukul training can be fulfilled in the present. It is not just about knowing the past. It is imperative to have a co-ordination of both the education systems. We cannot forget that Gurukul system was the only education system of that time.

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