



Teaching Learning Activities in Gurukul

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Abstract

The school understands that the teaching and learning of the students cannot be covered in the classroom and only by the curriculum. That is why the school has linked teaching and learning with the community and society. Every year, the school has been imparting various community-centered teaching and learning to the children in a way that integrates them with society. The methodology used for this study is related to interview, focus group discussions and observations to collect the information. The aim of this paper is to find out teaching learning activities which are used in Gurukul. The finding of this research article is that although teachers try to use the student centered methods, they use the teacher centered approaches mostly while teaching learning process.

Key words: *Teaching Learning, Curriculum, Gurukul, Methodology, Spiritual*

Introduction

The method, procedure and how to present the prescribed subject to the students plays important role in teaching learning activities which is known as teaching-learning strategy. Teaching learning relates especially in school textbooks since teaching is done on a basic basis, there is a close relationship between the teaching method and the subject matter for which the curriculum presents learning experience in a planned and organized way.

The teacher activities, student activities and joint activities should be clearly mentioned. This process makes teaching simple and effective. Moreover, the reciprocal relationship between learning and teaching is the key to achieving educational goals. The nature of the subject matter, the level of the student, interest, ability and selection of effective teaching method according to the teacher's qualification as well as efficiency and availability of resources play role in teaching and learning. Furthermore, the same teaching method is not suitable in all cases. The same subjects can also be taught using different teaching methods. As a whole teaching relates to the ability of a teacher and his/ her study. The teachers need to develop interactive teaching and learning strategies to promote critical thinking and reflective skills. At the present time, teaching and learning activities should relate to social realities and collaborative process; Teaching and learning activities should develop interpersonal skills such as – communication, negotiation, team work, leadership and appreciation. Moreover, teachers have to use their professional techniques while following the process of teaching and learning.

Active learning is not a new concept. It "derives from two basic assumptions: (1) that learning is by nature an active endeavor and (2) that different people learn in different ways" (Meyers and Jones, 1993). There are a wide range of activities used both inside and outside the classroom that promote active learning. While each discipline has traditional ways of teaching certain subject matter, and activities used in seminars and large lectures may vary, the concept of "active learning" applies in every discipline, in every class size. The types of activities you choose to use, however, might be more applicable in some types of courses than others.

Gurus' Kul is called Gurukul. 'Kul' means lineage and house and these two meanings are appropriate in this context. It is an ancient custom to go to the Guru's house and do study. Thus the

house of the Guru is called Gurukul. Thus the house of the Guru is called Gurukul. Knowledge was also learned by going with the forest ascetic guru. To grasp this context, kul means shelter

Gurukul policies such as; conduct, behavior, dress, language style, routine and diet are as prescribed. Something in this regard depends on the person or founder of the gurukul, its nature and purpose or objective. For example, in some gurukul, more emphasis is placed on specific dualistic philosophy and ethics, beliefs, and routines, while in some gurukul, emphasis is placed on Advaita philosophy and related ethics, beliefs and routines. Similarly, in some other general gurukul, the only goal is to identify the Vedic Sanatan religion and culture as a whole. All types of gurukul aim at imparting Sanskrit literature including Vedas and the knowledge contained within them. On the other hand, in ordinary schools and Sanskrit schools, the formality of teaching only the prescribed curriculum is fulfilled rather than any philosophy, ethics, behavior, etc. Thus, in Gurukul, emphasis is laid not only on science, but also on the conduct taught by it.

The purpose of establishing Gurukul is to make the child an expert of Vedic Sanatan Dharma culture by identifying his / her identity, knowledge of his / her culture, rites, ethics, thoughts, purusharthachastustaya, discipline, dignity, and ideal patriotic citizen full of virtue and goodwill. The purpose of establishing Gurukul is to make the child a knower of Vedic Sanatan Dharma culture by identifying his / her identity, knowledge of his / her culture, rites, ethics, thoughts, purusharthachastustaya, discipline, dignity, and ideal patriotic citizen full of virtue and goodwill. There is no shortage of so-called modern Western education today, with science-educated children at home.

The purpose of gurukul education was to attain religion, meaning, work and salvation, while the purpose of present day education seems to be only to attain meaning and work. The existing Gurukul is the oldest formal education system in the Indian subcontinent.

Gurukul education used to provide analytical and synthetic knowledge in a balanced way, today's education seems to be only analytical. Gurukul education was artistic and creative (conscience oriented), today's education is one-sided and brain (intellect) oriented. Today's education is focused on livelihood and employment while gurukul education was focused on awakening.

Objective

The main objective of this study is to present the teaching learning activities of Gurukul. More specifically, it will show teaching -learning activities adopted by Gurukul.

Methodology

This is a qualitative study and the methodology applied is related to qualitative technique; the process of data collection is through interview and focus group discussion and observation. So this is also based on a study of Gurukul located in DewghatDham of Nepal. And data analysis process is interpretive; moreover, content analysis is done for this study.

Analysis and interpretation

This is a qualitative study and analysis has been made without any quantitative symbols. Moreover, a thick description process has been done for content analysis including some reasonable themes.

All teaching learning activities and learning strategies are the main part of activities which are running in educational institutions to be adopted by an academic institution. Teaching learning activities are related to the students' achievement through the interaction between teachers and students. So we can say that teaching learning activities are tools to achieve the learning achievement and competency. Teaching learning activities are decided on the basis of students' pre - knowledge, peer groups, learning environment and capacity of teacher. These activities are related to the improvement of knowledge and skills of the students. According to Shulman (2008), the knowledge of student learning difficulties relate to the former origins in the precise domain, knowledge of instructional methods, and domain- specific assessment methods. Regarding teaching learning activities, the head teachers of selected Gurukul mentioned that they were trying to adjust student centered methods although different kinds of problems were faced. They have mentioned that students learning capacities were not found so much better and the students needed more support from the teachers. Richards and Schmidt (2010) define teaching activities as "any classroom procedure that requires students to use and practice of their available language resources" (p. 9)

Regarding teaching learning activities, European Union (2016) has mentioned as follows:

Learning activities are defined as 'any activities of an individual organized with the intention to improve his/her knowledge, skills and competences'. The two fundamental criteria that distinguish learning activities from non-learning activities are as; the learning activity must be intentional (as opposed to random learning), so the act has a predetermined purpose; the learning activity is organized in some way, including by the learner him-/herself; it typically involves the transfer of information in a broader sense (messages, ideas, knowledge, strategies) (p. 10).

European Union has mentioned about learning activities and non-learning activities. Any kind of learning process will be for gaining knowledge. One way of reading is to go deeply and another way is just to scan but students learning process goes in depth study for achieving knowledge and skills.

In teaching learning activities, there are good relationship between teacher and students. Regarding relationship between teacher and students, Positive student-teacher relations help the students to involve positively in academic and social activities. It will increase the productivity of the students (Hamre & Pianta, 2010).

Regarding relationship between teacher and students, Kaufman (2022) has mentioned as follows:

Improving students' relationships with teachers has important, positive and long-lasting implications for both students' academic and social development. Solely improving students' relationships with their teachers will not produce gains in achievement. However, those students who have close, positive and supportive relationships with their teachers will attain higher levels of achievement than those students with more conflict in their relationships.

Regarding teaching learning activities, the teachers as respondents of this study mentioned that they were making efforts to improve students learning skills and achievement as far as possible. They also mentioned that they had made proper selection of the learning activities of the students based on the process of achieving knowledge by making links between learning activities and intended knowledge. They had tried to manage sequence of the activities for the learning related to early skills and needed by them at the later on process.

According to Manurung (2012), active and motivated learners during the teaching learning process are among the roles of teachers in active learning mode. Activating learners indicate that learners are not only assigned to receive or listen to what a teacher has explained but they must be involved in asking or answering questions, working in groups, assisting other learners and demonstrating critical and creative learning. Since the teaching is expected to motivate learners, it is necessary to consider the technique employed teaching learning process. Manurung has focused on the creativity of the teachers to conduct the classes effectively in teaching field. If teachers have developed motivating power, they can motivate the learners more effectively to develop creativity and critical thinking in them. As mentioned by Manurung, teachers are found with more motivating power for the students if they have developed capacity to link past and present. Regarding this situation, Dewey (1899) has mentioned that the subject matters of teaching relates to the base of cultural product of the past ages and the first aim of education is to develop and keep the cultural aspect alive. Present Gurukuls are found similarity with statement of Dewey. Keeping alive eastern philosophy and culture, Gurukuls have included modern subjects as per modern education system.

This concept is found maintained in Gurukul. The teachers' ideas have exposed that they have gone into the deep process of the learning activities. They are aware of the situation that the students have to meet some objectives to achieve knowledge. They have also tried to catch the students' prior knowledge to link it for gaining further knowledge.

Regarding learning activities, Schuell (1986) has stated as follows:

The teacher's fundamental task is to get students to engage in learning activities that are likely to result in achieving the intended learning outcomes. It is helpful to remember that what

the student does is actually more important than what the teacher does (p. 429).

Schuell has given emphasis on student centered activities rather than teacher centered activities. It is true nature of learning that students know well if they themselves perform learning activities if they follow only teacher activities, they will be only imitating.

From the views of head teacher and teachers, they had tried to apply modern system of student centered teaching methods. But in this context, they had to face difficulties to transform knowledge to all the students equally because of diverse ground of the students. In teacher centered methods, the students would feel easy but they had to depend on the teachers all the time. The advantages of student - centered methods are that students learn important communicative and collaborative skills through group work. Students learn to direct their own learning, ask questions, and complete tasks independently and students are more interested in learning activities when they can interact with one another and participate actively.

The researcher can say that in recent years, more teachers have moved towards student-centered approach. However, some students mention that teacher-centered education is more effective strategy. In most cases, it is best for teachers to use a combination of approaches to ensure that all students' needs are met.

The researcher observed and found that the Gurukuls had applied different kinds of methods of teaching and learning. The researcher found that the learning system was applied on the basis of homework. They had also applied the methods of question answer, discussion, conversation and related to practical work, doing some Hinduism related technical work such as performing Hawan and doing lines as religious practices. The structure of the havankund itself generates energy to perform the rituals. It is traditionally made in pure copper as copper is well known for its grasping capacity, it grasps the divine spirit and destroys bad spirits. The spiritual vibrations are easily absorbed in copper and it has the capacity to transmit them. The researcher found that the students would learn individually and in groups too. According to **Hinduism**, every matter is made up of five elements which are earth, water, fire, air and space. In **Heaven**, we use the thermal energy of fire and the sound energy of the mantras for therapeutic application which purifies the air and brings harmony to the environment.

The students in Gurukuls mentioned that they would get feedback from their teacher individually and collectively. They also mentioned that the teachers had made practice of drill system for teaching learning activities and the students used to learn by heart. The students replied that they had to learn by heart also and sometimes they had to do work themselves. In this way, Gurukuls applied both deductive and inductive methods of teaching.

The students' responses show that the teacher follows progressivism in their teaching activities. It is because they had applied self-learning activities as a scientific system. For this situation, teachers have to develop their professional practices. Regarding professional practices, Vorster and Quinn (2015) have stated that in recent year education has highlighted the significant of building the knowledge based on academic development and structure are still lacking in educational sectors (as cited in Ghimire, 2016).

It is understood that education delivery is based on knowledge production using inductive process. In deductive approach, the students have to do only the activities as prescribed but in inductive process they can do self-activities. But this system has not been successful in many places, in academic institutions. According to Klippel (1984), "Activities for practicing a foreign language have left the narrow path of purely structural and lexical training; and have expanded into the fields of values education and personality building" (p. 6).

The researcher inquired the parents also about teaching learning activities in Gurukuls.

The parents were also aware of the present system of teaching learning activities. They mentioned that their children were performing better in comprising to the students of other schools. According to the parents' voices, their children had developed communication skills. They made response that their children had developed creativity and maintained good discipline. It was found that the parents were satisfied by the teaching learning activities applied in Gurukuls.

Regarding education system in Gurukuls, parents have mentioned their views very positively. When the parents were interviewed, they have given emphasis regarding the system of Gurukul education on different points. They are found almost satisfied with Gurukul system of education. They also mentioned that their children have cultivated good disciplined habits in Gurukuls and their children are also satisfied with the care got from the management system of Gurukuls. When the children get holidays, the parents themselves go and take their children home. At home also their children show proper disciplinary activities. The parents also said that their children want to stay in Gurukuls but not at home regularly.

The responses of the parents show that the parents are glad to have sent their children to Gurukuls. Their children are also found so much satisfied that they want to go to school rather than to stay at home for a long time. This situation has clearly mentioned that there is child friendly education system in Gurukuls. When the researcher observed the activities of the teachers and students it was also observed that the Gurukuls had maintained interactive teaching methods as well as peer learning system. The students who knew better than other would be engaged in teaching and giving feedback to the weak students. It was found that in group learning they were found doing project work and value line. In the process of peer learning they were doing the process of direct reading method. Individually they were following activities such as homework, classwork, individual study, quick writing and making notes.

Findings

The children who study in gurukul become members of the gurukul, they become members of the large family of Acharya who teaches ethics from the small family of their birth parents. They are taught austere life there. Children receive free education there. There will be no discrimination between rich and poor, high and low, men and women. One of the characteristics of Gurukul education is that everyone has equal access to education.

Conclusion

Today's need is a refined form of traditional Gurukul education, which is considered in all aspects, such as creation of new things,

longing for subtle knowledge, dream of a civilized society, imagining a benevolent life, and spiritual consciousness. At the same time, in the name of freedom, self-proclaimed 'unique' youth, influenced by unfamiliar with indigenous culture and civilization, and alienated from the glorious myths, must convey the message of persuasive nature, goodwill and far-reaching influence and assured future. At the same time, it is indispensable to link the education received by all from the general public to the upper educated group with knowledge of science, advanced technology of science and world control system or state governance system.

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