

Bridging Tradition and Modern Education: The Role of Indian Knowledge System in Shaping Learning and Society

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Abstract: *Indian knowledge tradition is a perennial flow of the Ganga. Ganga is a symbol of purity and liberations it descended from heaven to give moksha to the people of Yog Bhumi Bharata. Indian Knowledge System aspired to know everything that the mind can comprehend from tiny atoms to the universe. Vedas are the oldest and richest source of Indian Knowledge Systems based on spiritual knowledge. The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) is one of the significant aspects of the National Education Policy curriculum. Indian Knowledge System has a notable influence on Higher Education as well. The Youth do get influenced by the Knowledge system. The Indian Higher Education model preaches Holistic Education for youth of the Nation, Ethics through Indian Ethos, inclusive workforce & social communities etc. By fostering collaboration between IKS practitioners and academic institutions, we can bridge the knowledge gap and leverage the potential of IKS to enhance human well-being. National Educational Policy fosters the creation of language resources and technology to facilitate the Indian Knowledge System as it recognizes its importance for disseminating indigenous knowledge. The National Education Policy 2020 envisions a massive revolution in India's education sector, underpinned by Indian Knowledge System. India possesses an immense wealth of knowledge, with numerous manuscripts yet to be explored. Traditionally Indian Knowledge, described as the 14 Vidya (4 Veda, 4 Upveda, 6 Vedanga) and 64 Kala which encompasses philosophy, practical education, arts, skills, craftsmanship, agriculture, health and science.*

Keywords: Indian Knowledge System, Higher Education and National Education System NEP 2020)

1. Introduction

The Indian Knowledge System (IKS) encompasses gyan, Vignan, and Jeevan Darshan which have developed through experience, observation, experimentation, and thorough analysis. This time-honoured practice had a profound impact on various facets of society including education, arts, administration, law, justice, health, manufacturing, and commerce. Additionally, it has left a significant imprint on classical and other languages of India, communicated through texts, oral traditions, and artistic expressions. Indian Knowledge System encapsulates knowledge from ancient India, along with its triumphs and obstacles, providing a vision for India's future aspirations, particularly in the fields of education, health, environment, and all aspects of life. Integrating Indigenous Knowledge Systems into higher education curricula is an important step that can enhance students' learning experiences, stimulate cultural understanding, and bridge the gap between traditional wisdom and modern knowledge.

"Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) refers to the comprehensive and diverse knowledge systems developed and nurtured in the Indian subcontinent over centuries. These systems encompass traditional knowledge in various domains such as science, technology, medicine, arts, and social organization, deeply rooted in India's cultural and philosophical heritage." (Indian National Science Academy, 2018)

Integrating Indian Knowledge System into higher education has the potential to bridge the gap between traditional and modern knowledge systems, fostering innovation and creativity. It can also enhance students' employability by

equipping them with a unique blend of skills and knowledge that is both culturally relevant and globally competitive. Moreover, this integration can contribute to the preservation and propagation of India's cultural heritage, instilling a sense of pride and continuity among future generations. However, the successful implementation of this vision requires addressing several challenges, including curriculum development, teacher training, resource allocation, and the establishment of standardized frameworks for validating traditional knowledge. Despite these challenges, the potential benefits of integrating traditional Indian knowledge systems into higher education make it a crucial aspect of the educational reforms proposed by National Education Policy 2020.

2. Review of Literature

Ramakrishnan (2008) suggests that traditional ecological knowledge, which values natural resource cycles and biodiversity, holds lessons that could be applied to modern sustainability efforts. In this way, Indian Knowledge System offers practical, historically tested solutions for current environmental challenges.

Kumar (2016) highlights the ecological wisdom embedded within Indian Knowledge System, noting that its principles prioritize balance and conservation rather than exploitation. This worldview resonates with sustainability goals, positioning Indian Knowledge System as a valuable resource for ecological education and sustainable management practices.

Chopra and Dasgupta (2019) argue that Indian Knowledge System provides frameworks for biodiversity conservation

and sustainable land management, practices which could mitigate some of the environmental degradation caused by industrialization.

Padel and Das (2021) explore the ways in which Indian Knowledge System can support sustainable development on a national and global scale by fostering resource use that is efficient, equitable, and ecologically sound. This growing body of literature highlights how the integration of Indian Knowledge System into educational and policy frameworks could help foster sustainable thinking in India's next generation of leaders.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives for the study:

- 1) To understand the importance of Indian Knowledge System.
- 2) To study the relation between Indian Knowledge System & Higher Education with special reference to NEP 2020.

3. Research Methodology

The article on Indian Knowledge System in Higher Education: National Education Policy 2020 is a descriptive article attempted by collecting data through the Secondary sources.

NEP 2020 outlines several key objectives related to the Indian knowledge system

- **Integration and Revitalization:** To integrate IKS into the mainstream education system, thereby ensuring its preservation and transmission to future generations.
- **Promotion of Local Languages:** To promote education in regional languages and dialects, which are often repositories of traditional knowledge.
- **Research and Development:** To encourage research and development in traditional knowledge systems and practices.
- **Interdisciplinary Approach:** To foster an interdisciplinary approach that bridges modern and traditional knowledge systems.

Indian Knowledge System & National Education Policy (NEP)

The New National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 advocates the fundamentals of Indian Knowledge System. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 aims to address the growing development educational need of the Nation. The Policy proposes the revision and revamping of all aspects of the education structure, National Education Policy 2020 promotes active pedagogy, development of core capacities and life skills, including 21st century skills, experimental learning at all stages, low stake board exams, holistic progress card, transformation in assessment to promote critical and higher order thinking among students, mainstreaming of vocational education and reforms in teacher education. The National Education Policy is the improvised way of structuring the education system leading to nurturing the Talent in Nation. It is an initiative that gives importance not only to the weak students but also to the creative minds of this new generation.

Understanding Traditional Indian Knowledge Systems

The integration of Traditional Indian Knowledge Systems (IKS) into the educational landscape not only serves as a means of cultural preservation but also holds the potential to redefine the learning paradigm in India. By incorporating Indian Knowledge System into the mainstream curriculum, educators are presented with a unique opportunity to cultivate a more profound understanding of India's heritage among students. This shift in educational focus aims to instill not only academic knowledge but also a sense of cultural pride and identity, fostering a generation that is deeply connected to its roots. Furthermore, the infusion of Indian Knowledge System into the education system promotes a holistic approach to learning, transcending the conventional boundaries of academic disciplines. This interdisciplinary integration allows students to explore the intersections between traditional knowledge and contemporary subjects such as science, arts, and humanities. The synthesis of diverse knowledge fields not only enriches the learning experience but also equips students with a well-rounded perspective that is essential for addressing complex challenges in today's world.

NEP 2020 and Integration of IKS:

The National Education Policy 2020 has emphasized that Indian Knowledge System will be part of the curriculum and will be included scientifically. Indian Knowledge System along with tribal knowledge will be included in mathematics, engineering, philosophy, yoga, medicine, sports, games literature, languages, and various other domains. National Education Policy has paying attention on precise courses in tribal ethnos medicinal practices, forest management, and natural farming. Under National Education Policy, Indian Knowledge System will be taught as an elective course for secondary school students. These inputs will be delivered through modern technologies, fun games, and cultural exchange programs among different states. National Education Policy focuses on multilingualism and the Indian Knowledge System storehouse has many languages. Under National Education Policy students will be delivered curriculum in their native languages and Sanskrit the most ancient language will be taught to all. By learning different languages, they will know the rich and miscellaneous civilization of the country. The multi-language formula will cover up the aspects of Constitutional provisions and it will create unity and veracity across the nation ("National Education Policy 2020"). It would be easy to include the history of Indian mathematics in normal math classes. The same could be done for architecture, philosophy, and Ayurveda. This is the goal of the National Education Policy, but it will have to be done slowly.

Implementation of Indian Knowledge System in education

The Indian Knowledge System holds immense potential to develop society at large, but its implementation faces challenges. Lack of awareness, undocumented knowledge, and resistance to change within education systems hinder the integration of Indian Knowledge System. The key elements potentially to be considered for the implementation of the Indian Knowledge System in Higher Education are:

- Launch targeted campaigns to educate stakeholders, including educators, administrators, policymakers, and

the public, about the value of Indian Knowledge System.

- Offer introductory courses on Indian Knowledge System for educators and administrators.
- Foster collaboration between college faculty and Indian Knowledge System practitioners (experts, knowledge holders) in curriculum development.
- Develop digital repositories for storing documented Indian Knowledge System knowledge, including audio recordings, transcripts, videos, and multimedia resources.
- Organize workshops for faculty to explore strategies for integrating Indian Knowledge System into existing courses.
- Design interactive learning experiences that engage students directly with Indian Knowledge System. This can include field trips to observe traditional practices (herbal medicine gardens, organic farms), workshops with Indian Knowledge System practitioners and project - based learning where students apply Indian Knowledge System knowledge to real - world problems.
- Advocate for curriculum frameworks that allow for flexibility within Indian Knowledge System integration.
- Document and share success stories of colleges that have successfully implemented Indian Knowledge System education initiatives. This can serve as inspiration for other institutions and highlight the positive impact of Indian Knowledge System on student learning and well - being.

Measures to Inculcate Indian Knowledge System in Higher Education

Higher educational institutes are regarded as the knowledge production centre and the students are to get this knowledge from various field. The following are the measures for production of knowledge -

- **Designing the Higher Education System on the Concept of Swadeshi** - The Govt. of India has taken the National Education Policy 2020 and will try to change the system of education and make it as global level. It is important to keep an open mind to welcome new ideas and our quest to add new knowledge must continue. To get this position the best way could be to discard all that is western system and design Swadeshi Higher Education System.
- **The Gurukula system** - The most famous aspect of Indian education is the Guru - Shishya parampara. In this the transmission of knowledge had taken place one to one interruptedly. The Guru is considered the embodiment of knowledge and the duty of the disciples is to draw from the treasure as much as they can. Teachers must tap their potential and channel their energy for nation building and in promotion of civil society. They need to be facilitators and mentors as ancient Guru.
- **Issue of Quantity versus Quality** - There is a big discrepancy regarding the number of universities and colleges in India. There are no fixed caps or standards. National Knowledge Commission (NKC) opined that India needs about 1500 universities. There is no common policy as how many universities India can contain. NEP - 2020 is in favour of downsizing the number in respect of colleges. As a matter of fact, there

are about 40000 colleges now under the affiliation of various universities in country. This shall come down to about one - fourth. There must be clear cut policy on the number of Higher Education Institutions.

NEP 2020: Key Provisions for Indian Knowledge Systems

National Education Policy 2020 outlines several key initiatives to integrate Indian Knowledge System into the modern education system:

- 1) **Curriculum Development:** Introducing Indian Knowledge System at various educational levels, from primary to higher education, ensuring students gain a comprehensive understanding of their cultural heritage.
- 2) **Teacher Training:** Special programs for educators to equip them with the knowledge and skills required to teach Indian Knowledge System effectively.
- 3) **Research and Innovation:** Establishing research centres dedicated to the study and advancement of Indian Knowledge System.
- 4) **Language Preservation:** Promoting classical languages like Sanskrit, Pali, and Prakrit alongside contemporary languages.
- 5) **Interdisciplinary Approach:** Encouraging the blending of traditional knowledge with modern scientific and technological advancements.

4. Challenges and Recommendations

While the integration of Indian Knowledge System presents exciting opportunities, it also poses challenges:

- **Resource Allocation:** Adequate funding and resources are required to develop and implement Indian Knowledge System curricula.
- **Teacher Preparedness:** Comprehensive training programs are essential to prepare teachers for this new approach.
- **Curriculum Balance:** Ensuring a balanced curriculum that harmonizes traditional and modern knowledge without overwhelming students.

To address these challenges, the following recommendations are proposed:

- a) **Collaborative Frameworks:** Establishing partnerships between educational institutions, government bodies, and Indian Knowledge System experts.
- b) **Continuous Evaluation:** Implementing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to assess the effectiveness of Indian Knowledge System integration.
- c) **Public Awareness Campaigns:** Raising awareness about the benefits of Indian Knowledge System through community engagement and outreach programs.

Measures can be taken for Integration of IKS:

Several measures can be adopted to promote Indian Knowledge System (IKS) through education:

Offering courses on Indian history, philosophy, arts, and literature.

- Encouraging the study of regional languages.
- Organizing cultural events and activities that celebrate Indian traditions.
- Strategies to promote research and development using Indian knowledge system

- Encouraging interdisciplinary research that blends traditional knowledge with modern scientific approaches.
- Establishing research centres dedicated to studying ancient Indian knowledge systems.
- Providing funding and support for projects exploring the practical applications of Indian Knowledge System across various fields.

5. Conclusion

The renovation of the education segment, guided by Indian Knowledge System, will play a crucial role in this revitalization, in a new era of mental freedom and intellectual empowerment. The inclusion of Indian Knowledge System in India may help the stakeholders to know their cultural heritage and they may develop a deep understanding of the environment. The Indian government has taken a step under National Education Policy to integrate Indian Knowledge System into the curriculum. Faculty members should be encouraged to create and instruct these courses in interesting way to expect the impact of these initiatives beyond the classroom, as higher education play a pivotal role in making the younger generations to be culturally aware and ethically reliable individuals driving India's advancement as a knowledge - driven society. By thoughtfully integrating Indian Knowledge System into the modern curriculum, India can create a more inclusive, holistic, and innovative educational environment that benefits individuals and society as a whole.

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