

Mentor's involvement in student's growth: Teacher - Student relationship, a practice of 5000 years in effect to 21st century

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Abstract

The role of a mentor (Guru) in a student's (Shishya) life is inevitable due to the former being instrumental in transferring knowledge and skills for years designed by an institution. The role of a teacher or a mentor is not only to provide the basic fundamental education of a selected area of study but to see it grow in a student in terms of acquiring the knowledge and mastering the skills to enhance proficiency in the allotted subject. The commitment and involvement here is a spiritual transaction varying from student to student where the extension of a teacher's role is beyond the formal and the number of years dedicated till graduation level of study. The most essential extension is the period when the formal education ends, and the practical implementation of the skill acquired is required to perform. It is from its first performing phase till the level of seeing the student rise to his utmost successful phase of performance. This is what has been a traditional (Parampara) practice past 5000 years and has seen its reflection in different countries in different forms. The question here arises of how effective it has been previously and its relevance and importance in the current century especially comparing the volume of difference in the social environment 5000 years ago till date. Practiced by the author here, this tradition of the 'Guru-shishya parampara' has worked wonders if freedom and restraint of a teacher's intervention and a student's commitment is defined appropriately.

1. Introduction

The classical art form in music and dance in India has always been taught under the 'Guru-Shishya parampara' – The Teacher - Student tradition which is as old as the Sanskrit epics of our history 'Ramayan' and 'Mahabharata' often known as a form of Bible in India. The teachings in Bhagwad-Gita written 5000 years ago establish the importance of such one invaluable relationship between Lord Krishna and Arjun.

The tradition followed in learning music and dance art forms not only teaches the students to master their

art, but it also becomes the mentor's duty to promote the student in different platforms and help him to challenge and channelize his talent and achieve great heights of success.

The Guru (Teacher)-Shishya (Student) parampara is a tradition which involves the 'Shishya' to believe and trust in a 'Guru' for the art he/she wants to learn and in return the 'Guru' takes responsibility of not only teaching him the art but taking care of the spiritual and emotional growth often involving the teacher to take up financial support for his student, not as a specific rule to this 'parampara' (tradition) but as a 'Guru's' lifetime commitment on the traditional and spiritual level to the student involved [1].

Describing the tradition, Sadhguru says: "India is the only place where this kind of tradition existed. That is, one person realizes something, and he looks for somebody who is truly dedicated, who holds this truth above his life. He looks for such a person and transmits it to him. This person looks for another like that and transmits it to him. This chain continued for thousands of years without a single break. This is known as Guru-shishya parampara." [1]

2. Methodology

The relationship of the 'Guru-shishya' is formally recognized by the institution following this tradition and the parents who enroll their child under the same 'parampara'. These art institutions are recognized by the Govt. of India and affiliated to educational boards for yearly examinations. They follow a specific curriculum and have certified examinations.

But not all institutes / colleges follow this tradition. They follow the modern way of teaching in classrooms and holding examinations as other educational colleges which does not involve the traditional way of imparting the education. The institutes / colleges involved in the traditional method of teaching are founded by professors / teachers who themselves have been taught under the same tradition.

The institutions teaching classical music follow a 7-year course beginning from Prarambhik -

Elementary, Praveshika pratham - Junior year 1st year, Praveshika Poorna - Junior year Completion, Madhyama Pratham - Middle year 1st year, Madhyama Poorna - Middle year Completion, Visharad Pratham - Graduation 1st year, Visharad Poorna - Graduation Final year.

Note: Though the number of years to complete music education may be 7 years, but the enrollment of a child is as early as 5 years. Hence the actual number of years in training may vary from 7 to 14 years.

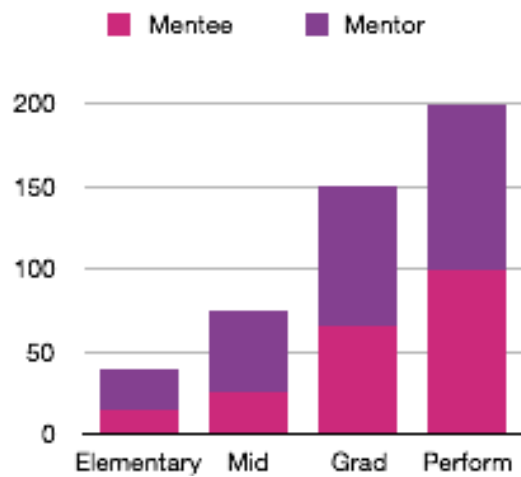


Figure 1. The chart depicts the role of both Mentor and Mentee through different stages of completing formal education leading to the involvement of the Guru through the students' performance level

The responsibilities of the Mentor (Guru) are many:

1. Imparting knowledge till the child masters the art
2. Providing social, practical, emotional and spiritual conditions for his growth
3. Mentoring him 24*7
4. Monitoring his growth, method of application of knowledge and an attempt at innovation
5. Maintain a record of his journey under this tradition

With the ever-changing dynamics of the relationship between teacher and student, the teacher has to continue to impart knowledge and the student to seek knowledge throughout the life process. Hence the process of imparting knowledge to the student is life-long.

Depending on the background of the student, it is the teacher's responsibility to ensure a healthy environment for the growth of a stable mind to achieve excellence in the art. The percentage may vary from child to child dividing his requirement for social care,

emotional stability and a conducive environment to grow.

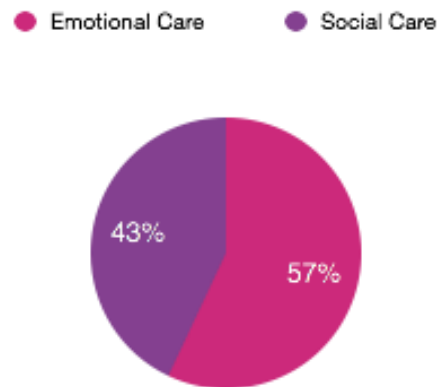


Figure 2. Two most important area followed while imparting education under this tradition

4. Removing barriers

The 'parampara' eradicates the barriers in learning - This traditional method of learning often removes the barriers / obstacles that are faced by the student during his learning process. The barriers may be social, economic or financial and geographical.

4.1. Social barrier. The social barrier here refers to the acceptance of this tradition socially as the student who chooses to be in this traditional method to learn versus the student following the modern method of education may be criticized on social platforms to establish market value as the traditional method followed by institutions are less expensive than the modern method established institutions.

The barrier is removed when this tradition is followed under recognized institutes affiliated to eminent educational boards with modern set up in infrastructure. Like all colleges, they hold certified examinations placing the students in high rank jobs and ability to establish their own institutes.

These recognized institutes/colleges are founded by artistes recognized by the Govt. of India and are also empaneled artistes of Indian Council for Cultural relations (ICCR). These institutes are ranked very high and are asked to certify the student for admissions in various international universities.

4.2. Economic barrier. The economical barrier refers to financial affordability of enrolling to learn which is often removed by the institute following this tradition by way of scholarships granted on merit basis. Under this tradition, the 'Guru' who adopts the student to teach under this traditional method often takes up

responsibility to fund the student’s education, food and stay.

4.3. Geographic barrier. The geographical barrier refers to the distance between the student residence and the location of such institutes or colleges, which may be an obstacle for the student to enroll. The ‘Guru-shishya parampara’ enables the ‘Guru’ to open his/her home as a shelter to these students giving them a family environment taking care of his mental and physical health and also imparting the teaching for which the commitment is made from both teacher and student.

The same institute / college where the student shows interest may have affordable hostel accommodation to overcome such obstacle.

The method is traditional, but it is equipped like any other educational colleges with modern classroom set up, audio-visual labs, auditoriums of presentations, library and smart-classes to name a few.

The traditional method teaching is sans the comfort of modern day infrastructure but to enable the success of the same, the institutes provide a combination of both modern and traditional facility to create the environment for the same.

5. Mentoring and Monitoring

5.1 Benefits for Students (Shishya)

Gaining Practical Advices and generating alternative approach, increasing confidence academically, recognizing social pressures and preparing accordingly, learning from peers and teacher’s experience, developing own communication tools, practical skills, challenging theoretical approach in performance, developing strategies and innovating ideas, identifying dreams, planning goals and direction of career, feeling empowered to make decisions, if failing - knowing to reach out to mentor for advice are the few essential benefits of being guided under this tradition.



Figure 3. Division of 3 aspects of the tradition

5.2 Benefits for Mentor (Guru)

The Mentor benefits the experience with a sense of fulfillment seeing the student achieve their dreams also by creating a lifelong bond with students and fellow mentors, voluntarily engage in spiritual and academic advancement of self and the mentee, open the door of knowledge each time its knocked with questions, gain opportunity to mentor more students who seek guidance.

It is from the post academic completion that the Guru / Mentor has to keep all channels of communication open for the students to always reach out from anywhere in the globe.

The tradition of Guru-Shishya parampara is mainly followed in India imparting various classical art, dance and music forms. The notations in music are thousands years old yet followed now in classical instituted in India.

Indian classical music is both elaborate and expressive. Like Western classical music, it divides the octave into 12 semitones of which the 7 basic notes are, in ascending tonal order, Sa Re Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni for Hindustani music and Sa Ri Ga Ma Pa Dha Ni for Carnatic music, similar to Western music’s Do Re Mi Fa So La Ti [2]. However, Indian music uses just-intonation tuning, unlike most modern Western classical music, which uses the equal-temperament tuning system. Also, unlike modern Western classical music, Indian classical music places great emphasis on improvisation.

The underlying scale may have four, five, six or seven tones, called swaras (sometimes spelled as svaras). The svara concept is found in the ancient *Natya Shastra* in Chapter 28. It calls the unit of tonal measurement or audible unit as Śruti, with verse 28.21 introducing the musical scale as follows,

तत्र स्वराः –

षड्जश्च ऋषभश्चैव गान्धारो मध्यमस्तथा ।

पञ्चमो धैवतश्चैव सप्तमोऽथ निषादवान् ॥ २१ ॥

— Natya Shastra, 28.21[2]

7. Traditional Teaching in Modern environment

This tradition which is centuries old needs a modern environment to impart knowledge. Music and dance institutes like ours provide digital smart classes yet teaching the practical knowledge through traditional method.

India has a great reputation of being the foremost bearer of world education system since ancient times [3]. Education has played in major role in shaping the

tradition, culture and intellectual wealth of the people of India. The country introduced the concept of Gurukul system. It was way beyond a mere teacher-student relationship. Gurukul system thrived on virtuous bonding between a Guru (Teacher) and Shishya (pupil). From parents' point of view, Gurukul was always the first and last choice for the education of their wards. Parents realize that this ancient but extremely relevant system of education even during the modern times goes beyond the simple procedures of teaching and learning. While sending their children to Gurukul, parents could feel comfortable in the fact that imparting of knowledge and skills are done on a more personal level. Parents and teachers in India have always been accorded highest degree of respect.

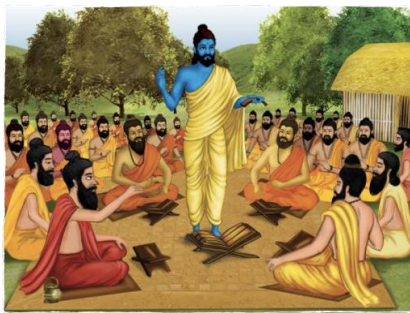


Figure 4. Ancient classroom

The ancient scriptures actually placed more emphasis on importance of teachers in shaping the futures of children and consequently, the country. To understand the true importance of teachers in our society, just have a look at below mentioned quotes from our scriptures:

“Guru govind dou khade, ka ke laago paaye, Balihari guru aapne, jin gobind deeye milaye, Gyan prakaasi guru mila, so jan bisar na jaaye Jab sahib kirpa kari, tab guru milya aaye.”

It implies, “God and teacher are both standing side by side, who I should look for blessings? It’s the teacher whom I should first go and hug as he made me aware of God!” This does not demand any more explanation and says it all.

So, at the core of Indian education system, parents and teachers play the most vital role. The combined efforts of these two can not only shape the future of the children in a positive way but that of, also the country. Gurukul knew the importance of proper channels of communication between the teachers and parents. The healthy relationship between parents and teachers was ensured through outbound communication, inbound feedback and by keeping interests of children as the single most priority. Parents were considered as community and they were asked to

participate and support and were provided a forum to interact among themselves.

Though, we are living in a different era, but we are also making a silent back move to our roots. There have been events of new schools being created and structured in the mould of Gurukul in different parts of the country. Parents, by keeping their ears and eyes open to such development can ensure a great future for their children.

The oral system for transmitting knowledge has oscillated by the emergence of modern methods of learning, and also by evident changes in Indian society. But there are positive developments too and learning music is now more democratic than it was in the past. The tradition of transferring the knowledge of Indian music and dance heritage has been omnipresent for as long as music and dance have flourished in India. Perhaps in no other country has knowledge been transferred through a compact socio-academic tradition - the guru-shishya parampara. As modern systems of teaching and giving knowledge have captured all over, this tradition is no longer as robust as it once was [3].

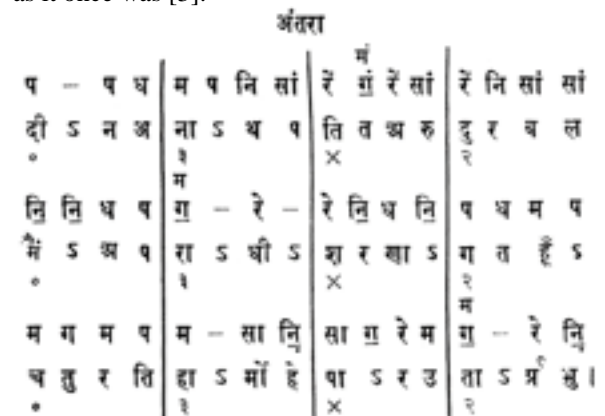


Figure 5. Ancient Indian classical notation pattern followed

8. Promoting students for stage performance

After the student has completed maximum four to five years of training examination, it is the Mentor’s responsibility to search and look out for opportunities to perform skills in front of audience. This initiative targets key areas – preparing to perform on stage through continuous and rigorous practice of the art, paying attention to stage presence, underlining key notes exhibiting the performer’s strength in vocal abilities/ dance moves / academic invention / sports skills / message via art on canvas in a gallery.

It is through this very process a student is being prepared practically to launch his career after completing graduation.

The Mentor's involvement in this phase of a student's life is of utmost importance.



Figure 6. Stage performance of Guru with students of 5th & 6th year of Indian music in London 2017

9. Guru Purnima Festival - A ritual celebrated

The Guru (*Teacher*) Purnima (*Full moon*) is a festival dedicated to spiritual and academic teachers. It is celebrated on a full moon day falling in an auspicious first peak of Lunar cycle after the peak of solar cycle. (June-July). All over India where this tradition of guru-shishya parampara is followed, this festival is compulsory to give this precious bond a fulfilling and complete recognition.

Hindu Legend - This was the day when Krishna-Dwaipayana Vyasa – author of the Mahabharata – was born to sage Parashara and a fisherman's daughter Satyawati; thus this day is also celebrated as *Vyasa Purnima* [5]. Veda Vyasa did yeoman service to the cause of Vedic studies by gathering all the Vedic hymns extant during his times, dividing them into four parts based on their use in the rites, characteristics and teaching them to his four chief disciples – Paila, Vaisampayana, Jaimini and Sumantu. It was this dividing and editing that earned him the honorific "Vyasa" (vyas = to edit, to divide). "He divided the Holy Veda into four, namely Rig, Yajur, Sama and Atharva. The histories and the Puranas are said to be the fifth Veda."

Guru Purnima is celebrated not through any religion establishment by most academic institution especially in the field of dance and music.

The celebration is marked by ritualistic respect to the Guru, *Guru Puja*. The Guru Principle is said to be a thousand times more active on the day of Guru Purnima than on any other day. The word Guru is derived from two words, *gu* and *ru*. The Sanskrit root *gu* means darkness or ignorance, and *ru* denotes the remover of that darkness. Therefore, a Guru is one who removes the darkness of our ignorance. Gurus are believed by many to be the most necessary part of life.

On this day, disciples offer pooja (worship) or pay respect to their Guru (spiritual guide). In addition to having religious importance, this festival has great importance for Indian academics and scholars. Indian academics celebrate this day by thanking their teachers as well as remembering past teachers and scholars

Traditionally the festival is celebrated by Buddhists in honor of the lord Buddha who gave His first sermon on this day at Sarnath, Uttar Pradesh, India. In the yogic tradition, the day is celebrated as the occasion when Shiva became the first Guru, as he began the transmission of yoga to the Saptarishis. Many Hindus celebrate the day in honor of the great sage Vyasa, who is seen as one of the greatest Gurus in ancient Hindu traditions and a symbol of the Guru-shishya tradition. Vyasa was not only believed to have been born on this day, but also to have started writing the Brahma Sutras on ashadha sudha padyami, which ends on this day. Their recitations are a dedication to him, and are organised on this day, which is also known as *Vyasa Purnima*. The festival is common to all spiritual traditions in Hinduism, where it is an expression of gratitude toward the teacher by his/her disciple. Hindu ascetics and wandering monks (sanyasis), observe this day by offering puja to their Guru, during the Chaturmas, a four-month period during the rainy season, when they choose seclusion and stay at one chosen place; some also give discourses to the local public. Students of Indian classical music and Indian classical dance, which also follow the *Guru shishya parampara*, celebrate this holy festival around the world [5].

In 2017, NASA also mentioned 'Guru Purnima' in its tweet highlighting its importance to the world because of the significance of the celebration. The tweet also carried a picture of the full moon and has been 'retweeted' over 1,000 times. Meanwhile, many Indians have applauded NASA for acknowledging Guru Purnima.

10. Iconic Mentor and Mentee legends

As old as 5000 years, the 'parampara' - 'tradition' of 'guru-shishya' has been a strong reason for great emperors and kings to change tactics on battle ground & impart social, moral and spiritual teachings to the mass.

10.1. Chanakya - Chandragupt Maurya

Chanakya (4th century BCE) was an Indian teacher, philosopher, economist, jurist and royal advisor. He is traditionally identified as **Kautilya** or **Vishnugupta**, who authored the ancient Indian political treatise, the *Arthashastra*. As such, he is

considered the pioneer of the field of political science and economics in India, and his work is thought of as an important precursor to classical economics. His works were lost near the end of the Gupta Empire and not rediscovered until the early twentieth century.[6]

10.2 Gopal Krishna Gokhale - Mahatma Gandhi

Gopal Krishna Gokhale (9 May 1866-19 Feb 1915) the senior leader of Indian National Congress and the founder of Servants of Indian Society, is known to be a mentor to Mahatma Gandhi [7]. Gopal Krishna Gokhale was also a social reformer whose goals were to promote non-violence and reform within existing government institutions.

On February 27, 1914, Gandhi wrote to Gokhale, "I propose to leave for India in April. I am entirely in your hands. I want to learn at your feet and gain the necessary experience. My present ambition is to be by your side as your nurse and attendant. I want to have the real discipline of obeying someone whom I love and look up to. I propose to use the funds you have sent for our passages." [7].

10.3 Ramakrishna Paramhansa and Vivekananda (Narendranath)

The relationship between Ramakrishna and Vivekananda began in November 1881 when they met at the house of Surendra Nath Mitra [8]. Ramakrishna asked Narendranath (the pre-monastic name of Vivekananda) to sing. Impressed by his singing talent, he invited him to Dakshineswar. Narendra accepted the invitation and went to Dakshinewsar to meet Ramakrishna. The meeting proved to be a turning point in the life of Narendranath. Initially Narendra did not accept Ramakrishna as his master and found him "mono maniac", but eventually he became one of closest people in his life. Ramakrishna reportedly shaped the personality of Narendranath and prepared him to dedicate his life to serve the humanity. After the death of Ramakrishna, Narendra and his other monastic disciples established their first monastery at Baranagar [8].

10.4. G.H.Hardy - Srinivasa Ramanujan

The legendary British mathematician G.H. Hardy is known for his achievements in number theory and mathematical analysis [9]. But he is perhaps even better known for his adoption and mentoring of the self-taught Indian mathematical genius, Srinivasa Ramanujan. Hardy himself was a prodigy from a young age, and stories are told about how he would write numbers up to millions at just two years of age,

and how he would amuse himself in church by factorizing the hymn numbers. He graduated with honours from Cambridge University, where he was to spend most of the rest of his academic career.

Meanwhile, in 1913, Srinivasa Ramanujan, a 23-year old shipping clerk from Madras, India, wrote to Hardy (and other academics at Cambridge), claiming, among other things, to have devised a formula that calculated the number of primes up to a hundred million with generally no error. The self-taught and obsessive Ramanujan had managed to prove all of Riemann's results and more with almost no knowledge of developments in the Western world and no formal tuition. He claimed that most of his ideas came to him in dreams.



Figure 7. G.H.Hardy and Ramanujan

G.H.Hardy was only one to recognize Ramanujan's genius, and brought him to Cambridge University, and was his friend and mentor for many years. The two collaborated on many mathematical problems, although the Riemann Hypothesis continued to defy even their joint efforts [9].

10.5. Ramakant Achrekar & Sachin Tendulkar

The Sachin-Achrekar partnership was a special, and some would say lethal, combination – a dedicated coach, hell-bent on getting the best out of his players, and a prodigy, ever-so-keen to learn and keep improving. Their first meeting, however, did not give the slightest hint of what was in store [10].

"Beneath the helmet, under that unruly curly hair, inside the cranium, there is something we don't know, something beyond scientific measure. Something that allows him to soar, to roam a territory of sport that, forget us, even those who are gifted enough to play alongside him cannot even fathom. When he goes out to bat, people switch on their TV sets and switch off their lives." –**British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC).**

Hence, time and again it has been proven that the bond and commitment between a Mentor and a mentee to excel outstandingly in his choice of study has given the world its legends and the eccentricity of excellence is equally empowered by the Teacher for the student, brings out the best results.

11. Discussions

Having dedicated 18 years to teaching, it has been quite an eye-opening revelation to see students achieve more when they are monitored continuously and mentored to excel profoundly in the area of study chosen. The forty-minute class schedule is absolutely necessary to impart education for the students to appear in competitive exams internationally but it is the after study hours attempt to bridge the gap between 'having doubts' on a particular area of content and informally extending your time/commitment to welcome students to discuss topics and clear doubts, makes the most astounding leap to imagination in a student and hence then the clarity on the matter.

Whether this method of following a five-thousand-year-old tradition valid and proven, is an area of discussion amongst academicians/professional.

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 [10]. 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 [10].

The relationship between the guru and shishya has some prescribed rules [11]. Broadly, the shishya is expected to train rigorously and usually has limited freedom until this period of training is completed. This period may vary. Modern gurus permit their shishyas to perform in public much earlier than what was the norm a generation ago. Once the shishya is past her training period, she is not only free to make her own adaptations and improvisations to her art but is in fact expected to do so, while taking the traditions of her guru and gharana forward. A good guru will appreciate out of the box thinking, though the tolerance to deviating from the gharana's essential style may vary. In the classical arts, learning is a lifelong process. In the traditional form of the gurukul, theoretical training involved both reading and debates among students and with the guru. The education was not designed to be a one-way dictatorial process and Prof Nair seems to imagine, though the status of the guru was (and is) undoubtedly exalted, with respected to her many years of rigorous sadhna and the exalted knowledge derived from this.

There are many positives to this model in my view – a long period of sustained interaction, an expectation of commitment, peer-to-peer learning and the setting of high standards. I do not believe the guru shishya parampara is in conflict with freedom of expression or dissent; yes, it is a system in which charting your own path comes after years spent learning the basics and that is the nature of the kind of knowledge the system was designed to impart.

In today's far more transactional education system, with its short-term targets and restricted rather than expansive curriculum, the guru shishya parampara often finds itself out of sync [11].

The role of a teacher, mentor or guru is a crucial one in any field. The teacher-student relationship is a revered one the world over [12]. Upon examining the meanings of and transformations in dance pedagogy, the teacher-student relationship in India is invariably complex and fascinating. In traditional India, the Gurukul system laid out norms for the relationship between the teacher and student. Students spent an extensive amount of time with the guru. The gurus were traditionally the male nattuvarans, and dance students dedicated more or less their entire time to their art. They even learnt other art forms such as music to enhance their understanding and practice of dance. Still, the transmission of privileged knowledge required the student's demonstration of worthiness. All in all, the guru-shishya relationship remained

peaceful as long as the guru had what Ananya Chatterjea calls the 'student's unconditional surrender'. Kumudini Lakhya's words, there was no room for questioning in the gurukul system.

Amongst the changes that began in modern India with regard to the guru-shishya relationship, Rukmini Devi's example is noteworthy. After just a brief period of training with her guru, Rukmini Devi performed her debut or arangetram in 1935, against her guru's wishes. Moreover, the institutionalization of dance education since the 1930s with the establishment of institutes like Kalakshetra and Kathak Kendra, took away the role of the traditional gurus and therefore a part of the gurukul system as well. Further, with this institutionalization, the one-to-one method of dance training more or less disintegrated. According to Mrinalini Sarabhai, by the time independence dawned on India, the 'teacher' had replaced the 'guru'.

T.G. Vaidyanathan argues that when the harmony and symmetry of this guru-shishya relationship is broken – as it often does in modern India – there is a crisis of identity and authority. I believe this is so because the transition from tradition to modernity is sketchy and incomplete [12].

12. Conclusion

Between choosing a traditional method of teaching-learning process i.e. Guru-shishya parampara and a modern method of 40-minute module in modern system of education, it is role of the parent to choose the necessary institution to enroll the child especially if it involves performing arts.

It is recommended that an institution well-reputed with extensive support system for modern equipment along with these centuries old tradition be chosen.

Also often observed is the choice that a student makes after passing out from such institute/college is to either continue his higher studies under the same tradition or opting out from it. Opting out is a choice that he /she makes is due to lack of institutes offering Master's degree in art under same traditional method of teaching.

The institute that usually offers the graduation degree starting from age 5 and completing by age 16/17 years of age enables the student to follow the Master's degree in the same college/institute. If the student opts to discontinue, the – 'guru-shishya' parampara continues for life-time as that is the sole foundation of such tradition. The guru may opt to be a support system to the student on academic and spiritual level that strengthens the bond and keeps the door open for the student to come back for guidance.

Why is this tradition so important and still practiced? It has been observed that mind that is functioning beyond the classroom set-up, be given

direction as whatever innovation that the individual attempts at can be (a) beneficial for the growth of the student (b) beneficial for the growth of the subject (c) if accepted and evolved in correct methods of study and experimentation, the study be beneficial for the future generation who have a base to take the subject to higher level of study.

The students who graduate in music under such supervision, design their own performance beginning from choosing the specific objective to perform, compose their music and know how to lay it out on notations, number of musicians involved, technically sound on stage for best output for the audience and the music to be performed. It is seen that the students who are professionals still take advice and take notes from their Guru as their belief and trust of the teacher's intention of seeing them grow is positively confirmed.

There might be no need for such a tradition to be followed, but when seen that the now professionals and then students reach out to their teacher from different time zones of the world though different channels of communication are rest assured that the teacher will definitely answer their calls, queries or applaud their achievement, is the outstanding outcome of such a tradition.

Does that make them dependent? In broader view of this question is co-joined with the question whether this dependency is crippling to the student? The success is of the end result is giving enlightenment to the subject which enables the student to work ahead with the study at present.

The Mentor is not only present to teach the subject but also to create environment for the mentee to evolve in the subject and have in-depth knowledge along with sufficient practical guidance.

The Guru-shishya parampara that still exists after 5000 years has a reason to still prevail in the 21st century.

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