

EDUCATION *SANS* GROOMING

1. In the ancient India, during BC era, the **Gurukul System** of education and grooming was present and **widely practiced** by all. This system was considered the **best method of imparting knowledge along with wholesome personality development**. Passing through the ages, it is fading out and **almost extinct** but the **relevance of it is well established** till date.

2. In the Gurukul System, all young children of the age but 8 - 10 were sent to Gurukul away from the civilization, till they became adults. The **guru was a trusted person with vast knowledge** and immaculate character qualities, appreciable value system and ethos. They did **selfless service** with no personal or financial strings attached. Their sole aim was to make their disciples "**Sarva Gun Sampann**" (well groomed personality with all qualities). The advantages of Gurukul System can be summarised as follows:

- **No Inequality:** Children of all religions, castes and strata of society (kings and common men) used to **study, work and live together**.
- **Work is Worship:** Everybody did his own work and hence lived a hard life devoid of luxury and comfort, which taught them to the **self-reliant and respect dignity of labour**.
- **Team Building:** Gurukul stay was a great learning experience towards team building and camaraderie as all disciples grew up together as one family. Guru and his family were foster parents and local guardians. **Practical education and knowledge was imparted with day to day examples**. Formal education and benchmarks like certificate/degree was never the concern.
- **Character Building:** The disciples observed the lifestyle and behaviour of the guru and imbibed values, ethos and character qualities to **evolve as a better human being**.
- **No Interference:** The Gurukul living was not influenced by the society and interference by the parents, as they were located far away in jungles. Parents were seldom allowed to meet and disciples came home only once a year for limited time. The guru was much respected person and parents had full faith in his grooming. **They gave a free hand to the gurus**.

3. Over the ages, as the societal changes came in with more

influences of evil designs and self-centric developments, the gurukul system started getting diluted and fading away. The Indian civilization also started getting influenced by other methods of education, as the intruders and invaders brought in their own system of education and child development.

4. In the colonial period, the Britishers wisely thought that if they have to rule this oldest civilization, they should destroy its education system. They only wanted locals to do labour work and clerical jobs since it was cheaper to utilize locals for menial jobs. This gave rise to **Macaulayism** or the Lord Macaulay System of Education. It emphasized on imparting basic education of reading and writing in local languages and English. This would result in some exams at various levels as benchmark and helped them in providing them jobs as per these **established grades of qualification**. Subsequently, they became identified as primary, metric, high secondary, graduate and post graduate degrees. **Need for personality development was de-linked from education benchmarks** since they only wanted skilled labours/clerks and not managers/leaders.

5. It is during this period of **British Raj, that education and personality development slowly got diverged**. The emphasis was solely focused on achieving a benchmark / certificate or degree, which would fetch them a good job. The same system of education unfortunately continued after independence. The downslide continued even after independence with **no efforts to arrest the downfall**.

6. In the second half of 20th century, 50 years back (I remember my school days) there used to be periods for moral science, co-curricular activities and sports. These were well utilised for the relevant activities, contributing significantly towards grooming of the child. However, slowly schools started paying lip service to this important facet of personality development. It's also prudent to highlight that **brighter students did not take up teaching** or imparting education as career. This resulted in **mediocrity seeping into the education system** and teachers not getting their due respect from the society. The **teachers are themselves not very well groomed** so how could they groom the students.

7. Today, with the **downfall of public education system and rise of private education industry**, the education has become totally devoid of personality development. Thus, education today means **bookish knowledge** and providing degree based on this theoretical gyan or at times, even lack of it.

8. Ironically, the **need for personality development is felt acutely in 21st century** than ever before. There is unemployment everywhere. The education institutes are churning out unemployable degree holders. In the '**survival of the fittest**' competitive world, the **industry wants it's employees to be seen as their brand ambassadors**. They want to pick young graduates who not only have good domain knowledge but also are well groomed. They are expected to be generally aware of national and international issues, bring in **new value system and work culture** to lift up the company's image and efficiency.

9. In the current scenario, there is **wide mismatch between product available (degree holder) and industry's expectations from youth**. The young degree holders in search of suitable jobs are left to undergo personality development and grooming on their own. A large number of institutions have jumped into fray to make easy money by providing personality development and grooming lessons. There some institutions and organisations like **UDAAN NGO, Jaipur** (which I am associated) **stand out with a beacon of hope. UDAAN provides free motivation, career guidance and personality development to underprivileged students**. Such organisations are just a drop in the ocean or a sparkle of hope in the dark (Not even a ray of hope). More often, the students fall prey to money making institutions on false promises.

10. I think, time has come to **reinvent our education system**. Let's learn from gurukul system and **infuse our education curriculum with ethos, values, character building, basic social etiquettes and general awareness**. Imparting practical knowledge along with grooming to our students to make them **employable and better global citizens**, is the need of the 21st Century millennials.

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