Political Socialization In The Gurukul Learning At Devghat Nepal

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ABSTRACT

The system of education that is ranked on the basis of Hindu culture selects the methodology to be the Gurukul system because it combines Political Theories with Holistic learning and moral development. This study looked at the impact of Gurukuls in the formation of citizenship values, toleration and cultural inheritance in the region of Devghat, Nepal. The quantitative gathered through structured observations, key informant interviews and questionnaires among 36 participants in seven Gurukuls was part of a mixed-methods design. The results are a reflection of Gurukuls well-disciplined time schedules to good teaching practices and discipline. Participants heavily favored Gurukul education and its capability to address modern societal demands and culture, asserting that it can be tailored to overcome challenges of today. There was caste, ethnic and geographic representation - in which case one will say that Inclusivity has come a long way in making Education more democratic. Moreover, Gurukuls incorporate cultural traditions like Garbhadhana and Upanayana, which provide civic values and social principles encouraging the values of democracy and integrationalism. All of these, however exciting they sound; are countervailed by the challenges of contemporary pedagogic technology and risen above casting out historical exclusions reigning in Gurukuls. This is a down side because if it could be improved, the whole system would be updated/used more appropriately the study highlights the key role that education in Gurukul can play in filling up gaps but also in changing ordinary values and re molding them according to modern needs of society so as to direct democratic development with cultural heritage whereas Nepal is concerned. Conclusions: Based on the above discussion, a few suggestions are proposed, such as a general orientation toward more modern teaching techniques and greater inclusiveness of Gurukuls in educational policy-making for their sustainability and relevance, which is becoming important at a time when the world is changing at an unprecedented speed.

KEYWORDS: Gurukul education, political socialization, inclusivity, cultural preservation, Nepal

INTRODUCTION

Political socialization is the process through which individuals receive their political values, beliefs and orientations. through which they come to understand or interpret that environment (Magleby 281). Processes of political socialization are largely determined by a wide variety of agents - from the immediate environment we live in, that is family and school, to mass media influences, influenced by friends and even broader cultural and societal contexts (Almond

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& Verba, 2015). This process is crucial for political stability, public accountability and civic participation which all helps in contributing to the cultural transmission of democratic values from one generation to another. In the backdrop of this, ancient pedagogy traditions of Gurukul system of learning have given a unique perspective for understanding political socialization. Gurukul system is about holistic individual-based education with a blend of right and wrong aspects along with technical knowledge. The classical model of education has traditionally aimed to fashion the intellectual, moral and civic state of learners by mixing liberal arts with physical education and skills for living (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957).

With its depth of culture and history, Nepal is an intriguing place for such a question. The birthplace of Gautam Buddha and the land of spiritualism, Nepal historically has a rich textile that is well-woven with features such as Gurukul system. The country is however suffering from what can be perceived as a severe crisis of losing age-old political philosophies due to the impacts of Globalization, migration and modernity. There are suggestions growing popular that political socialization has become a mutually appreciated requirement to narrow the particular disparity and enable the shift of general comprehension and secular-worth from one group to the next. Socialization or education is the problem but previous social strata with caste system impacted has great effects on the national framework (Stepanyants, 2014).

Gurukul system is a living legacy of cultural and pedagogic heritage of Hindu scriptures called Vedas- Upanishads in Nepal. In the past Gurus were considered as torchbearers who led students to transform knowledge and wisdom in practice, Gurukuls of old were places where students learn philosophy to profession, with the focus on discipline, austerity and social equilibrium (Sen, 2012). The system played a big contribution in building modern Nepal but went off rail during colonial periods of the Indian subcontinent and eventually lagged behind. In recent years, especially after the political transition in Nepal in 2006, there is renewed interest to revive Gurukuls and many such institutions are also registered with Ministry of Education. Nonetheless, despite their historical significance, the effects of these endeavors on contemporary political socialization remain largely under-researched (Bangsbo 2004).

Political socialization in Gurukuls done though both the manifest and latent methods. Manifest refers to explicit instruction on political systems, elections and civil engagement, whereas latent refers to the political values as in culture rituals & practices. These Gurukuls lay more importance on the latter with impart worldly knowledge with a dab of Eastern philosophical values through rituals, tales and religious sermons. The religious festivals of Ram Navami and Krishna Janmashtami serve as instances by which political and moral lessons from the Ramayana and Mahabharata are still imparted to Indian (Radhakrishnan & Moore, 1957). No doubt, it builds a meaningful bridge between traditional learning and political virtues and hence provides an attractive option to educational models of the present times (Fangming, 2015).

The Gurukul system… notwithstanding promising holds a history. Being both elitist and identified as a Brahmanical practice by its very history, it has been highly exclusive and undemocratic, especially towards the lower castes. Today while the Gurukuls of that time have

opened up, admitting all castes and even girls, due to the tarnished reputation and ragging experienced during its early avatar continues to shape help define whether or not in taking admission there. Furthermore, the system cannot accommodate contemporary pedagogic styles as well as it doesn't blend with technological adaptations, going against its favor for achieving relevance in a more globalized education (Adhikari 2023).

This topic matter is significant as the Gurukul system of political socialization may serve to promote values of socially acceptable living and responsible citizenship in a democratic set-up. With Nepal struggling to find its place in the political and cultural worlds of the 21st-century, it is essential to learn how traditional methods of education can help us secure our current democratic values. This smaller study was primarily interested in exploring these dynamics in the context of the Gurugul type system at Devghat which is a very traditional and sacred place in Nepal. Devghat's Gurukuls are an epitome of this pedagogical tradition allowing a peep into its glory, perils and loaded relevance in contemporary contexts—educational as well political (Sharma, 2020).

This study is intended to elaborate the background features of Gurukul Education in central Nepal, Devghat and reveals how gurukul education contributes or promotes political socialization. The study situates the practice of political socialisation within the paradigm of traditional Gurukul system with respect to how these systems impact on political attitudes and actions; in doing so it gives a broader picture. The study deals with the mechanics of Politics for Gurukuls, to raise political awareness, traditional as well as modern model of Gurukul system which are more or less similar and different from each other too. It also aims to identify the challenges of Gurukul learning in central Nepal and reveals barriers for its wider acceptance and propagation.

The study holds significant in the context of Nepal where there has been and will continue to be tug of war between tradition and modernity in educational, reading world and politics. The study has underscored the capacity of the Gurukul system to inculcate democratic values without eroding the cultural foundation of Nepal looking at its role in political socialization [18]. It is hoped that the results will offer some practical ideas to policymakers, educators and cultural mobilizers who are interested in helping bring traditional pedagogic processes into a more holistic set of modern pedagogies capable of generating a socially inclusive and harmonious society.

Methodology

As the mixed-methods study, which combines both qualitative and quantitative approaches in order to have a fuller understanding of Gurukul education political socialization in Devghat, Nepal. This study focused on the political socialization functions of the Gurukul systems using document analysis, key informant interviews with stakeholders and participant observation to collect the necessary primary data as well as questionnaires containing both open- and close-ended questions. Triangulation was achieved through purposive and convenience sampling to enhance testing for reliability, validity, and comprehensiveness. These procedures all together

enabled the examination to investigate the objectives of the investigation, including each angle of Gurukul education and its political socialization suggestions.

Primary data came from direct observation, stakeholder interviews, and official surveys in numeric and categorical forms. Descriptive secondary data were collected from weekly schedules, legal documents, educational materials (e.g., pamphlets and posters). Systematic coding was employed to organize and analyze qualitative data as well as quantitative data. The interviews were conducted with the managing committee members, students and Gurukul teachers to explore their attitudes towards the role of the Gurukul system in political socialization.

They conducted their research at Devghat, a scenic pilgrimage as well as historically important site in Tanahun district where the Trishuli and Kaligandaki rivers join. Devghat-LOCATION Devghat is located geographically north to the Chitwan district, south to Tanahu district and east Nawalparasi district, 200—575 meters above sea level (Sharma, 2020). Devghat is known for its cultural ethics and religious importance, the place has numerous temples, caves and Gurukul for local male and female residents. The study included seven Gurukuls: Yogi Narharinath Sanskrit Gurukul, Paramananda Sanskrit Gurukul, Mahesh Sanskrit Gurukul and Vedbedanga Sanskrit Gurukul (only for males), Ma Kalyani Vedic Gurukul, Gargi Kanya and Ramjanaki Kanya Gurukul. We selected these Gurukuls for study to maintain gender balance and institutional practice.

A total of 908 adults were part of the sample, with 36 subjects chosen at random for a deeper dive analysis. 14 male and 8 female students, 12 teachers, and 1 pass-out student. Purposive sampling for varied-view and key informant interviews was purposively selected indicative of the particular environments to inform Gurukul education potential and challenges.

Data were collected as part of a 24-hour structured observation protocol with non-overlapping categories such as meditation, study, meals and extracurricular activities. Whereas, the rest of the qualitative data included prenatal Samskara (ancient practices performed on expecting women), Upanayana, others life-stage ritual was break down as per the age and time frame Gurukul education is proper. Quantitative data were statistically analysed to generate frequency distributions, histogram and bar graph whilst Qualitative data was thematically analysed to identify the patterns and make meaning of it.

The paper used hypothesis-testing based approach to examine two principal assessments: how effective are Gurukuls at their scheduled activities and why they may be significant in contemporary context of Nepal. Everyone noted the adherence to schedules and the "importance" of maintaining the Gurukul system. Additionally, this was ascertained in terms of the comparative analysis among traditional Gurukul and modern Gurukul system which explains the transition of Gurukul education and its reconciliation with present day educational requirements.

This holistic approach enabled me to conduct in-depth study regarding contribution of Gurukul system on political socialization in Nepal. This study draws on both qualitative and quantitative methodologies to generate definitive findings regarding the potential of traditional education in times of rapid modernization to promote civic engagement, and democratic values.

Results

Adherence to Gurukul Schedules

The respondents were further questioned to analyse this punctuality of Gurukul w.r.t time on whether the Gurukuls operated as per the planned schedule or not. All 36 respondents unanimously agreed that the Gurukuls adhered to time schedules, and this validated the null hypothesis that there was no deviation. It is that this represents the disciplined and arranged functioning of Gurukuls.

Table 1: Response to Gurukul Schedules

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gurukuls operate as per schedule	36	100.0	100.0	100.0
Gurukuls do not operate as scheduled	0	0.0	-	-

Relevance of Gurukul Education

Gurukul education system is it still practicable in current Nepal, question to audience The answer is pretty unambiguous: all 36 of the people interviewed say yes, making short shrift of any argument that it has no relevance in this day and age. The results express a grasped meaning of the adaptability of the system and its sustained significance in addressing Nepal's cultural and educational goals.

Table 2: Relevance of Gurukul Education

Response	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Gurukul education is relevant	36	100.0	100.0	100.0
Gurukul education is irrelevant	0	0.0	-	-

Student Population by Caste/Ethnicity

Ethnic caste composition among the students at Ma Kalyani Vedic Kanya Gurukul for inclusivity, was assessed. The composition of 31 female students was multi-faceted: Brahman (25.8%), Kshetri (38.7%), Dalit (6.5%), Sherpa (6.5%), Tamang (6.5%) & others The diversity in this environment again reflects the spirit of universality that Gurukul system inherently believes in.

Caste/Ethnicity	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Brahman	8	25.8	25.8	25.8
Dalit	2	6.5	6.5	32.3
Kshetri	12	38.7	38.7	71.0
Newar	1	3.2	3.2	74.2
Sherpa	2	6.5	6.5	80.6
Tamang	2	6.5	6.5	87.1
Thakuri	3	9.7	9.7	96.8
Tharu	1	3.2	3.2	100.0

Geographic Distribution of Students

One of the questions asked was whether the Gurukul education system is still relevant in Nepal today. Significantly, all 36 of the answers say the former implying that from a group of industry elders and current heavy-hitters no one believes it has lost its importance in recent times (well, at least not saying so on permanent record). These results are testimony to the adaptability of the system and its continued relevance in a largely cultural and educational context such as that of Nepal.

Table 4: Student Population by District

District	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Sindhupalchok	6	19.4	19.4	19.4
Bajura	4	12.9	12.9	32.3
Dhading	3	9.7	9.7	42.0
Kavre	3	9.7	9.7	51.7
Dolakha	3	9.7	9.7	61.4
Dang	2	6.5	6.5	67.9
Chitwan	2	6.5	6.5	74.4
Nawalparasi East	2	6.5	6.5	80.9
Others (various)	6	19.1	19.1	100.0

Observed Extra Academic Activities

A number of Gurukul system generate a lot of extra-curricular activities based on Hindu culture. Rituals such as Garbhadhana, Pumsavana, Upanayana and Vivaha promote spiritual; moral and social development. This is in consonance with the holistic philosophy that underpins Gurukul education, reflected in all ceremonies.

Table 4 Student Population by District

Time	Activity
04:30 - 04:50	Wake-up and Refreshment
04:50 - 05:10	Meditation & Sandhya
05:10 - 05:45	Aarati
05:45 - 06:00	Breakfast
06:00 - 10:00	Gurukul Study
10:00 - 11:00	Lunch
11:00 - 15:00	Gurukul Study
15:00 - 16:00	Extra Activities (Bhajan)
16:00 - 17:00	Sports
17:00 - 17:45	Evening Sandhya
17:45 - 18:25	Evening Aarati
18:25 - 19:20	Dinner
19:20 - 22:00	Self-study
22:00 - 04:30	Sleep

This research agrees with disciplinary timetables, relevance, incorporation and integration of culture in Gurukul schooling. The system ensures a blend of old age traditions alongside comprehensive academic growth, which shapes strong and disciplined learning culture in students. Different geographically located audience and uniform acceptance of the system makes a Gurukul central to the education ecosystem in Nepal.

Discussion

Researching Gurukul school system in Nepal, this research portrays the school to have a lot of influence on political socialization, cultural heritage and inclusion as evidenced herein. This… … well-disciplined set-up of Gurukuls and common understanding among all concerned the timetables followed establish them as good schools. This conforms to the innate values of routine and wholistic development at the core of Gurukulism. Such controlled environments are not only essential to foster cognitive development but also build character, and civic responsibility among the students

in accordance to Radhakrishnan & Moore's (1957) assertion with regard to the all-inclusiveness of Eastern educational philosophies.

The fact that Gurukul education is applicable to the needs of Nepal as a unit, all the respondents unanimously agreed on, necessarily it should be recognized its flexibility and timelessness for all time. This is in line with the position taken by Fangming (2015) that certain aspects of cultural heritage could and should be linked to the modern through traditional educational system. Gurukuls per se by combining the spiritual methods and rituals also like Upanayana, Garbhadhana provide a general moral, spiritual and vocational education which helps an individual to transact in other alternative forms of societies, be it traditional or modern. Seems so this speaks a lot in favor of the Gurukul system - in that - it actually does deliver to the political socialization through values of responsibility and accountability along with inclusiveness.

The communal ethos in Gurukuls does indeed mark a break from their traditionally exclusionary purview. That Dalit, Tamang and Sherpa children are attending Gurukuls is a testament to the strides we have made in making this system of education available for all sections of society. The woman centered Gurukuls like Ma Kalyani Vedic Gurukul and Gargi Kanya Gurukul is the proof of advancement towards equality between two genders. These changes serve as evidence for Adhikari (2023) that suggests traditional education systems are becoming more inclusive and correlating with 21st century democratic ideals. Yet with a history of exclusion, it is proving difficult to overcome historical obstacles and integrate these institutions into broader acceptance within society.

The layer of geo-spatial location of students spanning Sindhupalchok, Bajura, Dolakha also resonates with the geographical scope and acceptance doses. All this varied suppleness too owes itself in a way to the ancient Gurukul system, which was able to assimilate not only students from different socio-economic and geographical backgrounds but leading on to something higher -national integration and democratic participation. This inclusive base is especially crucial in the breeding of a shared cultural and civil sense particularly also as we know with regards to cultures and nations which relates back to the study of how Gurukuls can play a role of working as bridges over troubled waters bordering regional and culture divides (Sharma, 2020).

Political socialization is shown through the integration of rituals and cultural practices; The Gurukul system Caste society, plagued with many social and economic problems has gone down in the flames of religion politics and on its lap lays political virtues politicized by Gurukuls. These traditions drawn from Eastern philosophical underpinnings provide another approach that is distinct from cumulative educational approaches outlined in modern Western education, aligning with the contention by Almond and Verba (2015) about the importance of a common set of civic objectives to maintaining democratic regimes.

Although these are the strengths of the Gurukul system, it is weak in accommodating modern pedagogy and technology. As much as it has retained its emphasis on discipline and tradition, the sporadic use of newer teaching techniques in the present may limit its possibilities moving into mainstream education in Nepal. That will be key to ensuring the relevance and attractiveness of a system in an ever more globalized world.

This study highlights the pioneering nature of the Gurukul system in effecting political socialization,

assimilation and cultural continuity in Nepal. The Gurukuls, where tradition and modernity are interwoven, is a wonderful middle ground for the democratic development in Nepal. The future strategies need to focus on enhancing the synchronization of Gurukul education with contemporary pedagogical models to makes its presence apt for the changing phase of education across the world.

CONCLUSION

The research supports us in understanding that the Gurukul system of education finds wider practice and relevance in the context of political socialization, inclusive and cultural preservation mechanism in Nepal. Gurukuls by their timely schedules and wholesome education have become relevant who in a way created the dialogue between traditional values and demanding living in Nepal. The heterogeneity of the system, being comprised of students from different geographic areas, castes and communities is an indication that India is on its way to democratizing higher education. Further, the incorporation of religious and cultural practices like Garbhadhana, Upanayana as part of Gurukul system refers to its role in promoting ethos of citizenship and ethics of virtues which fosters democratic values and social cohesion.

The study however also reveals the challenges, mainly that of the Gurukul system needing to update its pedagogical tools and technologies in order for it to be able to attract and sustain better under globalization. Overcoming these will be necessary for the Gurukul system to maintain its role along with being properly integrated into the wider Nepalese education stream. Gurukuls, by debunking that rich tradition and reconcile it with modern pedagogy, have the potential to drive change in civic engagement and democracy development in Nepal.

This study provides useful information for policy makers, educators and cultural activists who are looking to enhance education inclusion and modernization while at the same time safeguarding the cultural heritage of Nepal.

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