CHAPTER ONE

DETAILED STUDY OF GURUKUL SYSTEM
1. Introduction:

1.1.: Tradition of Guru Shishya Parampara

Music in India has been passed on in a tradition best described as Guru-Shishya Parampara (preceptor-disciple tradition). This method has occupied an important place in Indian culture. The system of Guru-Shishya Parampara has been in this nation since the ancient times.

Dictionary Definition:

Source: Merriam-Webster's Learner's Dictionary

Guru: noun, gu·ru \\ gür-(,)ü, ’gū-(-,)rū also gə-’rū

Simple Definition of Guru: a religious teacher and spiritual guide in Hinduism; a teacher or guide that you trust; a person who has a lot of experience in or knowledge about a particular subject. ¹

Guru (Sanskrit: पुरु, IAST: guru) is a Sanskrit term that connotes someone who is a "teacher, guide, expert or master" of certain knowledge or field.²

The word guru (Sanskrit: पुरु), a noun, connotes "teacher" in Sanskrit, but in Indian traditions it has contextual meanings with significance beyond what teacher means in English.³ The guru is more than someone who teaches specific type of knowledge, and includes in its scope someone who is also a "counselor, a sort of parent of mind and soul, who helps mold values and experiential knowledge as much as specific knowledge, an exemplar in life, an inspirational source and who reveals the meaning of life."⁴ The word has the same meaning in other languages derived from or borrowing words from Sanskrit, such as Hindi, Marathi, Punjabi, Tamil, Telugu,

¹ http://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/guru
Kannada, Malayalam, Odia, Bengali, Gujarati and Nepali. The Malayalam term Acharyan or Asan are derived from the Sanskrit word Acharya.

As a noun the word means the imparter of knowledge (jñāna; also Pali: ānā). As an adjective, it means 'heavy,' or 'weighty,' in the sense of "heavy with knowledge," "heavy with spiritual wisdom," "heavy with spiritual weight," "heavy with the good qualities of scriptures and realization," or "heavy with a wealth of knowledge." The word has its roots in the Sanskrit grī (to invoke, or to praise), and may have a connection to the word gur, meaning 'to raise, lift up, or to make an effort.'

The syllable gu means darkness, the syllable ru, he who dispels them, Because of the power to dispel darkness, the guru is thus named.

— Advayataraka Upanishad, Verse 16

Another etymological theory considers the term "guru" to be based on the syllables gu (गु) and ru (रु), which it claims stands for darkness and "light that dispels it", respectively. The guru is seen as the one who "dispels the darkness of ignorance."

In pan-Indian traditions, guru is someone more than a teacher, traditionally a reverential figure to the student, with the guru serving as a "counsellor, who helps mould values, shares experiential knowledge as much as literal knowledge, an exemplar in life, an inspirational source and who helps in the spiritual evolution of a student." The term also refers to someone who primarily is one’s spiritual guide, who helps one to discover the same potentialities that the guru has already realized or master which can achieve expert level with his perfectness in every field.

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7 Joel Mlecko (1982), The Guru in Hindu Tradition Numen, Volume 29, Fasc. 1, pages 33-61
politics, education, sports, and other field. And become very important person or pivotal figure of that field.  

The oldest references to the concept of guru are found in the earliest Vedic texts of Hinduism. The guru, and gurukul – a school run by guru, were an established tradition in India by the 1st millennium BCE, and these helped compose and transmit the various Vedas, the Upanishads, texts of various schools of Hindu philosophy, and post-Vedic Shastras ranging from spiritual knowledge to various arts. By about mid-1st millennium CE, archaeological and epigraphical evidence suggest numerous larger institutions of gurus existed in India, some near Hindu temples, where guru-shishya tradition helped preserve, create and transmit various fields of knowledge. These gurus led broad ranges of studies including Hindu scriptures, Buddhist texts, grammar, philosophy, martial arts, music and painting.

The way all the subjects like literature, philosophy, Vedas were taught and made learned through face to face or Seena-ba-seena and verbalisation or mukhast in the same way music which is primarily a vocal and performing art, was also taught through Gurumukh and was assimilated. A guru is regarded as the metaphysical father of his disciple and is ranked higher than biological parents. The Gurukul (guru's dynasty or family) system dates back to the Vedic period. In the Gurukul system of education, a pupil or shishya, after his initiation (sacred thread ceremony), lived in the house of his guru, or teacher, and studied the Vedas and other subjects under his guidance, for a period of 12 years. Gurus were expected to teach everything they knew to the disciple. The institution was accessible only to the upper classes. The Gurukuls were well supported by kings who considered it their duty to make them financially viable. After the student proved to be deserving candidate, he would get the discipleship of the Guru. A reverent master would bestow all his knowledge, skills to the fullest and make his student a perfect and a learned shishya. The success of a shishya was an image of the Guru’s success.

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8 Guru, Encyclopædia Britannica (2013)
In the Indian culture and Guru is given the highest place which can be seen in the following shloka:

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A Guru had same respect in the field of music too. Bookish knowledge had the capacity to get destroyed. Alexandria’s book library got destroyed in 300 BC due to which Greece and Rome had to suffer the loss of most of its written knowledge. But the Indian way of teaching: the guru shishya Parampara was a secure way of teaching and learning. In spite of tolerating the gusts in the field of performing art it is still attainable in the culture and the society. There are several granthas that contain the records of Natya and Sangeet that have been possible because of guru shishya Parampara’s oral and verbal teaching and learning forms. Teaching music in Institutional form and Collective or for mass was a gift by the 20th century AD. Before the 20th century AD this system was almost not present anywhere in the country.

The Vedas are considered as the primitive source of Indian music. The Samved is totally dedicated to music. In ancient times, singing of Richas of Samved helped in creation of swaras. Later, many branches were established like, Kauthumeeya, Ranananiya and Jaiminiya which were some of the popular ones. They all had their own Guru Shishya Parampara. Shivmat, Brahmamat, Bharatmat, Hanumatmat they all had their own vision of their theories, art and theatrics. For example, Dattil, Kohal, Matang and Abhinavgupt were the followers of Bharatmat. Ancient music tradition of Shuddha, Bhinna, Gaudi, Vesara of Prabandh-gan; Sadharani; Gaurahi, Dagur, Nauhar and Khadar Banis of Dhrupad; Gwalior, Agra, Jaipur, Kirana Gharanas all have evolved because of the characteristics of Guru shishya Parampara.

There is a variation in the level of authority that may be granted to the guru. The highest is that found in bhakti yoga, and the lowest is in the pranayama forms of

9 Dr. Amareshchandra Chaube, Sangeet Ki Sansthagat Shikshan- Pranali, Edition 1st, 1988, Krishna Brothers, Ajmer, pp 6
10 Ref- S.S. Paranjape, Bhartiya Sangeet Ka Itihas, Chaukhanba Prakashan, PP. 64
yoga such as the Sankara Saranam movement. Between these two there are many variations in degree and form of authority.

1.2.: Types of Guru Shishya Parampara:

Advaita Vedanta: Advaita Vedānta requires anyone seeking to study Advaita Vedānta to do so from a guru (teacher). The guru must have the following qualities (see Mundaka Upanishad 1.2.12):

1. Śrotriya — must be learned in the Vedic scriptures and sampradaya

2. Brahmaniṣṭha — figuratively meaning "established in Brahman"; must have realised the oneness of Brahman in everything and in himself.

The seeker must serve the guru and submit his questions with all humility so that doubt may be removed. (see Bhagavad Gita 4.34). According to Advaita, the seeker will be able to attain liberation from the cycle of births and deaths (moksha).

Śruti tradition:

The guru–shishya tradition plays an important part in the Shruti tradition of Vaidika dharma. The Hindus believe that the Vedas have been handed down through the ages from guru to shishya. The Vedas themselves prescribe for a young brahmachari to be sent to a Gurukul where the Guru (referred to also asacharya) teaches the pupil the Vedas and Vedangas. The pupil is also taught the prayoga to perform yajnas. The term of stay varies (Manu Smriti says the term may be 12 years, 36 years or 48 years). After the stay at the Gurukul the brahmachari returns home after performing a ceremony called samavartana.

The word Śrauta is derived from the word Śruti meaning that which is heard. The Śrauta tradition is a purely oral handing down of the Vedas, but many modern Vedic scholars make use of books as a teaching tool.
Shaktipat tradition:

The guru passes his knowledge to his disciples by virtue of the fact that his purified consciousness enters into the selves of his disciples and communicates its particular characteristic. In this process the disciple is made part of the spiritual family (kula) - a family which is not based on blood relations but on people of the same knowledge.11

Bhakti yoga:

The best known form of the guru–shishya relationship is that of bhakti. Bhakti (Sanskrit = Devotion) means surrender to God or guru. Bhakti extends from the simplest expression of devotion to the ego-destroying principle of prapatti, which is total surrender. The bhakti form of the guru–shishya relationship generally incorporates three primary beliefs or practices:

1. Devotion to the guru as a divine figure or Avatar.
2. The belief that such a guru has transmitted, or will impart moksha, diksha or shaktipat to the (successful) shishya.
3. The belief that if the shishya’s act of focusing his or her devotion (bhakti) upon the guru is sufficiently strong and worthy, then some form of spiritual merit will be gained by the shishya.

Prapatti:

In the ego-destroying principle of prapatti (Sanskrit, "Throwing oneself down"), the level of the submission of the will of the shishya to the will of God or the guru is sometimes extreme, and is often coupled with an attitude of personal helplessness, self-effacement and resignation. This doctrine is perhaps best expressed in the teachings of the four Samayacharya saints, who shared a profound and mystical love of Siva expressed by:

1. Deep humility and self-effacement, admission of sin and weakness;

2. Total surrender to God as the only true refuge; and

3. A relationship of lover and beloved known as bridal mysticism, in which the devotee is the bride and Siva the bridegroom.

In its most extreme form it sometimes includes:

The assignment of all or many of the material possessions of the *shishya* to the guru:

1) The strict and unconditional adherence by the *shishya* to all of the commands of the guru. An example is the legend that *Karna* silently bore the pain of a wasp stinging his thigh so as not to disturb his *guru Parashurama*.

2) A system of various titles of implied superiority or deification which the guru assumes, and often requires the *shishya* to use whenever addressing the guru.

3) The requirement that the *shishya* engage in various forms of physical demonstrations of affection towards the guru, such as bowing, kissing the hands or feet of the guru, and sometimes agreeing to various physical punishments as may sometimes be ordered by the guru.

4) Sometimes the authority of the guru will extend to all aspects of the *shishya's* life, including sexuality, livelihood, social life, etc.

Often a guru will assert that he or she is capable of leading a *shishya* directly to the highest possible state of spirituality or consciousness, sometimes referred to within Hinduism as moksha. In the bhakti *guru–shishya* relationship the guru is often believed to have supernatural powers, leading to the deification of the guru.¹²

In today's time the credit of technical aspect and ordination goes to Guru Shishya Parampara. All the famous singers and musicians have either directly or indirectly have been disciplined and learnt music through Guru Shishya Parampara¹³. Hence, in this chapter the focus will be on the Ancient way of teaching music through Gurukul Tradition from where it all started.

¹² https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Guru%E2%80%93shishya_tradition
Image: An artist’s impression of a traditional Gurukul from Vedic Period.
2. Detailed Study of Gurukul:

2.1.: History of Gurukul

2.1.1.: Definition of Gurukul:

Gurukul or Gurukul (Sanskrit: गुरुकुल) is a type of school in India, residential in nature, with pupils or shishya living near the guru, often within the same house. India has been known as the land of Gurus and Gurukuls. Gurukuls were great centres of learning in the ancient India. In the Gurukul System of Education, students lived in the kula (family) of their Guru (teacher) and studied the Vedas (Sacred Scriptures) and other subjects, such as Śikshā (Phonetics), Vyākarana (Grammar) and Jyotisha (Astronomy), and sciences like Arthaśāstra (Economics), Dharmaśāstra (Laws), Śastra vidyā (Art of Warfare), Kalā (Fine Arts) etc. under his guidance for a minimum period of 9 to 12 years.

Dr. A.S. Altekar says, “The Gurukul system which necessitated the staye of the student away from his home at the home of the teacher or in boarding house of established reputation, was one of the most important features of ancient Indian education.”

The Guru identified the capability of his students and accordingly imparted knowledge. The students learnt the Vedas and Śāstras amidst the natural surroundings of the kula or āshram, in open air, in close contact with nature. The Gurukul System of Education was dedicated to the highest ideals of ‘all-round human development’, namely, physical (practical), mental (intellectual) and spiritual (religious), leading to God-realization (Brahmasākshātkāra). The system was based on the principle, “Experience (anubhava) is the best teacher.” At the end of their training, the students thus emerged as responsible individuals who are well learned in the Vedas and capable of facing the toughest challenges of life. One of the most

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16 N. Jaypalan, Education in Ancient India, Atlantic Publishers & Dist, 2005, Pp 5
popular cultural institutions in India, which still follows the Gurukul System of Education, is Shantiniketan near Calcutta, which was established by the great Guru, artist, philosopher and literary laureate Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941).\footnote{Kurian Kachappilly, Gurukul: A Family with Difference - An Exposition of the Ancient Indian System of Education, 3 rd International ‘Soul in Education’ Conference Byron Bay, NSW, Australia, Sep 27 – Oct 2, 2003Pp 1}

**Gurukul: The Family of the Teacher:**

The word, Gurukul, literally means the ‘family’ (kula) of the teacher (Guru). Gurukul is an ancient Indian concept of education, wherein the student imbibed knowledge by residing with his Guru as part of his family. The word, kula, indicates the close relationship that existed between the teacher and students. Since kula means a ‘family’, Gurukul did not mean the ‘school’ of a teacher but the ‘family’ of a teacher. The Guru was more than merely a teacher; he was a parent, a guide and role model for all the students.

The following text from the Atharva Veda captures the spirit of family in the Gurukul: “ācārya upanayamāno brahmaṇārṇam kṛṣṇute garbha-mantah.”\footnote{Atharva Veda, 2, 3, 5} That is, the ācārya, while accepting a child, protects her/him as a pregnant woman protects her child in her womb. The Guru used to take the place of their real father the moment the children joined the Gurukul. It is true that while getting admission in the Gurukul, the students leave behind their parents who had given them birth, but their place is taken by the Guru, who is not only a teacher but also a parent to them. In some accounts, the Guru’s wife – Guru-Ma – lived in the āshram along with her husband, providing material care for the students. The āshram was veritably Gurukul, where the students were loved and cared for as members of the Guru’s family.

It is believed to be a modern discovery in the field of education that a child should at no stage feel cut off from the family or society. It may be pointed out that this very belief lay at the bottom of Gurukul System of Education. This system, as enunciated in the Vedas, clearly visualizes the entry of the child from a small family, comprising
of the father, mother, brothers and sisters, to the bigger family, comprising of teachers and students, where all live together in a social milieu. This is such a revolutionary idea that, if implemented in modern education, can bring out good results by transforming the whole society.

Swami Dayanand, for instance, visualized a scheme of education called ‘Gurukul’ in which all children of the society – irrespective of their birth, caste or creed – would be admitted in these institutions, where each and every child would get the same kind of food, the same kind of cloths and the same kind of treatment. They would form a nucleus of a socialistic pattern of society in the making in which all would be treated on an equal footing. This Gurukul System of Education was responsible for giving birth to the great ideal, which, if put into practice, can usher in socialism without any bloodshed.

**Guru:**

The word ‘Guru’ or ‘The Parent of the Family’ has many meanings. It has the same root as the Latin ‘gravis’, which means ‘grave’, ‘great’, or ‘that which has weight’. In ancient Rome, for instance, one spoke of a *gravis auctor* in order to refer to an authority among Magistrates, especially a senator. This notion of the ‘greatness/heaviness of the sacred’ is also found in the legends of gurus and ācāryas. It is necessary for a Guru to possess gravity and magnanimity. From the point of view of traditional etymology, ‘gu’ means ‘darkness’ and ‘ru’ means ‘to destroy’ or ‘to dissolve’. The ‘Guru’ thus is a term that has been associated most strongly with a spiritually enlightened being, who is capable of ‘dispelling the darkness’ of ignorance and lifting the veil of māyā (illusion), so that the student may perceive the Divine Reality (Brahman). Although “guruji” remains as a term of respect in the present Hindi language for any elderly person considered to know something more than others, the term “guru” has later assumed a more specific nuance, that of a

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20 Jan Gonda, *Change and Continuity in Indian Religion*, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal,
purely ‘spiritual teacher’ or ācārya. The ācārya is he who, having invested the student with the sacred thread, adopted him into his family and brought his mind into assonance with his own, teaches him Veda, together with its secret meaning and also the practical application thereof, through experimental demonstration.

The Guru is also called ācārya especially because he gathers together (i) ā-cinoti, all the most important principles of right and dutiful conduct in the various situations and circumstances of life from all the various sciences, and (ii) ā-carati, practising them himself, teaches the students to do so, ā-cārayati, by precept and even more by example.

**Qualities of Guru:**

The Muṇḍaka Upanishad mentions two qualifications of a Guru in the page dealing with the concept of the Paramātman (that is, the Supreme Self): “Tad vijñānārtham sa gurum evābhigacchet samit-pāṇīḥ śrotriyam brahma-niṣṭham.” Based on this text, Shankaracharya elaborates the specific characteristics of a real Guru: “He is a man well-versed in the sacred scriptures and is straightforward, who is not tormented by desires, who is the best among the knowers of Brahman, who has taken refuge in Brahman only, who is calm, and is like the fire which has consumed all its fuel, […] and who is like a close relative to those who take refuge in him.” The first qualification is that the Guru must be a śrotriya. A śrotriya is one who is steeped in the knowledge of Vedas, which embody the eternal truths about God, soul and matter. That is, erudition in the Vedas constitutes his educational qualification. Secondly, the Guru must be a Brahma-niṣṭha. Apart from possessing knowledge of the Paramātman to the utmost limits, he must have realization of it in his heart. Such personal experience or realization is not possible without love (bhakti), spirit of

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sacrifice (tapas) and truthful conduct (dharma). It means that the Upanishadic Guru was not merely a man of knowledge, but a teacher who possessed a wealth of qualities, which enabled him to lead his students to the realization of the Self. It was believed that such gurus were skilled in the art of warfare, in the know-how of administration, or in the knowledge of the Scriptures. These Gurus were always men and almost always from the Brahmins (priestly class). A young boy, either from the Brahmins or Kshatriyas (ruling class), was sent to a Guru at the age of 12 for about 9 to 12 years of rigorous education in one of these three areas – arts, administration or religion. Then the boy returned back to marry or he took the vows of Sannyāsa, “one who has fully renounced all ties with the world.” Those who belonged to the Vaiśyas (merchant class) and the Śūdras (working class) apprenticed themselves under a skilled individual in their trade or craft.

**Duties of Guru:**

A Guru, irrespective of the nature of students, has three tumultuous things to enact, namely to induce and promote creativity among all levels of students, to equip students with confidence and ability, and to maintain integrity in their words and deeds. If the Guru could perform these functions perfectly, the other functions would take care of themselves, and the education system would be on the correct trail to the limelight.

The main responsibility of the Guru would be to embed creativity into the mechanical minds of students. Where and when creativity is wanting, even the coveted students in many fields would not come up with immediate solutions to many prevailing problems. Creativity in educational institutions would vanish boredom, and which would, in turn, generates interest for studies. It has to be stated that the teachers should concentrate upon unlocking the imagination of students rather than restricting them to the boundaries of curriculum.

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23 There are four varnas or classes of Hindu society: priests (Brahmins), rulers or warrior kings (Kshatriyas), the merchants (Vaiśyas) and servants (Śūdras). Cf. Rg Veda, 10. 90; The Laws of Manu, I, 31n.
Confidence building is another vital role for the Guru. It is horrifying to see the intelligent students lack the ability to deal practical problems with panache. The Guru has to instil confidence in the students so that their education might become a complementing factor to their experience. Apart from creativity and confidence, the Guru has an important role to play in maintaining integrity. The teacher’s inability to maintain integrity would generate wrong signals to the students. As the saying goes, “if a student spoils his character, only he will suffer; if a girl spoils her character, two houses have to suffer; but if a teacher spoils his character, the whole generation will suffer.”

The 8th century Hindu text *Upadesasahasri* of the Advaita Vedanta philosopher Adi Shankara discusses the role of the guru in assessing and guiding students. In Chapter 1, he states that teacher is the pilot as the student walks in the journey of knowledge, he is the raft as the student rows. The text describes the need, role and characteristics of a teacher, as follows,

When the teacher finds from signs that knowledge has not been grasped or has been wrongly grasped by the student, he should remove the causes of non-comprehension in the student. This includes the student's past and present knowledge, want of previous knowledge of what constitutes subjects of discrimination and rules of reasoning, behaviour such as unrestrained conduct and speech, courting popularity, vanity of his parentage, ethical flaws that are means contrary to those causes. The teacher must enjoin means in the student that are enjoined by the Śruti and Smrti, such as avoidance of anger, Yamas consisting of Ahimsa and others, also the rules of conduct that are not inconsistent with knowledge. He [teacher] should also

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thoroughly impress upon the student qualities like humility, which are the means to knowledge.

— Adi Shankara, Upadesha Sahasri 1.4-1.5

The teacher is one who is endowed with the power of furnishing arguments pro and con, of understanding questions [of the student], and remembers them. The teacher possesses tranquility, self-control, compassion and a desire to help others, who is versed in the Śruti texts (Vedas, Upanishads), and unattached to pleasures here and hereafter, knows the subject and established in that knowledge. He is never a transgressor of the rules of conduct, devoid of weaknesses such as ostentation, pride, deceit, cunning, jugglery, jealousy, falsehood, egotism and attachment. The teacher's sole aim is to help others and a desire to impart the knowledge.

— Adi Shankara, Upadesha Sahasri 1.6

Adi Shankara presents a series of examples wherein he asserts that the best way to guide a student is not to give immediate answers, but posit dialogue-driven questions that enable the student to discover and understand the answer.

27 Sanskrit: न्नशष्यस्तय ज्ञािग्रहणं च लिन्नीप्रस्वद्य नद्रहणेन्तरं लोकक्षमानानित्यनित्यबलन्न (बन्लु) विवाक्षार्यास्मातुद्वूर्ववित्त-लोक-जनावेर्यास्मातुद्वूर्ववित्त-लोक-रमानादादिचन्दनन्नि्यान्नि्य (वस्ततु) न्नववेकन्नवषयासञ्जातदृढपूवरश्रुत्व लोक-न्नचन्तावेक्षण-ज्ञािादिछ्वम्यान्निमािादींस्तत्प्रन्नतपक्षैः श्रुन्नतस्तमृन्नतन्नवन्नहतैरपियेदक्रोधाकदन्निश्च यमैज्ञारिान्नवरुद्धैश्च न्नियमैः ॥ ४ ॥ अमान्नि्वाकदगुणं च ज्ञािोपायं सम्यग् ग्राहयेत् ॥ ५ ॥


29 Sanskrit: Upadesha sahasri;

Efficacy of Guru’s Words:

The words of the Guru have almost creative power. In the Chāndogya Upanishad, we read: “Even if one should tell this to a dried up stump, branches would be produced on it and leaves would spring forth.”\(^{31}\) The Guru is the spark, which arouses the right understanding in the students. In the Upanishads it is said that the students always went to the Guru with dry twigs of wood in their hands. It was thought that as the pieces of wood catch fire as soon as they come into contact with fire, so also the students, who were like dry pieces of wood, get enlightened by their contact with the Guru, who is supposed to have the fire of knowledge within him. If the Guru has no fire of enlightenment and purity of character within him, how he is going to enlighten and inspire his students? So goes the saying: “Character is not so much taught as caught.”

Śhishyas: The Antevāsins of the Family

One of the important features of ancient Indian education was that it was obligatory for the members of first three classes – Brahmins, Kshatriyas and Vaiśyas. However, admission to the Gurukul was not an easy process. The Dahrmasāstras declare that education must be imparted to the deserving alone – satpātra. The idea that the deserving should only be taught is expressed in the form of a story. The Goddess of Vidyā tells a Brahmin (Guru): “I am a great treasure you have received. You must safeguard me in the same way as you safeguard a treasure. Spend it with care and distribute it among the deserving.”\(^{32}\)

It is also stated in the Laws of Manu that student should not be taught who is neither attentive nor devoted and who misuses his Vidyā. For, “it is better for someone who expounds the Veda to die along with his learning than to sow it on barren ground.”\(^{33}\)


\(^{32}\) The Laws of Manu, II, 114.

\(^{33}\) The Laws of Manu, II, 112-13
Students, therefore, had to convince their Guru that they had the desire, the determination and the required intelligence to pursue the studies. Regardless of their social or financial status, the Guru accepts the student, if compatibility was discerned and if it was perceived that the student was prepared to learn wholeheartedly the entire course with the observance of the rules of the Gurukul. The students who joined the Gurukul have to pass through three essential processes without which the main objectives of the system will not be fulfilled. These processes are (i) upanayana (ii) vow of brahmacarya, and (iii) āshramavāsa.34

**Upanayana:**

Upanayana (sacred thread wearing ceremony) is the important initiation ceremony, which marks the formal and regular entrance into the Vedic school – Gurukul. Upanayana, which is derived from upa (near) and nayana (carry), literally means, “carrying student near to the teacher (ācārya).” It is an impressive rite in which the student is ceremoniously conducted by the parents near to the teacher of known wisdom, virtue and learning, in order that he may be led by that teacher to Brahma, the Supreme.35

In ancient times, it was given to both boys and girls, but now it is with rare exception reserved for boys. Upanayana was an obligatory social rite, which was ordained for all the castes, and practised in a great variety of manners for many centuries. The ceremony of investiture begins by the student’s standing opposite to the sun and walking thrice round the fire. Then girt with the thread, he asks alms from the assembled company. This begging for alms indicates that the student undertakes to provide himself and his guru with food. The Guru then initiates him into the daily use of the holy prayers (Gāyatri mantra) and admits him to the privilege of repeating the three Vedas and of performing other religious rites, which are not allowed before the investiture. The whispering of the Gāyatri mantra puts the ‘soul-life’ of the child

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35 Bhagwan Das, Manu’s Code of Life, 248
in touch with the Infinite Life, and awakens therein a tiny spark of All-Self-
Consciousness.

After the sacrament of Upanayana, the student is described as “twice-born” (dvija). To be born of parents is the first or physical birth; to be born of guru/ācārya is second or spiritual birth. In the investiture ceremony, one finds many symbols of ‘rites de passage’: namely, initiatory death (the student is covered by a veil or else has his eyes bandaged), imposition of the hands, sprinkling of water, presence of fire, etc. While performing the Upanayana ceremony, the Guru brings the student so close to himself as a child is in the womb of the mother. The Guru thus establishes a relationship of unity with his student. For example, at the time of Upanayana, the Guru addresses the student in the following way: “I take your heart into mine, your mind into mine.”

Hence the student is called the ‘antevasi’ (in-dweller), one who lives in the heart of the Guru. This feeling of “one’s own” towards a student is the soul of the Gurukul System of Education promulgated in the ancient India.

**Brahmacharya:**

There are two meanings of the word, brahmacharya. The derivative meaning of a brahmacari is “brahmani caratiti brahmacari” That means, one who lives in Brahman (God) is a brahmacari. The word ‘Brahman’ is derived from the verb brihi, meaning ‘great’. Yes, the one who is great is Brahman. Thus, brahmacari is one who comes to the Guru with the aspiration of becoming great. In the Vedic System of Education, a student getting admitted to the Gurukul was not merely called vidyārthi (one who aspires for knowledge) but brahmacari. This stage of life has been traditionally described as Brahmacarya Āshram.

The traditional meaning of brahmacari is one who observes complete purity in his

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38 According to the Vedic tradition, there are four Āśramas or Stages of Life: Brahmacarya (Religious student), Grihastha (Householder), Vānaprastha (Anchorite) and Sannyāsa (Religious mendicant).
behaviour, leads a life of sexual abstinence and moral rectitude. This is the commonly known and accepted meaning of brahmacarya. Observance of celibacy was highly stressed in the Gurukul System of Education. Therefore, it was considered to be a necessary duty of the Guru to impart students sex education, since the significance of brahmacarya could not be brought home to one who is completely ignorant of sex knowledge.

The students in the Gurukul were subjected to rigorous discipline. They had to live in a very austere environment, observe complete celibacy, practice yoga and meditation under the supervision of the Guru and perform many menial jobs for the Guru’s household. The fundamental spirit of Āshram is shram (labour) and tapas (austerity). This is evident from the instructions imparted to the students at the entry to the Gurukul: “Work hard; never sit idle; never lose temper; never speak untruth; don’t sleep on luxurious bed.”

The basis of Vedic system of education was hard work. For, it was believed that a brahmacari could lead a life of dedication only when he has performed tapas. Just as heating (tapas) in fire turns impure gold into pure gold, so also tapas makes a human being true and responsible person.

Another advantage of leading an austere life in Āshram is that it removes the discrimination between the high and the low, the rich and the poor. In Āshram all students are treated at the same level; all are brothers and sisters. No one is rich or poor, high or low, all experience in Āshram life that they are on an equal footing. When the spirit of the rich (śukla) and the poor (gupta) pervades in the educational institutions, then they carry the same spirit of inequality with them, when they enter the society. The Gurukul System of Education precludes even the semblance of inequality.

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39 Brahmacarya Sūkta, in Atharva Veda, 11, 2
Gurukula-vāsa:

The purpose of admission to Gurukul is to live with the Guru in his kula/āshram, until he has gained a thorough knowledge of the three Vedas (Trayi). According to the Laws of Manu “the vow for studying the three Vedas with a guru is for thirty-six years, or half of that, or a quarter of that, or whenever the undertaking comes to an end.” He may even be a student for life, and such students are known as Naishthika Brahmacārins. Probably it is for these students such long period of studentship as 36 or 18 years are meant.

Those who would be householders (Gṛhasthāshram) would have to confine their studentship to a minimum period of nine years or till the desired knowledge is acquired.

Apart from imbibing the knowledge imparted by the Guru, the students would also be expected to shoulder some of the household chores or responsibilities (Āshrama-seva). One text sums up the position by stating that the student is to serve his teacher as a son, slave or supplicant (Putravat dāsavat arthivat anucaratā tvayā). As Apastamba puts it more definitely, the student shall “assist his teacher daily by acts tending to the acquisition of spiritual merit and of wealth.” The former class of acts will comprise of collecting scared fuel, grass, earth and flowers for sacrifice as also fetching a pot full of water, while the latter class implies gathering fuel for cooking, begging alms, etc. Every day the student is to go round the neighbouring villages begging food for himself and his Guru, and collecting fuel for the maintenance of the sacred fire. Apart from the services to be rendered to the teacher, there is a second class of duties connected with the student’s own welfare, such as bathing three times a day, performing morning and evening devotions, offering libations of water to gods, sages, manes, etc.

The student is always to pay the most profound respect to his religious teacher,

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41 The Laws of Manu, III, 1
the Guru, as well as to his parents and to all persons older than himself. “By loving devotion to his mother, he wins this world; by loving devotion to his father, the middle world; and by obedience to his guru, the world of ultimate reality.”

“Gurudevo bhava” (Guru as equivalent to God) was the ideal cherished by the students. In fact, “Gurudevo bhava” was a way of life for the students who were part of a unique educational system of Gurukul in ancient India. It was expected of the students to serve their Guru, as they would serve the Lord himself, and in turn receive invaluable knowledge of Brahman (Brahmavidyā). Guru is even equated with the Supreme Absolute Being: “Gururbrahma gururvisnu gururdevo maheśvara” (Guru is Brahma, Guru is Vishnu, Guru is Maheśvara). In fact, reverence for the teacher was enjoined upon the student for three reasons. (i) It was part and parcel of the Indian Culture to respect parents, teachers and elders. (ii) Guru represented not only a man of scholarly wisdom, but also a man of high spiritual realization. (iii) The Indian educational system recognized the real teacher as the Supreme Brahman seated within oneself.

On completing his studies, the student thanked his Guru with a gift in the form of guru-dakshina, which literally means ‘offerings to the Guru’. He is then to perform the proper ceremonial bath (snāna) on the occasion of his solemn return to his own home – known as Samāvartana. According to Manu, “he who knows the sacred law must not present any gift to his teacher before the Samāvartana, but when, with the permission of his guru, he is about to take the final bath, let him procure a gift for the venerable man according to his ability, viz. a field, a cow, a horse, or even an umbrella and shoes, or vegetables, and thus give pleasure to his Guru.” The word “procure” implies that the student is ordinarily of such circumstances that he has to collect the gifts for his teacher by begging. Thus it would appear that the offering of the gift is enjoined more as a religious act formally bringing to a close the period of studentship and marking the fulfilment of a sacred vow than as any kind of material remuneration for the services rendered.

43 The Laws of Manu, II, 233
44 Nagendra Kr. Singh, ed. Encyclopaedia of Hinduism, 1277-79
45 The Laws of Manu, II, 245-46
The studentship was formally brought to a close by what has been called Samāvartana, which literally means ‘the returning home of the student’. It included a number of acts signifying the end of the austerities imposed upon the condition of studentship. First, the brahmacari was given a solemn bath, and he thus became a Snātaka. Secondly, he was given new garments, earrings, accompanied by the use of powder, perfumes, and sandalwood, etc. Thirdly, a homa or sacrifice was performed with a prayer that the Snātaka will have any number of students to teach in his turn. Finally, donned in his new robes, he was to pay a visit to the local assembly in a chariot or on an elephant to be introduced to them as a full-fledged scholar. The student’s return to his own home was made an occasion of great festivity.46

**Brahma-vidyā: The Soul of Curriculum**

In the Gurukul System of Education the courses of study (curriculum) included the ‘whole’ Veda, together with the Rahasyas, as stated by Manu: “A twice-born should study the whole Veda together with the secret texts (Rahasyas), while generating particular forms of inner heat (tapas) and performing various vows (vratas) enjoined by the rules.”47

By the ‘whole Veda’ the scholars understand the four Vedas (Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, and Atharvaveda) with the six Vedāńgas (Veda + Âṅgas), the ritualistic treatises. The names of these six treatises are first mentioned in the Muṇḍaka Upanishad: “Śikshā (Phonetics), Kalpa (Ritual), Vyākarana (Grammar), Nirukta (Etymology) Chandas (Metrics) and Jyotisha (Astrology).” By ‘Rahasyas’ we mean the esoteric treatises, the Upanishads, or the secret explanations of the


47 The Laws of Manu, II, 165
In the Mahābhārata, there is a description of Kaṇva’s Āshram, which was situated on the banks of the river Malini. At this Āshram, there were specialists in each of the four Vedas; in Phonetics, Grammar and Etymology. There were also philosophers well versed in the science of the Absolute. There were logicians, and specialists in the physical sciences and arts.

In this forest university, the study of every available branch of learning was cultivated.  

**Vedic-Centrism:**

A brief survey of the literary activities of the period shows that vidyā (learning) in ancient India was rooted in the Vedas. The various works, making up the literature either in arts or science, were connected with one or other of the Vedic vidyās.  

First of all, there was the need to fix the texts of the Vedic prayers; secondly, to establish a correct pronunciation and recitation; thirdly, to preserve the tradition of their origin; and lastly, when in the course of time the literal sense of the old texts become more and more foreign to the current language, or the spoken dialectics of the day, to take precautions whereby the original sense might be secured and established and not lost. Thus the intellectual life was but the handmaid of the spiritual life.

As explained above, at first the different subjects included in the curriculum were strictly subservient to the primary needs of the study of Veda and sacrificial rituals. In the course of time, however, these sacrificial rituals themselves led to the growth of scientific study and specializations. Thus, Geometry and Algebra

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48 For detailed descriptions of the Vedāṅgas, see Subodh Kapoor, ed. Ancient Indian Education, 238-40
arose out of the elaborate rules for the construction of altars. Sometimes it was necessary to erect a round altar covering the same area as a square one, giving rise to problems like squaring the circle. Astronomy and Astrology grew out of the necessity of finding out the proper times and seasons for sacrifice and other purposes. The foundation of Anatomy was laid in the dissection of sacrificial animals. Grammar and Philology had their origin in the care to preserve the sacred texts from corruption and fix the methods of their proper pronunciation. Thus each of the original Vedic Aṅgas (members/branches of Veda) gave rise to a number of allied sciences through its specialized and scientific study in special schools.

The knowledge imparted to the students could thus be stated to be of three kinds, viz. the worldly knowledge (relating to poetry, rhetoric and the like subjects), the sacred knowledge (relating to the Vedas and Vedāngas), and the knowledge of the Supreme Spirit (Brahman). According to the Muṇḍaka Upanishad, the former is known as the lower (aparā) knowledge, while the latter is called the higher (parā) knowledge. According to Manu, Brahmavidyā (the knowledge of Brahman) is the supreme wisdom (Brahmavidyā paramjñānam). And he who possesses it not only earns the svarga of the Gods (abode of thecelestials) but is ‘severed from all connections with samsara (worldly life) and attains oneness with Paramātman. That is, he who attains Brahmavidyā attains moksha.51

**God-Realization:** In the Upanishadic period, scientific knowledge was described as ‘aparā-vidyā’ and spiritual knowledge as ‘parā-vidyā’. In the Muṇḍaka Upanishad, there is an interesting narration of a disciple Saunaka, who goes to Ācārya Aṅgiras and tells him: “I have read all the Vedas, Chandas, Kalpa, Nirukta, etc. and so my aparā vidyā is complete. But I’m still ignorant of the parā-vidyā.”52 In the Chāndogya Upanishad, there is a similar narration of Nārada who goes to Ācārya Sanatkumara

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52 Muṇḍaka Upanishad, I, 1.3.
and tells him: “I have read Ṛgveda, Yajurveda, Sāmaveda, Atharvaveda and mastered Deva-vidyā, Brahma-vidyā, Bhūt-vidyā, Kshatra-vidyā, Nakshatra-vidyā, Sarpa-vidyā and as a result I have become ‘mantravid’ but not ‘ātmavid’. Even Nārada has gone to Ācārya Sanatkumara for acquiring science of the spirit (soul) after having mastered physical sciences, for scientific knowledge was considered incomplete without the spiritual knowledge.

The Gīta has used the word Ātma Rata for a man who accepts Ātma (soul), and it denotes the spiritual state of a wo/man who is merged in Ātman, or a realized soul. According to Vedanta, the purpose of the study of the Vedas is to realize Brahman (Aham brahmāsmi - I am Brahman). Mahatma Gandhiji, the Father of the Nation, has beautifully summarized the vision of Gurukula/Indian System of Education: “Man’s ultimate aim is the realization of God, and all his activities - social, political, and religious - have to be guided by the ultimate aim of the vision of God.”

Prior to British rule, they served as South Asia's primary educational institution. The guru-shishya tradition or parampara is a hallowed one in Hinduism and appears in other religious groups in India, such as Jainism, Buddhism and Sikhism. The word Gurukul is a contraction of the Sanskrit guru (teacher or master) and kula (extended family).

In a Gurukul, shishya live together as equal, irrespective of their social standing, learn from the guru and help the guru in his day-to-day life, including the carrying out of mundane chores such as washing clothes, cooking, etc. Typically, a guru does not receive any fees from the shishya studying with him. At the end of his studies, a shishya offers the guru dakshina before leaving the Gurukul or ashram. The gurudakshina is a traditional gesture of acknowledgment, respect and thanks to the guru, which may be monetary, but may also be a special task the teacher wants.

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53 Chāndogya Upanishad, VII, I, 2
the student to accomplish. While living in a Gurukul the students had to be away from his house and family completely. The guru didn't take any fees and so they had to serve the guru.

Gurukul have existed since the Vedic age. Upanishads mention many Gurukul, including that of Yajnavalkya, Varuni. Bhrigu Valli, the famous discourse on Brahman, is mentioned to have taken place in Guru Varuni's Gurukul. Vedic school of thought prescribes an initiation or Upanayana, a compulsory Sanskara or activity for a Hindu living to all individuals, including women, before the age of 8 or latest by 12. From initiation until the age of 25 all individuals are prescribed to be students and to remain unmarried.

The Gurukul were supported by public donation. This was followed by the many following Vedic thoughts making Gurukul one of the earliest forms of public school offices.

In the ancient India music took roots in hermitages in the form of the sacred sacrificial rites yajnas, hymns and religious ceremonies of all descriptions. The teacher of the Guru himself selected the pupils and acquainted them with the details and finer aspects of swaras and rhythm together with the hymns of the Samveda. The educational system of the Gurukuls continued uninterrupted for centuries.

3. Developments and Changes in Gurukul from Ancient to Modern: The history of Gurukul system and its development in India can be divided into three major portions which are as follows: Ancient, Medieval and Modern.

3.1.: Ancient (ca. 1500 BCE–500 BCE): In ancient times knowledge was imparted through the medium of Vedas. During that time the Guru-Shishya Parampara could be understood from the following couplet from ‘Kathopanishad’:

*Aum Sanhnabhavatu, Sah Nau Bhunaktu, Sah Veeryam Karvavhai* |
Tejaswini Navadhitamastu, Ma Vidhushahai
Aum Shantih, shantih, shantih||

Meaning: May Lord Brahma take care of both of us (Guru and Shishya) in the same way, May he provide us with the same knowledge and food, May he provide enough understating power to grasp knowledge, May the knowledge be of both of us be a success, May there be no differences, Hope the three spheres be in peace.

The Vedic Age:

Education in India started many years before 5000 BC (many years before the age of Lord Shri Ram). There used to be separate Gurukuls for both Girls and Boys. Girls got their education from only women-sages called Rishikas and Brahmavadinidis and Boys got their education from Rishi.

In this Vedic period, the following objectives were ascribed to education.

1. Self-control
2. Development of character
3. Generation of sociability or social awareness
4. Integral development of personality
5. Propagation of purity
6. Preservation of knowledge and culture.⁵⁶

In this relation a Shloka from Bhagwat Gita is of great reference:

Tad Viddhi Pranipaten Pariprashnen Sevaya |
Upadekshyanti Te Gyanum Gyaninastvadarshinah||

Meaning:
The knowledgeable who knows truth, will impart knowledge to you; Get knowledge by showing your devotion and service and ask questions again and again. Here,

⁵⁶ https://www.quora.com/How-was-the-Gurukul-education-system-in-ancient-India
devotion is also humbleness and asking questions and giving service again and again is important. With this faith for each other is also important.

The above tells that the education was so transparent in the Vedic age. Questions can be asked as many times as one can. Education did not seem a burden as it is now.

At that time Vedas were also called *Shruti* (means that has been heard) and this knowledge is passed from one generation to next and even today it is preserved as it is without any adulteration and change. Education in Ancient India originated with the Gurukul system. This type of ancient school in India was residential in nature with the Shishyas or students and the Guru or teacher living in proximity within the same house. The students resided together irrespective of their social standing. However, several temples and community centres regularly took the role of schools. In addition to that ancient Indian education achieved a noticeable position in the early Vedic period. In the Vedic days, the teaching of the four Vedas, the hymns and ritual practices were seen. The Vedas included the Sanskrit language which in turn became the language of classical learning. Besides the pronunciation of the Vedas and their implication, phonology, metrics, elementary grammar, and etymology were also taught.

In fair weather, classes were held under the shelter of the tree. In the rainy season schools ran under thatched roof. Temple colleges of the past had been of great renown for having spacious buildings for classrooms and the residential complexes of the students and the "Gurus". Gurukuls or Ashrams were generally situated on the river banks or on the lake to attain the knowledge. 

Education at that time was free. It was free because no student was required to pay any fees. It was free also because no outside agency could interfere in the matters of education. There was perfect autonomy. No external authority no external beneficiary, no politics was permitted to enter the school or college system. A

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https://www.quora.com/How-was-the-Gurukul-education-system-in-ancient-India
student had to pay nothing in return for education he received in a Gurukul. Access to good education depended not on wealth but on talent. The student was expected, if desired but never compelled to offer a field, cow, horse or the elements of the daily needs to his teacher according to his financial position in the society. But students from well-to-do families paid Gurudakshina, a sought of voluntary contribution after the completion of their studies.

**Glory of ancient women sage in Gurukuls:**

**Women as Rishis:**

The history of the most of the known civilizations show that the further back we go into antiquity, the more unsatisfactory is found to be the general position of women. Hindu civilization is unique in this respect, for here we find a surprising exception to the general rule. The further back we go, the more satisfactory is found to be the position of women in more spheres than one; and the field of education is most noteworthy among them. There is ample and convincing evidence to show that women were regarded as perfectly eligible for the privilege of studying the Vedic literature.  

In Sanskrit the meaning of the word “Ved” is Gyaan or knowledge. Vedas are not only proverbial but also have the capacity for uncanny significance. It is said that the genesis of four vedas Rigved, Yajurved, Atharved and Samved were orated by the four mouths of Lord Brahma. All the four Vedas were taught in the premises of Gurukul. It is clear from the vedic literature that samved was musical. All the shlokas are sing-able in Samved. Hence, the provenance of music is supposed to be from Samveda. The shlokas were sung in three notes or swaras: *Uddat, Anuddaat and Swarit*. Acharya Panini said that the seven swaras: Sa, Re, Ga, Ma, Pa, Dha, Ni are derived from these three swaras.  

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58 [https://www.quora.com/How-was-the-Gurukul-education-system-in-ancient-India](https://www.quora.com/How-was-the-Gurukul-education-system-in-ancient-India)

Different Eras in Vedic Period:

(i) **Gandharva Era:** The arrangement of education of music community in Gandharva Era was based on Gurukul System of Vedic methodology. The medium of continuous education was done through constant dialogue. Teaching of music through Gurukul system was the best and most effective ways of teaching and in this era many music Gurukuls must be working on the same. One can therefore find a lot of information about Vocal music, Instrumental Dance and understand Guru-Shishya Parampara and its system through various Upanishads. The ancient period is believed to have been based on Vedic system as per the Hindu Classical Music is concerned.

(ii) **Vedic Era:** All the three spheres of music vocal, instrumental and dance were found in considerable amount in Vedic literature and its relationship with the rich ‘Sama’ Vedic literature ensures that in Vedic period music and its literature were on a decent level. The Vedic Classical Music is mostly defined as ‘Sama’, which developed in the initial years, was on a very individual level and was reflected in the conscience of the Vedic Rishi-munis who were inherent. Those who did the studied Rig-mantras, many of them sang the difficult hymns musically.

In the Vedic Era, both the styles were found- **Laukik** and **Shastriya**. Laukik was found among the common man and society where it was performed in family functions and festivals. This folklore and its tradition were not documented and therefore not much information can be found about it. Whereas, the Classical music and its basics were well rehearsed by the Rishimunis which used to sing in Yagnas were documented and hence it could reach out to others and could evolve.

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63 Laukik- Folklore
64 Shastriya- Classical
(iii) Ramayana Era: The great epic “Ramayana” was written by Valmiki in *treta yug*.

The hermitage of Vyasa was another seat of learning. There Vyasa taught the Vedas to his disciples. Those disciples were highly blessed Sumantra, vaisampayana, Jamini of great wisdom, and Paila of great ascetic merit.” They were afterwards joined by Suka, the famous son of Vyasa. Hermitage of Rishi Bharadvaja at Prayaga, or at Atri at Chitrakuta was center of learning Vedas.65

(iv) Mahabharata Era: The Mahabharata tells of numerous hermitages where pupils from distant parts gathered for instruction round some far-famed teachers. A full-fledged Asrama is described as consisting of several Departments which are enumerated as following:

Agnisthana: the place for fire-worship and prayers
Brahma-sthana: the Department of Veda
Vishnusthana: the Department for teaching Raja-Niti etc
Mahendra-sthana: Military Section
Vivasvata-sthana: Department of Astronomy
Somasthana: Department of Botany
Garuda-sthana: Section dealing with Transport and Conveyances
Kartikeya-sthana: Section teaching military organization, how to form patrols, battalions, and army.

(v) Mauryan/ Ashoka Era (322–185 BCE):

The first millennium and the few centuries preceding it saw the flourishing of higher education at Nalanda, Takshila, Ujjain, & Vikramshila Universities.


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65 [https://www.quora.com/How-was-the-Gurukul-education-system-in-ancient-India](https://www.quora.com/How-was-the-Gurukul-education-system-in-ancient-India)
Takshshila specialized in the study of medicine, while Ujjain laid emphasis on astronomy. Takshshila (Taxila): Students arriving at Takshashila usually had completed their primary education at home (until the age of eight), and their secondary education in the Ashrams (between the ages of eight and twelve), and therefore came to Takshashila chiefly to reach the ends of knowledge in specific disciplines.

3.2.: Medieval (1206–1858):

In the era of Sultans the Gandharvas were known as “Sangeet- Nayak”. Such a reference is seen in the 15th century era in the court of Raja Mansingh like, Bakshu, Mahmood, Bhanu, Kiran, Lohang, Pandui, Baiju etc.66

Fakirullah has mentioned the following in “Ragdarpan”:

“In the times of Akbar, very few people were academically inclined that in comparison were more in Raja Man’s era that was called Nayaks. In olden days, the Nayakas used to sit in the Kedara and the accompanisits who played Veena and Mridang sat at the back and learnt music. They read a lot of books and granthas on music and used to perform. Whatever was performed was taught to the Shishyas. In such Baithaks very few were musicians and thus the training was done secretly.”67

With the above statement one can very well understand that in Mughal Era the Hindu tradition of teaching was given in such a way and all those who imparted knowledge were Sangeet Nayaks.

In the Mughal Era to the Modern Age a new trend had started of teaching even if the teacher has less knowledge about a topic. Only with some probability and little idea the Guru would impart the knowledge. This went on and as a result during the


Parvarti Era the Classical part of music was disagreed and confusions created. There was a thought in this era that any big performer is also a big knowledgeable. 68

Education in medieval India expressed a new perspective in the 11th century. The Muslim established the elementary and secondary schools. This further let to the commencement of universities like Delhi, Lucknow and Allahabad.

There was a fresh interaction between Indian and Islamic traditions in the fields of knowledge like theology, religion, philosophy, fine arts, painting, architecture, mathematics, medicine and astronomy. Muslim rulers promoted urban education by building libraries and literary societies, primary schools called maktabs were established and reading writing and basic Islamic prayers were taught. Secondary schools called Madrasas taught advanced language skills. These were setup by Sultans’ nobles and other influential ladies. Scholars from Madrasa would be eligible for civil service and to become a judge.

3.3.: Modern (after c.1850):

The educational system which the British introduced teaching of English language was given greater emphasis and the study of languages like Arabic, Persian and Sanskrit were left to individual efforts. By the colonial era the Gurukul system was declining in India.

History says that traditions have kept the institution of Indian music alive due to which there has been a continuity observed in the development of the music. Traditions bring-in a balance, perseverance and persistence in Indian music. A lot of importance has been given to the system of Parampara, which is a well-known truth, and the fact that without keeping Parampara of music in mind we cannot ever imagine to learn Hindustani Classical music. That does not mean there is no scope to do new experiments and inventions; in fact, they have always been a part of this. But

all these were always inside the boundaries of ancient traditional music. The existing Guru-Shishya Parampara in the world of Indian music which consists of all the three aspects: gaayan, vaadan and nritya have meandered through different forms and phases which later were efflorescent of originating Gharanas. Gharana system has a great importance in the music domain. The system of Gharana is found in all the above three aspects of music. Today also a student of music has to mandatorily learn from a Guru. But, the reason of slow and steady origination of narrowness in the relationship between the Guru and the Shishya was because Guru’s tendency to hide the special qualities of that particular Gharana resulted into a drastic change in the past thirty to forty years. Eventually what has happened is that the ancient knowing has desolated from us which is indeed an enormous loss. But still there are many who want to reincarnate and involve themselves in the metempsychosis of the very admirable Parampara. That is why many intellectuals play an important role to bring forth the utility of this Guru-Shishya Parampara. To re-live the same, a very serious endeavour was made by Indian Tobacco Company- Sangeet Research Academy (I.T.C. - S.R.A., Kolkata). It is an effort by ITC which is offering service in this direction since a few years. They have tried to create an environment which was quite similar to the Gurukul Paddhati. Here, the student lives in juxtaposition with the Guru who takes care of the student.

**Merits of Guru Shishya Parampara:**

1. The Gurus had enormous knowledge and knew how to teach the most arduous of the things.
2. This Parampara used to take its time and due to this the students used to come out in a very perfect manner.
3. They used to inherit a certain style and had the efficiency in it.
4. In this the student was well trained and he had the full authority for his art form.
5. The student used to have very humble respects for the Guru and discipline was pursued due to this they got the opportunity to learn the good points of the attitude and art.
6. They were taught directly or face-to-face and there were lot of benefits of this style of teaching.
7. The environment provided to the student was made sure the he would come out an artist.

**Demerits of Guru Shishya Parampara:**

1. The student never got a glimpse of the other genres because he came across only one Guru.
2. There was no time period allotted for the course. The student had to depend on the teacher totally.
3. The ancient system did not entertain the theoretical wing of the art.
4. The Guru used to hide a lot of important points which the student used to be unaware of.
5. The student also had to do all the inferior daily house cores.

All is history as in today’s world it is not possible for both the student and the teacher to have harmony on the basis of these narrow traditions.

To nurture and propagate the priceless heritage of Indian Classical music, beginning with Hindustani Classical Music, through the tradition of 'Guru-Shishya Parampara'.

The aims and vision of the New Gurukuls are in choosing classical music as an area of its social responsibility, ITC and Gangubai Hangal Gurukul has played an important role in the resurgence and nurturing of this rich heritage. The three basic objectives are:

1. Creation of an effective training system.
2. To rationalise traditional data with the help of modern research methods and technology.

This has provided security and the comforts of a home for both guru and scholar. Its training system is essentially the Guru-Shishya Parampara with suitable contemporary inputs. The quality of the average listener plays a vital role in the development of music. In the current Indian classical music scenario, where the audience has assumed the role of the most decisive patron, the task of nourishing a
solid base of high quality listeners has become a critical factor for the survival of the best values in music. Gurukuls such as ITC-SRA, Gangubai Hangal Gurukul in Hubli has undertaken the task of creating a variety of platforms all over our country and abroad, which attempt:

1. To take high quality music systematically to areas and sections of the population who otherwise do not enjoy access to it.
2. To cater to specialised audience needs and create connoisseurs of music by changing the conventional conference mould and creating new thematic profiles.
3. To commemorate those veterans and doyens of classical music whose pursuit of music as a form of knowledge has enabled us to establish and perpetuate a community of shared values.

The relationship between the Guru and the Shishya is one of all-pervading learning and complete trust, born out of the Shishya's total surrender to the universal glory of the art. To the Shishya, the Guru symbolises the art itself, while for the Guru, the Shishya signifies the continuity of the art. The Guru shares the sacred knowledge of the art only with kindred souls, sincere in their quest.  

4. Summary of the Chapter:

The most important idea governing the Gurukul System of Education was that of development, development of the body, the mind and the soul of the student person.

Accordingly, education was considered to be a “process of training, disciplining and teaching;” that is, training of the body (vyāyāmana of sarira), disciplining of the character (vinayana of svabhāva) and teaching of intelligence (adhyāpana of buddhi). Thus education is the educing (educate means ‘lead forth’) or developing the  

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cognitive, affective and conative faculties of the educable in such a way that they may become able to take care of themselves and their families and dependents, and to serve their society, materially and spiritually, so as to secure for themselves and others, as far as possible, the greatest happiness here on earth and hereafter, by achieving the end of life moksha, namely, the emancipation of soul and spirit.

The exhortation to the departing students in the Taïtirīya Upanishad rightly explains the objectives of the Gurukul System of Education. Having taught the Vedas, the Guru instructs the students as follows: “satyam vada, dharmam cara, svādhīyān ma pramadah.” That is, “Speak the truth. Practise virtue. Let there be no neglect of your (daily) reading. […] Let there be no neglect of truth. Let there be no neglect of virtue. Let there be no neglect of welfare. […] Treat your mother, father, teacher and guest as persons of high respect.”

This is the command, the teaching, the secret of the Veda, and the instruction. Thus should one worship.

But unless and until the guru-śishya relationship is based on the spirit of the ‘kula’ (family) and the teacher and student come closer to each other as parent and child, unless and until the guru possesses gravity and magnanimity, unless and until the students are prepared for hard work and austerity, unless and until brahmacarya and character formation become part of our educational programmes, it is not possible to make any headway in the system of education. From this viewpoint, the Gurukul System of Education has its own significance. If this system, in a refined form, were re-established, it would mark a turning point and add lustre to the system of education.

In the Gandharva Era the medium of education was continuous dialogue between the Guru and the Shishya which was not the same in the Gharana System which had become powerful by then. The fact that in the Gandharva Era the Guru would not

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70 Taïtirīya Upanishad, in S. Radhakrishnan, ed. The Principal Upanishads, New Delhi: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994, I, Section 11, 1-4. “matr devo bhava, pitr devo bhava, ācārya devo bhava, atithi devo bhava” In the Banaras Hindu University, this passage is read by the Vice-Chancellor on the Convocation Day as an exhortation to the students who are leaving the University
criticise the subject not known to him, the same did not appear in the Medieval to the Modern period. Due to this the results in the latter era were worse as there have always been controversies, mutual jealousy, different views come to light. In the Mughal Era the growth in professional music brought out an increase in skill in comparison to art. Many unwanted imaginary actions had entered into Hindustani Classical Music which led to the up rise of performance through the medium of Raagdari.

In the Vedic period Laukik Sangeet was popular but since its existence was only among the local group, that is why there are not much evidences found in the literature and therefore not much can be said about its teachings and training. Also, the Rishi-munis who were well versed with Sama Veda and other Vedas like Rig-Veda, used to sing their own hymns. They were well rehearsed and knew the basic of music that they were not needed to be trained. Thus, in this era of evolution, Music was in the creative stage and not in the phase of training others. They had in built the talent of Classical music in themselves and for its development they took the base of their contemporary available hymns, and there was no doubt about the originality of its Sama.

Music can only be created with the proper and scientific coo-ordination of Swara, Pada, Laya and Taal which are the principle rules of which should be persuaded. Emulation only is not music and to create is to learn and understand. The inexpert Acharyas with less knowledge damage themselves which further damages the others.